

VICTORY LAPS!
JOSHUA 6:15-16; 20

Taking Your Praise Before the Wall Falls

DR. DARRYL T. CANADY

RODMAN STREET CHURCH | 9.20.26

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Title: Victory Laps: Taking Your Praise Before the Wall Falls

Sermon Summary: What if God declared the victory before the battle even began? That is exactly what we discover in Joshua 6, where God tells Joshua that Jericho has already been delivered into Israel's hands -- even while the walls are still standing tall and the gates are locked shut. This sermon draws us into one of the most counterintuitive moments in all of Scripture: a people commanded to march, stay silent, and trust a strategy that made no military sense whatsoever. This sermon challenges believers to celebrate God's promises before they see the physical evidence of their fulfillment. The pastor presents the story of Israel's march around Jericho as a model for faith-driven obedience, declaring that God's spoken Word settles outcomes before circumstances change.

And yet, that is precisely the point. The central lesson here is that faith does not wait for visible evidence before it moves. Every lap around Jericho was not just a military exercise -- it was a spiritual formation. Each lap built discipline, dependence, patience, and obedience. The sermon also weaves in the story of LIFE Male STEAM Academy as a living testimony of what happens when a community takes its victory laps in faith, enduring walls of opposition until possession is realized. Just as God told Joshua that Jericho was already delivered before a single wall fell, believers are called to follow God's direction, declare His promises out loud, and walk boldly toward the destination He has ordained.

We are invited to ask ourselves whether we are willing to keep walking when nothing around us appears to be changing. The walls in our own lives -- whether financial, relational, physical, or emotional -- have not been given the final word. God has. And if we can hold onto that truth, we will find the courage to keep marching even when the breakthrough has not yet appeared. We are challenged to remember that faith does not wait for the victory to celebrate; it celebrates because God has already spoken.

Chapters

Chapter 1: Taking the Victory Lap Before the Victory

We are introduced to the story of Jericho and challenged to celebrate God's promises before we see them fulfilled, just as Israel marched before the walls fell.

Chapter 2: The Directions They Followed: Obeying When It Makes No Sense

God's instructions to march around Jericho were not logical, but faith follows God's direction even when it defies human reasoning.

Chapter 3: The Declaration They Spoke: Agreeing With What God Has Already Decreed

Faith declares what God has said before it sees what God has done, and we must learn to speak the victory before it is visible.

Chapter 4: The Destination They Possessed: Walking Into What God Has Promised

After the wall fell, Israel had to move forward and possess the city -- and we too must take active steps into the promises God has opened for us.

Key Points:

- God speaks about future victories in the past tense, meaning what is still ahead for the believer is already settled in the mind of God
- Faith follows God's direction even when it does not make logical sense, because God's instructions are designed to develop faith, not satisfy human reasoning
- Every lap of obedience builds discipline, dependence, patience, and the understanding that victory comes because God is present, not because of superior human strategy
- Believers are called to declare what God has decreed before they see what God has demonstrated, speaking to their walls rather than allowing their walls to speak to them
- The shout of Israel did not create the promise; it came into agreement with a promise God had already made
- God's power does not eliminate human participation; when God brings the wall down, the believer must still choose to walk forward and possess what is on the other side
- Taking a victory lap is an act of faith that confuses the enemy and honors God before the breakthrough is visible

Scripture Reference:

- Joshua 6:15-16 and 6:20, in which Israel marches around Jericho on the seventh day, the priests sound the trumpet, Joshua commands the people to shout, and the walls collapse
- Joshua 6:1-2, in which God declares to Joshua that Jericho has already been delivered into his hands before the march begins

- Joshua 1:3-6, in which God promises that every place Israel sets its foot will be given to them, and calls Joshua to be strong and courageous
- Joshua 2:8-9, in which Rahab tells the spies that all of Jericho has heard of the Lord and is melting in fear because of Israel
- Hebrews 11:1, which defines faith as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen

Stories:

- The march around Jericho: Israel follows God's precise instructions to march silently around the city for six days and seven times on the seventh day, then shout, resulting in the collapse of the walls and the possession of the city
- Rahab and the spies: Rahab reveals to the Israelite spies that all of Jericho already fears Israel because of what the Lord has done, demonstrating that the enemy was already intimidated before the battle began
- The pastor's personal account of being called to Rodman Church: While serving as a candidate, God spoke to him that this was his assignment, and he called his wife to begin packing before the vote was even held, acting on the word before the outcome was visible
- The pastor walking the property of Penn Center East: For years the pastor walked the grounds of the property, standing on the promise that every place his feet tread would be given to him, which ultimately became the home of the LIFE Male STEAM Academy
- LIFE Male STEAM Academy's growth: Founded in 2014 with no money, building, students, or curriculum, only a word from God to save boys, the school grew from 88 scholars to 140 in a single year,

serving as a living testimony of walls coming down through persistent faith and obedience

