LOOK THROUGH YOUR WINDSHIELD

DON’T STOP NOW!
JOSHUA 11:18-23

DR. DARRYL T. CANADY

RODMAN STREET CHURCH 10.25.26

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Title: Don't Stop Now: Persevering From Promise to Possession

Sermon Summary: What if the battles we are facing right now are not signs of failure, but part of a divine process leading us toward our greatest victories? Drawing from Joshua chapter 11, we explore the powerful truth that God is never caught off guard by the opposition in our lives. The central argument is that opposition, fatigue, and delay are not signs of God's absence or disapproval, but are often instruments through which God develops character, builds faith, and ultimately fulfills His purpose. Just as God sovereignly hardened the hearts of Israel's enemies as part of His divine judgment and plan, believers today can trust that nothing in their lives catches God by surprise.

Just as Joshua waged war against formidable kings for a long time before finally taking the entire land, we are reminded that the length of our struggle does not indicate the absence of God's faithfulness. The sermon unpacks three vital warnings for every believer: refuse complacency and to rest on past victories, resist the temptation to retreat because of present fatigue, and not to relinquish future possibilities God has prepared for them. The windshield of our lives must always be larger than the rearview mirror, because what lies ahead demands more of our attention than what lies behind. Our past is a place of reference, not a place of residence. If we can hold onto that truth, we will find the courage to keep pressing forward into everything God has prepared for us.

Chapters

Chapter 1: God Is Behind the Opposition

Every battle we face is not a sign that something has gone wrong, but may be part of God's sovereign purpose working in our lives.

Chapter 2: Do Not Rest on Past Victories

We cannot allow our past accomplishments to become an excuse for present inactivity, because God still has work ahead of us.

Chapter 3: Do Not Retreat Because of Present Fatigue

Just because we are tired does not mean we are finished, and our breakthrough may be closer than it appears.

Chapter 4: Do Not Relinquish Your Future Possibilities

We must remember who we are and refuse to let past pain, scars, or setbacks cause us to walk away from the future God has called us toward.

Key Points:

- God himself was behind the hardening of the hearts of Israel's enemies, demonstrating that opposition in the believer's life is not outside of God's sovereign purpose
- Every battle a believer faces is not evidence of failure or divine abandonment, but may be part of the very process God is using to fulfill His plan
- Grit is the courage to keep working toward a goal even when the work becomes difficult, and it is developed through hardship, not comfort
- Do not rest on past victories; the past is a place of reference, not a place of residence

- The windshield of a car is larger than the rearview mirror for a reason -- what lies ahead demands more attention than what has already passed
- Do not retreat because of present fatigue; fatigue is a feeling, but quitting is a decision
- The passenger side mirror warning that objects are closer than they appear serves as a spiritual metaphor -- your breakthrough may be closer than it appears
- Do not relinquish future possibilities; Joshua could not have experienced the fruit of his perseverance had he surrendered to the weariness of the fight
- Scars and setbacks do not cancel a believer's calling or purpose
- Jesus himself did not retreat from the cross, and His resurrection provides the ultimate model of endurance and victory

Scripture Reference:

- Joshua 11:16-23, which describes Joshua's extended military campaigns, God's hardening of enemy hearts, the destruction of the Anakites, and the conclusion that Joshua took the entire land as God had directed Moses, after which the land had rest from war
- Philippians 3:13-14, where Paul describes setting aside what is behind and pressing forward toward the purpose God has called him to
- Galatians 6:9, which urges believers not to grow weary in doing good, promising a harvest for those who do not give up
- Isaiah 40:31, which promises renewed strength to those who wait upon the Lord

- Exodus 7:3, referenced in connection with God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart as a parallel to the hardening of the Canaanite kings' hearts

Stories:

- The account of God hardening Pharaoh's heart in Exodus is used as a parallel to Joshua 11, illustrating that divine sovereignty over opposition is a consistent biblical pattern
- Pastor Canady shares a personal testimony of discovering a lump on his neck while shaving with a razor in the basement during the pandemic, which led to a cancer diagnosis and subsequent healing, illustrating how God can use unexpected circumstances to reveal and address hidden dangers
- The story of Al Pulliam, a longtime church transportation volunteer who continued his ministry of service even when he could no longer drive himself, and whose faithfulness impacted his granddaughter and others until the day he died, is used to illustrate that past accomplishments should not lead to present inactivity
- The Lion King film is referenced, with Simba's story serving as an illustration of how shame and guilt can cause a person to abandon their God-given purpose, and how being reminded of one's true identity can restore a sense of calling and destiny
- Pastor Canady shares a personal childhood memory of growing up on a dirt road alley in Kissimmee, Florida, and his grandmother cleaning houses to provide for him, as a testimony of God's faithfulness across a lifetime

Scripture References from "Don't Stop Now"

Explicitly Cited References

Joshua 11:16-17 — Description of the full extent of the land Joshua captured and the kings he defeated

Joshua 11:18 — Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time

Joshua 11:20 — The Lord hardened the hearts of the enemy kings to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them

Joshua 11:23 — Joshua took the entire land as the Lord directed Moses and gave it as an inheritance to Israel, and the land had rest from war

Exodus 7:3 — God told Moses he would harden Pharaoh's heart before Moses ever stood before him

Philippians 3:13-14 — Paul describes forgetting what is behind and pressing forward toward the goal God has set before him

Galatians 6:9 — A call not to grow weary in doing good, with the promise of a harvest for those who do not give up

Isaiah 40:31 — Those who wait on the Lord will have their strength renewed, rising like eagles and running without growing weary

Thematically Alluded References

Romans 8:28 — The theme that God works all things, including opposition and hardship, together for his purpose

Romans 8:37 — The declaration that believers are more than conquerors, referenced directly in the sermon

John 10:10 — Jesus came so that believers might have life and have it more abundantly, cited near the sermon's close

2 Corinthians 4:7 — The imagery of being an empty earthen vessel dependent on God's power, echoed in the opening prayer

Philippians 4:19 — God supplying every need, referenced when the pastor declares God big enough to provide

QUOTES:

Sometimes God is developing something in you while He's bringing you through something that is around you.

You got to stop assuming that every difficulty means that the devil did it. You got to stop assuming that every difficulty means that God has abandoned you. You got to stop assuming that every delay means that God has denied you.

Your past is a place of reference, not a place of residence.

Fatigue is a feeling, but quitting is a decision.

Just because you are tired don't mean that you are through.

You cannot have championship results with a casual commitment.

Don't let your scars make you forget who you are. Don't let your setbacks make you forget who you are.

You may have some scars, but your scars don't cancel your calling. You may have some setbacks, but your setback can't cancel your purpose.

When you've been fighting for a long time, your breakthrough is closer than it appears.

The promise may be divine, but the process can still be demanding.

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5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Sermon Series: From Promise to Possession

Day 1: God Is Sovereign Over Your Struggles

Reading: Joshua 11:18-20

Devotional: Not every battle you face is a sign that something has gone wrong. Pastor Canady reminded us that God hardened the hearts of Israel's enemies as part of His sovereign judgment and purpose. The opposition Joshua faced was not outside of God's plan — it was inside it. When you find yourself in a prolonged fight, resist the temptation to conclude that God has abandoned you. Every delay, every difficulty, and every demanding season must first pass through the hands of a sovereign God before it reaches you. Your struggle has not caught God by surprise. He is still large and in charge.

Personal Reflection: What current battle are you tempted to interpret as God's absence rather than God's activity? How might your perspective shift if you believed God was working through this struggle rather than simply allowing it?

Practical Application: Write down one difficulty you are facing. Beside it, write the words: "God is sovereign over this." Pray over that statement each morning this week and ask God to reveal what He may be developing in you through the process.

