

Faith Leads to Action

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 07 September 2025

Preacher: Joe Dugger

[0 : 00] Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, God, I pray as we study your word that you, by your spirit, by your spirit, would bring this word to bear on our lives.

Help us to leave this place transformed by your word. Mold us into the image of your son by your word.

Pray your blessings. Pray for your presence as we read and study together now. And pray this in Jesus' holy and precious name. Amen.

Well, Joshua chapter 11 is the conquest of the northern cities in the land of Canaan. Last week, Joshua chapter 10, we talked about the conquest of the southern kingdom, the southern, I guess, cities.

And remember we talked about how those five kings and kingdoms, they came together, kind of a coalition of armies to oppose Israel, and they didn't stand a chance.

[1 : 13] They died. They lost. A great loss, actually. And now the kingdom of Israel, as they're trying to take it and make it into one, the land of Canaan, what the people have done is they've divided the land in two.

So Joshua and the people coming in through Jericho, and then they headed inward into the land, and then they've taken the southern, and now the land is cut in half, and the northern cities realize what's happening.

They realize what's coming. And so they wanted to get together and fight against Israel as well. So we see another coalition, another group, another army getting together to oppose Israel.

And as we study this passage, what I want you to see, what I really want you to take home, is just an understanding of the centrality of God's word. How God's word motivates us to action.

How God's word is certain and trustworthy. And how God's word transforms our lives. And so as we get started, there's five questions. What I want you to do is I want you to take out a piece of paper and a pen, if you have it, or your phone, you can take it out and make a note on your phone, whatever you want to do.

[2 : 29] I'm going to trust, you know, we're adults, right? So if you pull your phone out, we know we're not texting. Okay? I'm just kidding. I couldn't do this when I was in youth ministry. If I told them to pull their phones out for something, they were never going back.

You know what I mean? But anyways, open up your phone, open up a piece of paper, whatever. I want you to think about five questions. And this is not a test.

Next, this is not something that I'm going to take and read. This is something for you, for you to reflect on and you to pray about and think about. I'm going to ask you five questions, okay? Number one, do you know God's word?

And I know that's a broad question, but what I mean by that is, do you read God's word? Do you meditate on God's word? Do you memorize God's word? Do you know God's word?

You know, at the beginning of this book, when God was commissioning Joshua publicly, he said to him, Joshua chapter 1, verses 7 and 8, Above all, be strong and very courageous to observe carefully the whole instruction my servant Moses commanded you.

[3 : 33] Do not turn from it to the right or the left so that you will have success wherever you go. This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth. You are to meditate on it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it.

For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do. So do you know God's word? And this is not the time for you to, you know, for the church answer, right?

If the answer is no, write no. This is for you. This is right. Reflect on this, okay? Number two, do you trust God's word? And what I mean by that is, do you believe that when you read this book or your,

you know, edition, that you are reading the word of God?

Do you believe that this is God's word? And do you believe God's word? Do you believe what he says? 2 Timothy 3 says, All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

God's word is effective. God's word is reliable. God's word is useful. Do you trust God's word? Number three, do you obey God's word? And I'm not just talking about the easy stuff, right?

[4 : 52] I'm talking about all of it. Do you obey God's word? 1 John 2, 3 through 6 says, This is how we know that we know him. Have you ever wondered, by the way, how do I know that I'm a Christian?

Have you ever wondered that? Been through a season of doubt? How do I know for sure that I'm saved? How can I possibly know that? Well, thankfully, God's word gives us the answer. This is how we know that we know him, if we keep his commands.

It's pretty simple, right? How do I know? How can I trust that I know God, that I'm known by God? Well, do you keep his commands? Do you obey his word? The one who says, I've come to know him, and yet doesn't keep his commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoever keeps his word, truly in him, the love of God is made complete. This is how we know we are in him. The one who says he remains in him should walk just as he walked.

Do you walk like Jesus? Do you obey God's word? Number four, do you see God at work? I'm not saying at your workplace. You go to get water at the water fountain?

[5 : 57] Hey, God. No, no. That's not what I mean. I mean, do you... Thanks for laughing. Do you see God at work in your life? Do you see God at work in the lives of people around you?

Do you see God at work in the lives of your spouse and of your kids? Do you see God at work in Acts chapter 9 when Saul is miraculously converted?