- Reverend Taleeta's cancer diagnosis: When told her cancer was incurable, she declared that she begged to differ and that it was both treatable and curable, modeling the kind of declaration that precedes the demonstration

Scripture References from the Sermon

Explicitly Cited

- Joshua 6:1
- Joshua 6:2
- Joshua 6:15-16
- Joshua 6:20
- Joshua 1:3-6
- Joshua 2:8-9
- Psalm 23:4
- Hebrews 11:1

Alluded To or Paraphrased

- Isaiah 43:2 — God's promise to be present through waters, rivers, and fire
- Daniel 3:24-25 — God's presence in the fiery furnace
- Daniel 6:22 — God shutting the lions' mouths in the den
- Jonah 2:10 — the whale spitting Jonah onto dry ground
- Genesis 1:3 — God speaking light into darkness

- 1 Kings 17:8-16 — Elijah and the widow at Zarephath
- Ezekiel 37:1-10 — the valley of dry bones
- John 11:43-44 — Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead
- Isaiah 54:17 — no weapon formed against you shall prosper
- Philippians 4:19 — God supplying all needs according to His riches in glory
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 — anyone in Christ is a new creation
- Philippians 1:6 — God completing the good work He began
- Matthew 24:35 — heaven and earth passing away but God's word enduring

QUOTES:

Faith doesn't wait until it sees the victory. Faith can celebrate because God has already spoken the victory.

Don't measure the effectiveness of your obedience by the immediacy of your results.

Every lap was teaching them discipline every lap was teaching them dependence every lap was teaching them patience every lap was teaching them obedience every lap was teaching them that we don't win because our strategy is better we win because God is with us.

Faith does not deny that the wall does exist. Faith just simply refuses to give the wall more authority than the Word of God. Because the wall does not get the last word. God gets the last word.

See, faith does not ask God to agree with us. Faith brings us in agreement with God.

What is still in your future is already settled in the mind of God.

God's power does not eliminate our participation.

They planted you. They dug a ditch for you and put you in the ground and didn't realize that you were a seed that was still going to grow.

Sometimes God is doing something in you before God would do something for you.

You don't know whether your next lap is the lap when everything you've been believing God for begin to start shifting.

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5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

From Promise to Possession: Taking Your Victory Laps

Day 1: God Has Already Spoken Reading: Joshua 6:1-5

Devotional: Before a single wall crumbled, God declared Jericho already delivered into Israel's hands. This is the nature of divine promise — God speaks in the past tense about what has not yet appeared in your present circumstances. Your wall may still be standing. Your door may still be closed. Your situation may look completely unchanged. But God's Word over your life does not depend on what you can see. Today, resist the temptation to measure God's faithfulness by what your eyes report. What has God already spoken over you? Stand on that word. It is settled.

Reflection: What promise from God are you struggling to believe because circumstances contradict it?

Practical Application: Write down one specific promise God has spoken over your life. Post it somewhere visible and read it aloud every morning this week.

Day 2: Walking When Nothing Has Changed Reading: Hebrews 11:1-6

Devotional: Faith, as described in this passage, is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Israel marched around Jericho's walls day after day with no visible results. Not one brick shifted. Not one gate cracked open. Yet they kept walking. Every lap they completed was an act of trust, not strategy. God was not teaching them military tactics. He was developing their faith, their discipline, their dependence on Him alone. Sometimes God allows the wall to remain standing longer than we prefer because He is doing something in us before He does something for us. Keep walking.

Reflection: In what area of your life has God called you to keep moving even when nothing appears to be changing?

Practical Application: Identify one act of obedience you have delayed because results were not immediate. Commit to resuming that obedience today, trusting that every step moves you closer to your possession.

Day 3: Declare Before the Demonstration Reading: Romans 4:17-21

Devotional: This passage describes how Abraham believed in a God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence things that do not yet exist. Abraham did not waver in unbelief when his circumstances were impossible. He grew strong in faith and gave glory to God. Israel's shout at Jericho was not the cause of the wall's collapse — it was an agreement with what God had already decreed. Your declaration of faith is not wishful thinking. It is your spoken agreement with the Word of God. When fear speaks, faith must answer. When doubt narrates your circumstances, Scripture must have the final word. Speak what God said.

Reflection: What has fear or doubt been saying over your life that needs to be countered with a declaration rooted in God's Word?