Day 2: Do Not Rest on Past Victories

Reading: Philippians 3:12-14

Devotional: The Apostle Paul, in Philippians 3, describes a man who refused to let his past accomplishments become a ceiling on his future pursuit. He was pressing, reaching, and straining forward. Joshua had already conquered Jericho, defeated Ai, and overcome five kings — yet he kept marching. Your history with God is meant to inspire your faith, not imprison your forward movement. As Pastor Canady said, your past is a place of reference, not a place of residence. The windshield of your life is far larger than your rearview mirror for a reason. Where you are going demands far more of your attention than where you have been.

Personal Reflection: Are you living off a past spiritual victory rather than pursuing present faithfulness? In what areas of your life have you coasted on yesterday's momentum instead of seeking fresh obedience today?

Practical Application: Identify one area of your spiritual life — prayer, service, generosity, or study — where you have grown passive. Commit to one specific, concrete action this week that moves you forward in that area rather than simply remembering what you once did.

Day 3: Do Not Retreat Because of Fatigue

Reading: Galatians 6:9; Isaiah 40:28-31

Devotional: Galatians 6:9 does not promise you that the journey will be easy. It acknowledges that weariness is real. What it commands is that you refuse to let your weariness become your reason for quitting. Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that those who wait upon the Lord will have their strength renewed. Waiting here does not mean passive inactivity — it means active, trusting dependence on God. Pastor Canady reminded us that Joshua fought a long time before the land had rest from war. The length of your struggle does not diminish the certainty of God's promise. Fatigue is a feeling. Quitting is a decision. Do not let one become the other.

Personal Reflection: Where are you most tired right now — physically, emotionally, or spiritually? Have you been honest with God about that exhaustion? What would it look like to wait on the Lord in that specific place of weariness rather than walking away from your assignment?

Practical Application: Set aside fifteen minutes today in complete silence before God. Do not bring a list of requests. Simply acknowledge your weariness and ask God to renew your strength. Return to Isaiah 40:31 and read it aloud slowly three times as a declaration of trust.

Day 4: Your Breakthrough Is Closer Than It Appears

Reading: Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Devotional: The passenger side mirror on your vehicle carries a warning: objects in the mirror are closer than they appear. Pastor Canady borrowed that image to deliver a powerful truth — when you have been fighting for a long time, your breakthrough may be far closer than your

fatigue is telling you. Romans 8:28 assures us that God is working all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Second Corinthians 4:17 reminds us that our present troubles are producing an eternal weight of glory that far outweighs them all. Do not abandon your position just before the harvest arrives.

Personal Reflection: Think about a promise you have been waiting on God to fulfill. Has your weariness caused you to believe it will never come? How might Romans 8:28 reframe the way you are interpreting the delays and difficulties in that situation?

Practical Application: Write down one promise from Scripture that speaks directly to your current season of waiting. Place it somewhere visible — your mirror, your phone screen, or your desk. Each time you see it this week, declare it aloud as an act of faith that your breakthrough is closer than it appears.

Day 5: Remember Who You Are

Reading: Genesis 1:27; 1 Peter 2:9; Romans 8:37

Devotional: Pastor Canady drew from The Lion King to deliver one of the sermon's most penetrating challenges: remember who you are. Simba allowed guilt, shame, and the manipulation of his enemy to cause him to abandon his identity and his calling. Many believers have done the same. Your scars do not cancel your calling. Your setbacks do not erase your purpose. Your mistakes do not define your identity. Genesis 1:27 establishes that you were created in the very image of God. First Peter 2:9 declares that you are chosen, royal, and set apart. Romans 8:37 proclaims that you are more than a conqueror through Christ. No enemy, no failure, and no season of suffering changes who God says you are.

Personal Reflection: What lie about your identity have you been carrying? Has a past failure, a painful word spoken over you, or a prolonged season of difficulty caused you to forget who God created and called you to be? What would it mean to fully receive what Scripture says about your identity today?

