



## “Heroes of the Faith #3 – ‘Go Ahead! I Dare You to Jump!’”

We continue with the CB North Central 2017 theme, “Believing God for the impossible.” At our recent regional board meeting, a new member asked me a most interesting question. He said, “Pat, what is our passion for the church?” It was much like asking a child, “Hey kid, do you like candy?” How I desire to see pastors, leaders and church people step out and do impossible things for God. Stepping out in bold unconventional faith for God requires something. The ability to “jump”.

*During the terrible days of the Blitzkrieg (German for “lightning war”), against Nazi Germany, a father holding his small son by the hand, ran from a building that had been just struck by a bomb. In the front yard was a large shell hole. Seeking shelter, the father jumped into the hole and held up his arms for his son to follow. Terrified, yet hearing his father’s voice telling him to jump, the boy replied, “I can’t see you!” The father, looking up against the sky tinted red by the burning buildings, called to the silhouette of his son, “But I can see you. Jump!”*

I read this story and it brought tears to my eyes. Why? I HAVE BEEN THERE! There have been times in my life that my heavenly Father has asked me to “jump into his arms” in the midst of challenging church experiences. Even if I could not see the outcome? Yep! God said to me, “I want you to jump and plant a church!” Wait! What? Not me Lord. I eventually jumped and it was the single most incredible experience in my ministry.

The hero of the faith that I want to briefly talk about is no different. His name is Joshua. Why him? It is because God has for each of us and our church a spiritual conquest to overcome. He wants to involve us in an impossible assignment that only He can accomplish.

Not knowing the Lord while growing up, I solved all my conflicts with my fists. My twin and I used to live out the part of “Rocky” Balboa. We settled everything with a fight. Here was the problem. I was never guaranteed a victory. Sometimes I won and sometimes I got beat up. I fought and scrapped for a victory.

When you look at Joshua’s battle over Jericho in chapter 6:1-6, that was not the case. He fought FROM victory not FOR victory because he knew by faith that God would prevail. Here are some good lessons I learned:

### **1. We must have a genuine fear of the Lord.**

Chapter 5:13-15 conveys that as Joshua approached Jericho he was met by the Commander of God’s army. His response? He fell facedown to the ground in respect and awe that he had just encountered God.

I believe that before God asks us to do something impossible, we must be spiritually prepared. Instead of rushing into battle to do ministry for God, we must take time to worship His presence in our lives and submit to a holy life. THEN WE ARE READY!

### **2. We must act upon God’s promises.**

God said to Joshua in 6:2, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and fighting men.”

Are you kidding me Joshua? *Hey, I was in boot camp in 1971 being prepared to serve my country at the tail end of the Vietnam War. They trained us to develop strategies in battle and how to defeat our enemy in hand-to-hand combat. My drill sergeant NEVER once said we have the guarantee of victory when going into battle.*

Here, God guaranteed Joshua absolute victory in the battle over Jericho and he had not done a thing yet. The victory had already been won! All Joshua had to do was claim the promise by simply obeying the Lord.

Don't you see it? Before God even gives His assignment to you as a leader, (that seems impossible by the way) He has provided complete victory to accomplish it. What is God waiting for then? You need to "jump".

**3. "We should always follow God's instruction if we want victory.      READ Joshua 5:3-5**

*Be honest. How many of us have purchased something, assembled it without the instructions and messed it up but good? Then your wife graciously stands over you and says, "Gee honey, did you follow the instructions?"*

In chapter 6:3-5, Joshua did not take the city of Jericho by some clever military tactic that he learned in boot camp. Nope. He followed the Lord's strategy to a tee and victory followed.

God's plan for the conquest of your impossible assignment may seem foolish and bazaar, but that is not the point. The point is simple. No matter how silly or ridiculous the assignment sounds to you, do you believe by faith that God can accomplish what He said He would do? You know, you gotta jump!

In your church, God is waiting to present the most ridiculous, the most obscure and the most unbelievable plan known to any military strategist. WHY? I have discovered in thirty-four years of ministry that it is not about the assignment or even the strategy to win. It is about our ability to say, "Ok God, I see your plan. Now what do you want me to do?" Jump! It takes unbelievable faith to step out and do something that makes no sense. The point is, "Do you really believe God can do what He said He can do?"

I cannot speak for you right now, but God has His arms open right now for me. Oh, I know exactly what the assignment is. He is telling me now to jump and simply trust Him at His Word, even if I don't see where I am going to land.

Are you ready to believe that VICTORY is already yours in Jesus Christ? Ok now jump!



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