Practical Application: Choose three Scripture passages that speak directly to your current struggle. Speak them aloud each day this week as a declaration of agreement with God's Word rather than agreement with your circumstances.

Day 4: God's Presence Is the Real Victory Reading: Psalm 23:1-6

Devotional: The Ark of the Covenant traveled at the center of Israel's procession around Jericho. It represented the very presence of God moving with His people. Israel was not simply marching around a wall. They were marching with God around a wall. This distinction changes everything. The question is never only how large your wall is. The deeper question is who is walking with you around it. The psalmist understood this truth. Even in the valley of the shadow of death, fear is defeated not by the absence of danger but by the presence of God. You are never walking alone. God is with you.

Reflection: How does the awareness of God's presence change the way you face the walls currently standing in your life?

Practical Application: Before facing a difficult situation today, pause and consciously acknowledge God's presence with you. Pray a brief prayer inviting His presence to lead you, just as the Ark led Israel.

Day 5: Possess What God Has Promised Reading: Joshua 1:2-9

Devotional: God told Joshua that every place his foot would tread had been given to him. But the land did not possess itself. Israel had to walk forward. When the wall of Jericho finally collapsed, the people did not stand at the edge celebrating. The text says every man charged straight in and they took the city. God brings walls down so that we can walk into what was waiting on the other side. Possession requires participation. God removes the obstacle, but you must take the step. The open door still requires you to walk through it. The promise still requires you to move toward it. Do not let the wall fall and remain standing outside. Walk in.

Reflection: Is there a promise, opportunity, or calling God has opened for you that you have hesitated to fully step into? What is holding you back?

Practical Application: Take one concrete step today toward possessing what God has promised you. It does not need to be a large step. It simply needs to be forward. Movement is an act of faith. Walk in what God has already given.

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Small Group Discussion Guide

"Victory Laps" | Joshua 6:15-16, 20

From Promise to Possession Sermon Series

OPENING REFLECTION

Before diving into discussion, take a moment as a group to consider this question silently: What is one area of your life where you are currently standing between a promise and a possession?

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SERMON

1. God declares the victory before the victory is visible. In Joshua 6:2, before a single brick fell, God told Joshua that Jericho had already been delivered into his hands. God speaks according to what He has already settled, not according to what we can currently see.

2. Faith follows God's direction even when it does not make sense. The marching strategy God gave Israel was not designed to satisfy their logic. It was designed to develop their faith. Obedience is not measured by the immediacy of results.

3. The declaration comes before the demonstration. Israel shouted before the wall fell. Faith declares what God has said before it sees what God has done. The shout was not a response to the victory. It was an agreement with the promise.

4. Possession requires participation. God brought the wall down, but Israel still had to march forward. God's power does not eliminate our participation. He opens the door, but we must walk through it.

5. Every lap of obedience moves you closer to your possession. Each time Israel marched around Jericho, they were being developed in discipline, dependence, patience, and obedience. No act of faithful obedience is wasted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section 1: The Directions They Followed

1. The pastor noted that God does not always give us an explanation. Sometimes He simply gives us the next instruction. Can you think of a time when God gave you a direction that did not make immediate sense? How did you respond?
2. Israel was told to march in silence for six days. What do you think was the most difficult part of that assignment, the marching or the silence? What does silence in obedience require of us spiritually?
3. The pastor said, "Don't measure the effectiveness of your obedience by the immediacy of your results." Why is this principle difficult to live out in everyday life? What pressures cause us to abandon obedience when we do not see quick results?
4. The Ark of the Covenant was carried in the middle of the procession, representing the presence of God among the people. What does it

mean practically for you to ensure that God is at the center of your daily journey, not just at the beginning or the end of it?

Section 2: The Declaration They Spoke

5. Joshua commanded the people to shout before the wall fell. In your own life, what does it look like to declare victory before you see it? What makes that feel difficult or even unnatural?
 6. The pastor drew a distinction between Israel's shout creating the promise and their shout agreeing with the promise. Why is that difference theologically significant? How does it change the way we think about faith and prayer?
 7. Hebrews 11:1 describes faith as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. How does this definition challenge the way most people wait for God to move before they respond in praise?
 8. The pastor said, "Faith does not deny that the wall exists. Faith simply refuses to give the wall more authority than the Word of God." Is there a wall in your life that you have been giving more authority than God's Word? How can your group help you begin to speak differently about it?
 9. For six days, Israel was silent. On the seventh day, they spoke back to the wall. What are some specific declarations from Scripture that your group can begin speaking over the walls you are each facing?
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Section 3: The Destination They Possessed