Practical Application: Read Genesis 1:27, 1 Peter 2:9, and Romans 8:37 aloud and replace every pronoun with your own name. Speak each verse as a personal declaration. Then write a brief prayer surrendering the false identity you have been carrying and asking God to restore the truth of who He says you are. Do not stop now. God is not finished with you yet.

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Small Group Guide: "Don't Stop Now"

Based on Joshua 11:18-23 | Series: From Promise to Possession

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Overview

This sermon draws from Joshua's long military campaign to deliver three timeless challenges to believers: do not rest on past victories, do not retreat because of present fatigue, and do not relinquish future possibilities. Using the imagery of rearview mirrors, windshields, and the story of Simba from The Lion King, the message calls every believer to press forward with faith, grit, and perseverance.

Key Scripture References

- Joshua 11:18-23 -- Joshua waged war against many kings for a long time before the land finally had rest
- Joshua 11:20 -- God hardened the hearts of Israel's enemies as part of his sovereign judgment and purpose
- Philippians 3:13-14 -- Paul describes the discipline of releasing the past and pressing toward what lies ahead
- Galatians 6:9 -- A reminder that those who do not give up will reap a harvest at the proper time
- Isaiah 40:31 -- The promise of renewed strength for those who wait on the Lord

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Key Takeaways

1. Not every battle is a sign that something has gone wrong. Some opposition is part of God's sovereign plan to accomplish His purpose in and through you.

2. God is never surprised by the opposition you face. What looks like an obstacle to God's promise is never outside of God's purpose.
3. Your past is a place of reference, not a place of residence. History should inspire your future, not imprison you in it.
4. Fatigue is a feeling, but quitting is a decision. You can be tired and still keep going.
5. Your breakthrough may be closer than it appears. Do not walk away from something worthwhile simply because the journey has been long and hard.
6. Your scars do not cancel your calling. Setbacks do not cancel your purpose.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question

Go around the group and share one word that describes where you are in your personal journey of faith right now. It could be a season, a feeling, or a single descriptor.

Section 1: Don't Rest on Your Past Victories

1. The pastor said, "Just because you've done something does not mean that you've done everything." Can you think of a time when a past accomplishment became an excuse for present inactivity, either in your own life or in a community you were part of?
2. He used the image of a windshield versus a rearview mirror, saying the windshield is bigger because what is ahead of you requires more of your attention than what is behind you. In what areas of

your life are you currently gazing through the rearview mirror when God may be calling you to look through the windshield?

3. The pastor said, "Your past is a place of reference, not a place of residence." How do you personally strike the balance between honoring your history and not being held back by it?

Section 2: Don't Retreat Because of Your Present Fatigue

4. The pastor said, "Sometimes you don't feel like quitting because you lost your faith. Sometimes you feel like quitting because you lost your energy. I'm still saved, but I'm tired." Have you ever been in that place? How did you navigate that season without giving up?
5. He used the passenger side mirror warning -- "objects in the mirror are closer than they appear" -- as a spiritual metaphor. What is something in your life right now where your breakthrough or progress might be closer than it currently appears?
6. Joshua 11:20 says it was God himself who hardened the hearts of Israel's enemies. The pastor explained that the very opposition Joshua faced was part of God's sovereign purpose. How does that change the way you view a current difficulty or prolonged struggle in your own life?
7. The pastor said, "You cannot have championship results with a casual commitment." Where in your faith life, relationships, or calling might God be asking you to deepen your commitment rather than reduce your effort?

Section 3: Don't Relinquish Your Future Possibilities

8. Using the story of Simba from The Lion King, the pastor said, "Don't let your scars make you forget who you are." What is a lie that pain, failure, or someone else's words has told you about your identity that you need to actively reject?
9. He said, "You may have some scars, but your scars don't cancel your calling." How have you seen God use a painful or difficult season to actually prepare you for something he called you to do later?
10. The pastor challenged the group to remember why they started. What was the original "why" behind something meaningful you are currently doing -- a ministry role, a relationship, a commitment, a goal -- and how does returning to that "why" help you keep going?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to practice individually or as a group before your next meeting.