Remember, Jesus appears to him on the road to Damascus, and this great light blinds him, and he hears, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? Well, after that, after he's converted, he goes back to Damascus, and he preaches the gospel.

And then they try to kill him. But there was this person there in Damascus who saw what God was doing in Saul. He saw God at work.

Acts 9, 27 says, So Barnabas saw God at work.

[7 : 00] And he was like, people are scared. They think that Saul's trying to set them up to kill them. But he saw God at work. He recognized that God was at work in Saul's life. And so he brought him to the brothers, to the apostles, and said, look, this is the real deal.

God's at work in his life. And then number five, the last question, do you participate in God's work? Are you serving? Are you going where God is leading?

Are you involving yourself in the ministry and service that God has lined out for you? Do you participate in God's work? A great example of participating in God's work in Scripture is found in Acts chapter 8.

There's Philip. He's one of the six men who were voted in as the first deacons in the church. He's walking on this road outside of Jerusalem, and there's an Ethiopian official, an Ethiopian eunuch from Candace.

And he's reading Isaiah 53, and he has no idea what he's reading. Well, the Holy Spirit of God speaks to Philip, go and join him on his chariot. And so Philip joined in in what God was doing. God was working on this Ethiopian official through his word.

[8 : 07] And then Philip went over there obediently to the Spirit of God, joined him on his chariot, and explained what Isaiah 53 really meant and how it pointed to Jesus, the suffering servant.

And the Ethiopian gave his life to Christ. He asked to be baptized, and so Philip baptized him. And then he disappeared. That's another story. But Philip saw God at work and participated in God's work.

So do you participate in God's work? Where are you serving? Now I want you to hold on to those answers that you wrote down. Again, this is not for me. This is not for anyone else. You know, it's like, think about like school when you're, you know, you're taking a test and you don't want your friend to cheat.

Cover it up, that's fine. This is for you. Hold on to your answers. But as we go through this passage, I want you to, I hope you see that these questions aren't random. But the path to victory, we're just

saying victory in Jesus, the path for victory against enemies that we face in our life is mapped out here in this chapter, in this passage, really throughout the whole story of the conquest. But there's a path for us to live victorious in Christ over enemies that we face. And I want you to see that. The path focuses first on God's word.

[9 : 23] God's word provides the path to victory. So if you remember from when I read through this passage a few minutes ago, the people that Israel was about to fight, this northern coalition of armies, it was massive.

This is probably, I mean, there's good reason to believe this is the biggest army that they'd faced. I mean, they faced some big fights at this point. But this was the biggest.

Joshua 11, 4 and 5 says, They went out with all their armies, a multitude as numerous as the sand on the seashore, along with a vast number of horses and chariots. So that hyperbole there, as numerous as the sand on the seashore, it's the first time that we see this here in this book.

I mean, this is a huge army. And the author wants us to recognize that they faced a massive threat, an intimidating foe. And not only was it the biggest army that they faced, it was also the most technologically advanced army that they faced.

And I know it's funny to think about horses and chariots being technologically advanced. But for that time, they were. Israel was an army of infantry only. They didn't have horses and chariots to take into battle.

[10 : 34] So they stood outnumbered, outmanned, and outweoponed. And these kings joined forces. They unified together with one purpose. It was to attack Israel.

They wanted to kill Israel. Israel, they wanted to stop them from taking the land. Israel faced a daunting enemy. And at the surface, if I were Joshua, and I was looking at that army, I would get nervous.

I don't know about you. I would get nervous. That is a big foe. That is a large enemy. On the surface, victory seems impossible.

So, what do we do when we face impossible enemies? That's the question. What do we do? Do we cower? Do we say, you know what? The southern half of the land is just fine for me.

And in the U.S., that's true. Stay in the south. Amen. But, you know, the southern half of the land is just fine. We don't have to go any further. They would crush us. No, we don't cower.

[11 : 39] We don't back down when we face enemies. But like Israel, we do face big and real enemies. And they may not be armed with chariots and swords drawn and coming at us in the same way.

But we do face big enemies. Enemies that are real. Enemies that are powerful. Enemies that, when we look at them at first glance, we have to ask the question, how am I supposed to win? Right?

Like, we face threats to marriage, our marriages. We face threats to our children and our families.

We face threats to our church and then personal temptations even. Right?