10. The pastor pointed out that it is possible to see the wall fall and still be afraid to walk into the city. Have you ever experienced a moment where God opened a door, but fear kept you from walking through it? What held you back?
11. The pastor listed several things God has given us that require our active participation: gifts to develop, visions to build, children to teach, ministries to serve, resources to steward. Which of these resonates most with where you are right now, and what step of participation is God calling you to take?
12. The pastor shared the journey of LIFE Male STEAM Academy, from a word from God in 2014 with no money, no building, no students, and no teachers, to 140 scholars in the current year. What does that story teach your group about the relationship between a God-given vision and the patience required to see it through?
13. The sermon concluded with the reminder that 140 scholars is worth celebrating but is not the final destination. How do you hold the tension between celebrating what God has done and remaining hungry for what He has yet to do?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose at least one of the following to commit to before your group meets again:

Walk in Obedience Without Waiting for an Explanation Identify one area where you have been waiting for God to explain Himself before you

move. Take one concrete step of obedience this week, even if the full picture is not clear.

Speak a Declaration Over Your Wall Write down the specific wall you are facing. Then find at least two Scripture passages that speak directly to that situation. Commit to declaring those passages aloud over your situation every day this week.

Take a Victory Lap in Advance Find one way to praise God this week for a promise He has spoken over your life that has not yet fully manifested. This could be through journaling, worship, sharing your testimony with someone, or an act of generosity done in faith.

Identify Your Next Step of Possession Ask yourself honestly: Has God already opened a door that I have been standing outside of? If so, identify the specific fear or hesitation that is keeping you from walking through it and bring it before the group for prayer and accountability.

Pray With Someone Over Their Wall Partner with one other person in your group this week. Check in on each other mid-week, pray together over the walls you each named, and remind each other of what God has already spoken.

CLOSING PRAYER POINTS

As you close your time together, pray specifically over these areas:

- Boldness to follow God's direction even when it does not make logical sense
- Faith to declare what God has promised before you see the evidence
- Courage to walk through doors God has already opened
- Gratitude for every lap of obedience that God has already honored

- A spirit of expectation for what God is preparing to do in your next season
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MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Joshua 6:2 — God declared to Joshua that Jericho had already been delivered into his hands before a single wall had fallen. Meditate this week on the truth that what is still in your future is already settled in the mind of God.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Consider journaling your responses to these questions throughout the week:

- What promise has God spoken over my life that I have stopped declaring?
- Which lap am I currently on, and what would it look like to keep going?
- Where have I been waiting for the wall to fall before I praise Him?
- What would it look like for me to live this week as though my possession is already mine?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The pastor describes how God declared Jericho already delivered before a single wall fell -- in what areas of your life do you struggle most to trust a promise you cannot yet see evidence of, and what would it look like to act as though that promise were already settled?

2. Israel was commanded to march in silence for six days before shouting on the seventh -- how do you discern the difference between a season of quiet, faithful obedience and a moment when God is calling you to speak and declare boldly?
3. The pastor says that every lap around Jericho was teaching Israel discipline, dependence, patience, and obedience -- what repeated, seemingly unproductive circumstances in your own life might actually be God developing something essential in you before He moves on your behalf?
4. The sermon draws a distinction between faith that waits for visible evidence before celebrating and faith that celebrates because God has already spoken -- which posture more accurately describes your current walk with God, and what would it cost you to shift toward the other?
5. The pastor says God does not always give you an explanation but sometimes gives you only the next instruction -- how comfortable are you with partial information from God, and what makes full obedience difficult when the full picture is withheld?
6. Israel's shout did not create the promise but came into agreement with what God had already decreed -- what is the difference between speaking faith-filled declarations and engaging in wishful thinking, and how do you guard against confusing the two?
7. The pastor observes that it is possible to see a wall fall and still be too afraid to walk into the city -- what walls in your past have come down that you have not yet fully walked through, and what is holding you back from possessing what God has already opened?

8. The sermon emphasizes that God's power does not eliminate our participation -- where in your spiritual life have you been waiting for God to do everything, and what specific step of obedience might God be waiting on you to take?
9. The pastor reflects on walking the property of what would become LIFE Male STEAM Academy for years before it materialized, standing on the promise that every place his feet tread would be his -- what vision or promise has God placed in your heart that requires you to take tangible, visible steps of faith even before the outcome is clear?
10. The sermon closes with the reminder that reaching 140 scholars is worth celebrating but is not the final destination because there are still boys who need to be saved -- how do you guard against settling into a past victory when God is calling you toward a greater possession that still lies ahead?