The Windshield Exercise Write down three things God has already brought you through (your rearview mirror). Then write down three things you believe God still has ahead of you (your windshield). Spend time in prayer this week asking God to shift your focus from the first list to the second.

Identify Your Fatigue Be honest with yourself about one area of your life where you are genuinely tired. Rather than quitting or pushing through alone, bring it before God in prayer and share it with a trusted person in your group who can pray with you and hold you accountable.

A Letter to Yourself Write a short letter to yourself that begins with "Remember who you are." Include your identity in Christ, the gifts God has placed in you, and at least one promise from Scripture that speaks to your current season. Keep it somewhere you will see it regularly.

Memorize and Meditate Commit Galatians 6:9 to memory this week. Each time you feel like giving up on something God has called you to, recite it and ask God to renew your resolve.

Share Your Testimony The pastor said, "Stop your testilying and start doing your testifying because you can bless somebody with what you've really been through." Identify one person in your life who is going through something similar to what you have already survived. Reach out to them this week with an encouraging word or a shared testimony.

Closing Reflection

Close your time together by reading Isaiah 40:31 aloud as a group. Then allow each member to complete this sentence in one or two sentences before the group prays together:

"One thing I am not going to stop now is..."

Closing Prayer Points

- Pray for those in the group who are in a season of prolonged difficulty or fatigue
- Pray for renewed vision and courage to pursue what God has ahead
- Pray for the discipline to stop living in the past and to press toward future possibilities

- Pray for anyone in the group who needs to remember who they are in Christ

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The sermon suggests that God sometimes hardens the hearts of our opponents as part of His sovereign purpose — how does this challenge or reshape the way you currently interpret the opposition and resistance you face in your own life?
2. Pastor Canady draws a distinction between using the past as a place of reference versus a place of residence — in what areas of your life might you be dwelling in past victories or failures rather than pressing forward toward what God has ahead?
3. The sermon uses the imagery of the windshield versus the rearview mirror to illustrate how much more attention we should give to our future than our past — what practical steps can you take this week to shift your focus from what is behind you to what God is calling you toward?
4. Joshua waged war against these kings for a long time, and the sermon reminds us that the length of a struggle does not indicate the absence of God — how do you personally distinguish between a season where God is calling you to persevere and a season where He is calling you to change direction?
5. The passenger side mirror warning that objects are closer than they appear is offered as a metaphor for spiritual breakthroughs — what breakthrough in your life have you perhaps given up on prematurely, and what would it look like to believe it is closer than it appears?

6. The sermon draws a parallel between Simba in The Lion King being manipulated into abandoning his destiny and believers who allow guilt, shame, or disappointment to cause them to walk away from their God-given purpose — what lies have you believed about yourself that may be causing you to forfeit your calling?
7. Pastor Canady distinguishes between fatigue as a feeling and quitting as a decision, referencing Galatians 6:9 which speaks of reaping a harvest if we do not give up — how do you practically maintain obedience and forward movement in seasons when your emotional and physical energy is depleted?
8. The sermon reflects on how Brother Al Pulliam continued to minister and bless others even as his physical capacity declined — how does his example challenge you to rethink what faithful service looks like in whatever season of life you currently occupy?
9. Pastor Canady shares that his cancer diagnosis became part of his testimony and that the very process he wanted to escape developed the strength he would need — how has a painful or prolonged experience in your own life ultimately produced something in your character that could not have been developed any other way?
10. The sermon closes with a call to remember who you are as a child of God, created in His image, redeemed by His blood, and covered by His grace — in what specific relationships, environments, or circumstances do you find it most difficult to walk in that identity, and what would change if you truly believed it?