We live in an age that so just, you know, profoundly celebrates a culture of lust. Right? Lust makes, there's no mistake here in Scripture, lust is sinful.

But we live in a culture that just praises and celebrates and encourages lust and just, you know, showers on temptation after temptation. And pride.

[12 : 34] I mean, we live in a culture where if you are prideful, if you're the man with a plan, then you get ahead. Right? We live in a culture that celebrates prideful people. Selfishness. We live in an age where we are told that if any relationship is not beneficial for you at the moment, then you need to cut that person off.

Because you're more important than anyone else. What about worry? There's an enemy of worry. Anybody here on social media?

Raise your hand. Facebook? Instagram? Twitter? That's not called Twitter anymore. You know what I mean. You on social media? Okay. Have you read a, I don't know, scary headline on your social media news feed this week?

Anyone? Yes? No? I mean, it's everywhere, right? Every day there's this fear mongering that happens in our society on social media. Like, watch out for these people.

Watch out for those people. This is coming for our country. This is coming for you. Every single day on social media, things are getting shared. And it's just, it builds this feeling, this tension of worry.

And then if you're not on social media, but you watch the nightly news, I mean, you see, this person was killed here.

[13:45] This war is happening here. I mean, it's just worry and worry. And we know so much information. We're filled with so much worry and fear. How can we overcome these enemies?

How can we beat these threats? How can we be victorious? These subtle enemies threaten our testimony as Christ followers. They threaten our marriages, our families. They want us to submit to the temptation.

They want us to lose. They seek, overall, to destroy our faith and cause us to doubt God's goodness. So how do we, when we face an enemy like Israel, that's massive and intimidating, and it seems like it's going to be impossible to overcome, how do we overcome?

Well, I think there's a road map here. All right? So what you see here, first, in Joshua chapter 1, verse 6, God spoke. Be strong and courageous, for you will distribute the land I swore to their inheritance.

That was 1-6. It's supposed to be 11-6. My bad. But it's cool. It says, be strong and courageous. Wow, what a connection. Verse 6 of chapter 11, the Lord said to Joshua, do not be afraid of them, for at this time tomorrow I will cause all of them to be killed before Israel.

[14:57] You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots. God spoke to Joshua. And when God speaks in his word, when God's word is spoken, it is certain.

It is sure. There's no reason to doubt. There's no reason to fear. Because when God speaks, he is faithful. And so Joshua, he says, God says, don't be afraid of them.

Like, that's intimidating. So the first thing is, when we face a large foe, we have to turn to God's word. Right? God strengthened Joshua by his word. And then what I want you to see, too, is that Joshua listened to God's word.

He didn't just listen and then, like, say, okay, sure, God, whatever you say, but I see them. You know what I mean? No. He listened and acted. He listened and acted. Look at verses 7 and 8. It says, See, Joshua is a good example of not having the let go and let God mentality.

[16:09] Joshua heard the word of the Lord. He knew that the word of the Lord was certain. And then he applied the certainty of God's word to his situation and was obedient and in action.

He had faith. He trusted the word of God. And then he acted in that faith. God calls his people to action. All right? It's not just sit back and let God figure it out.

I trust that God's in control, so I'm not going to do anything. No, no, no. We have to go on the offense. See, this enemy, they had gathered at these waters to attack Israel, and instead of waiting for them to bring the battle to themselves, Israel went on the offense.

They went and attacked the enemy. And God handed them over. So that action is part of obedience. Not only did he listen and act, he fully obeyed.

Look at verse 9. Joshua treated them as the Lord had told him. He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots. Joshua was obedient to the Lord's command.

[17:09] And by the way, I want to notice real quick. Isn't that a little bit odd that God would tell the people of Israel to hamstring these horses, which means cut a tendon in the leg of a horse so it can't be used in war?

Had to look that one up this week. And to burn the chariots? When it seems like it would make sense for the people of Israel to use those in war themselves.

Like, why would God tell them to do? Well, here's the thing. God wanted his people to rely on him for the victory. Not the tools of the enemy.

Right? God wanted his people to trust in himself. Psalm 27, David says, Some take pride or some trust in chariots and others in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

The only source of victory is God himself. Right? We can't take, you know, the tools and tactics of the enemies. I mean, like, here's the thing. If you want to get over your fear of worry, then the first step is not to better yourself.

