

Bay City Wesleyan Church
July 3, 2016

Sunday Morning 07-03-2106

Life is full of new challenges. What new challenge are you facing right now? Yesterday's portion of courage is gone. Where will you find the courage to face your new challenge? God's promises become reality as the Holy Spirit leads and you follow in obedient faith.

<http://bible.com/events/59809>

Meet This Summer's Challenges with Courage

Life is full of new challenges. What new challenge are you facing right now? Yesterday's portion of courage is gone. Where will you find the courage to face your new challenge?

Join us this summer as we uncover new sources of courage in the adventures of Joshua. He faced the challenge of turning wanderers into warriors, sojourners into soldiers, and travelers into trailblazers. Jesus helped him and he will help you. Starts today.

Erik Weihenmayer is blind, yet on May 25, 2001 (Nepal time), he reached the peak of Mt. Everest. Suffering from a degenerative eye disease, he lost his sight when he was 13, but that didn't stop him. On a mountain where 90 percent of climbers never make it to the top — and 165 have died trying since 1953 — Erik succeeded, in large measure because he listened well.

He listened to the little bell tied to the back of the climber in front of him, so he would know what direction to go.

He listened to the voice of teammates who would shout back to him, "Death fall two feet to your right!" so he would know what direction not to go.

He listened to the sound of his pick jabbing the ice, so he would know whether the ice was safe to cross.

When we take a perilous journey, listening well can make all the difference.

Citation: Bill White, Paramount, California; source: Time (6-18-01); © 2016 Christianity Today & PreachingToday.com

Find out more about Eric

Erik Weihenmayer is an American athlete, adventurer, author, activist and motivational speaker, and the only blind person to reach the summit of Mount Everest, on May 25, 2001. He was honored with a Time Magazine cover story.

<http://www.touchthetop.com/>

Joshua listened well as the people of Israel approached Jericho.

Joshua 5:13-15 NET

When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him holding a drawn sword. Joshua approached him and asked him, "Are you on our side or allied with our enemies?" He answered, "Truly I am the commander of the Lord's army. Now I have arrived!" Joshua bowed down

with his face to the ground and asked, “What does my master want to say to his servant?” The commander of the Lord’s army answered Joshua, “Remove your sandals from your feet, because the place where you stand is holy.” Joshua did so.

Joshua 6:1-5 NET

Now Jericho was shut tightly because of the Israelites. No one was allowed to leave or enter. The Lord told Joshua, “See, I am about to defeat Jericho for you, along with its king and its warriors. Have all the warriors march around the city one time; do this for six days. Have seven priests carry seven rams’ horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the horns. When you hear the signal from the ram’s horn, have the whole army give a loud battle cry. Then the city wall will collapse and the warriors should charge straight ahead.”

Joshua failed to listen at all later.

Joshua 9:1-27 NET

When the news reached all the kings on the west side of the Jordan – in the hill country, the lowlands, and all along the Mediterranean coast as far as Lebanon (including the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites) – they formed an alliance to fight against Joshua and Israel. When the residents of Gibeon heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai, they did something clever. They collected some provisions and put worn-out sacks on their donkeys, along with worn-out wineskins that were ripped and patched. They had worn-out, patched sandals on their feet and dressed in worn-out clothes. All their bread was dry and hard. They came to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant land. Make a treaty with us.” The men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you live near us. So how can we make a treaty with you?” But they said to Joshua, “We are willing to be your subjects.” So Joshua said to them, “Who are you and where do you come from?” They told him, “Your subjects have come from a very distant land because of the reputation of the Lord your God, for we have heard the news about all he did in Egypt and all he did to the two Amorite kings on the other side of the Jordan – King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan in Ashteroth. Our leaders and all who live in our land told us, ‘Take provisions for your journey and go meet them. Tell them, “We are willing to be your subjects. Make a treaty with us.”’ This bread of ours was warm when we packed it in our homes the day we started out to meet you, but now it is dry and hard. These wineskins we filled were brand new, but look how they have ripped. Our clothes and sandals have worn out because it has been a very long journey.” The men examined some of their provisions, but they failed to ask the Lord’s advice. Joshua made a peace treaty with them and agreed to let them live. The leaders of the community sealed it with an oath. Three days after they made the treaty with them, the Israelites found out they were from the local area and lived nearby. So the Israelites set out and on the third day arrived at their cities – Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. The Israelites did not attack them because the leaders of the community had sworn an oath to them in the name of the Lord God of Israel. The whole community criticized the leaders, but all the leaders told the whole community, “We swore an oath to them in the name of the Lord God of Israel. So now we can’t hurt them! We must let them live so we can escape the curse attached to the oath we swore to them.” The leaders then added, “Let them live.” So they became woodcutters and water carriers for the whole community, as the leaders had decided. Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said to them, “Why did you trick us by saying, ‘We live far away from you,’ when you really live nearby? Now you are condemned to perpetual servitude as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.” They said to Joshua, “It was carefully reported to your subjects how the Lord your God commanded Moses his servant to assign you the whole land and to destroy all who live in the land from before you. Because of you we were terrified we would lose our lives, so we did this thing. So now we are in your power. Do to us what you think is good and appropriate.” Joshua did as they said;

he kept the Israelites from killing them and that day made them woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the Lord at the divinely chosen site. (They continue in that capacity to this very day.)

Sermon in a Sentence:

When we pray, Jesus gives us the power to go over walls and to see His way clearly.

A new paradigm:

We all lean toward guesstimating our way through this life. A limited number of us set aside enough time to ask Jesus to guide us. But when we pray, the Holy Spirit gives us the power to go over the obstacles we encounter. He also makes sure we see His way clearly.

First Steps:

Everyone must ask.

- Some will open their spirits to Jesus' guidance by singing praise and writing down the thoughts that come to mind as they do.
- Others will listen by reading the Bible, expecting the Spirit to capture their attention with a statement there.
- A few will wake up with an answer to their question.
- Others will find Jesus' answer by talking with other Christians.
- Then everyone will need to compare their thoughts and ideas to Bible and pray for confirmation.

Let's take time now to ask Jesus for directions and to begin listening for his answer to our questions.