[18:13] Right? Like, the first step is not to cut out these whatever, you know, relationships. The first step in getting over the fear of worry is turning to God's word and trusting and applying what he says in it.

Joshua was obedient. Verse 12, Joshua captured all these kings and their cities and struck them down with the sword. He completely destroyed them as Moses, the Lord's servant, had commanded.

Joshua 11, 15, Just as the Lord had commanded his servant Moses, Moses commanded Joshua. This is what Joshua did, leaving nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses.

Joshua was remembered, is remembered in Scripture, as a man who did everything that he was supposed to do, what God gave him to do. He was obedient.

Now, he wasn't perfect. Right? We've already talked about some mistakes that Joshua's made along the way. We have the loss at I. Yeah, I. That's how I say it now. We have the deception of the Gibeonites.

[19 : 15] Remember? We have these examples. Joshua wasn't perfect. He's a human being. But he's a really, really good example. He's a good example of how valuable it is in God's sight to be a man or a woman who commits themselves to God's word.

Commit yourself to the word of God. Joshua's life is a model of this vital truth, which is our only hope for success against the enemy is to commit to God's word.

And by the way, I'll just point out real quick that Joshua is an example of Psalm 1. He's an example of Psalm 1, delighting and meditating on God's instruction, which leads to prosperity.

Psalm 1 says, How happy is the one who does not walk in the advice of the wicked or stand in the pathway with sinners or sit at the company of mockers. Instead, his delight is in the Lord's instruction and he meditates on it day and night.

He is like a tree planted beside flowing streams that bears its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. The wicked are not like this. Instead, they are like chaff that the wind blows away.

[20 : 22] Therefore, the wicked will not stand up in the judgment nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to ruin. Joshua's life is an example of the Psalm 1 life.

He committed himself to God's word and everything he did was prosperous. And God had promised him as much at the very beginning of this book. So, let's work through one of these enemies that I mentioned before.

Do you struggle with worry? Do you struggle with fear? Do you live in the age consumed by worry like so many do? Well, how do we know what God says about worry?

We have to look. We have to read God's word. When I ask, Do you know God's word? Do you know what God's word says on the issue of worrying? On the sin of worrying? Matthew 6, 31-34, Jesus says, So don't worry, saying, What will we eat or what will we drink or what will we wear?

For the Gentiles eagerly seek these things and your heavenly Father knows you need them, but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be provided for you. I mean, Jesus gives us the antidote, right?

[21 : 34] The answer. How do we get past the consuming worry we feel? Well, focus on the kingdom of God. Spend all your focus that you can muster, all your attention that you can get on the kingdom of God, on the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 4, 18 says, We do not focus on what is seen, but what is unseen, because what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. We don't focus on these temporal things.

God's word says, to focus on the unseen, focus on Him. So, we have to know God's word to get past the sin of worry. We have to know God's word, but we also have to believe God's word.

Right? Like, this is not just like a self-help mantra. This is life. This is the solution. This is the answer. This is hope. It's not just like, yeah, what Jesus says sounds pretty good.

I'll try to not worry. I'll try to focus on Him. No, no. If you want to get past the sin of worry, the only way to do that is to focus and to trust and believe God at His word.

[22 : 41] Sometimes we say we believe that this is God's word, but we don't really believe God's word. Does that make sense? Like, we believe that this is God's word.

Like, if I were to ask, raise your hand if you believe that the Bible is God's word. Can you raise your hand? Anybody? Alright, you believe that the Bible is God's word? Awesome. Man, you're Baptist. Real quick. That hand drops down faster than anything.

Okay. So, you believe that this is God's word. Okay. So, when it comes to getting past temptation and struggles and sin in our lives, enemies that we face, do you, in those moments, know that this is God's word and know that this is the solution?

That He provides the way out? That He gives you life? Right? It's not just believing that this is God's word and saying, cool, it can take up space on my shelf. That's God's word over there. That's fine. It's, let God's word consume you.

Commit yourself to it. Believe God at His word. So, we trust God's word and we obey God's word. Now, the other thing that I want to point out here in this chapter, so, the commitment to God's word led Joshua to total obedience and to participation in what God was doing.

[23 : 53] And I want you to see also the consequences of rejecting God's word. Okay? Because this is really, really powerfully stated in this passage. There's a principle here which is, in this whole thing, which is obeying God's word and participating in God's work leads to God's blessing, which is rest.

If you look at the very end, verse 23, after this, the land had rest from war. Now, on the flip side, there's another truth that we have to take hold of, which is, if we, if you reject God's word and you oppose God's work, then it leads to God's wrath, which is judgment.

So, Joshua 11, 16 through 20 says, so Joshua took all this land, the hill country, all the Negev, the land of Goshen, the foothills, the Ereba, the hill country of Israel with its foothills, from Mount Halak, which ascends to Seir, as far as Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon at the foot of Mount Hermon. He captured all the kings and struck them down, putting them to death. Joshua waged war with all these kings for a long time. Now, verse 19 and 20, this is, look, this is, my timer here says I have five minutes, so just buckle up, okay?

This is heavy. No city made peace with the Israelites except the Hivites who inhabited Gibeon. All of them were taken in battle. Verse 20, for it was the Lord's intention to harden their hearts so that they would engage Israel in battle, be completely destroyed without mercy, and be annihilated, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[25 : 29] We read that, and sometimes we like to, you know, have this posture of I'm more morally pure than God, and we say, how could God harden their hearts so that they had no choice in the matter?

How could God do that? How could a loving God harden people's hearts so that they have no choice and they're going to face divine judgment? How can a loving God do that?

If He's all-loving, how is that even possible? I want you to understand a few things. Number one, this is God's Word. So we have to take it at face value.

God's Word says that He intended to harden the hearts of this enemy. That is true. It's a hard pill to swallow for some, but it's the truth. God hardens the hearts of those who are going into divine judgment or coming under divine judgment.

But the people of Canaan were not innocent in this at all. I want you to understand the people of Canaan were guilty of sin in the land that God had promised His people for hundreds of years.

[26 : 38] And when I say sin, I don't mean like they lied. I mean grotesque, pagan, idolatrous worship that if I describe some of the things that people have found through study of the Canaanites and their religions, you would be appalled.

I mean, they were guilty of grotesque sins. Not just sins against God, but sins against nature. They were completely guilty of sin. And we know that God punishes sin.

God is a holy God. Okay? We worship a holy God, which means we worship a God who justly punishes sinners. sinners. And we want that, right?

We want to serve a God who punishes sinful people. Right? We absolutely want to. Because if He just, you know, everybody's good. You know, that universalist God.

Everybody's good. Come on in. No big deal. Like, then why are we here? Right? We serve a God who's holy. We serve a God who deserves our worship. He deserves our praise.

[27 : 37] And if we stand in His way, we deserve His wrath because He is holy. And the people of Canaan stood in His way. And they knew God's Word, by the way.

They rejected God's Word. We know that they knew it because Rahab knew what the people of Israel were there for. It wasn't just Rahab, though. The Gibeonites knew what the people of Israel were there for. I mean, Word had gotten around.

They knew the Word of the Lord and they rejected the Word of the Lord. So did God harden the hearts of the people of Canaan so that they would be destroyed or annihilated, as it says? Yes, He did.

But we have to understand that God hardened the hearts of men and women who were never going to submit to Him at all. God didn't harden their hearts before they chose.

They made their decision. They rejected the Word of the Lord. And so God hardened their hearts so that they didn't come to Israel and say falsely, yeah, we're with y'all now.

[28 : 35] Yeah, let's... And just to trick them and deceive them and weasel their way in, God intended to protect His people and part of that was using them as His objects or His tools to pour out His wrath.

But we also see throughout Scripture that this is not a unique moment. Just by the way, Exodus chapter 4, God tells Moses that He's going to harden Pharaoh's heart. Again, Pharaoh's an example of someone who had rejected the Word of the Lord.

There was no getting through to him, right? There was no way that he was going to submit willfully to God and His Word. So, God hardened His heart. And in Romans chapter 1, Paul talks about how people, when they've lived in sin and rejected God's Word so much, so long, God literally hands them over, gives them over to their sinful passions.

And by the way, if you live in a place where you don't feel any sense of conviction or guilt or remorse or anything like that for your sin, might I suggest that that is God's judgment?

Being handed over to sinful passions, sinful lives that oppose God's Word, that is God's judgment? And what waits is even worse?

[29 : 48] So, when we read about the Canaanites and how God hardened their hearts, you have to understand this is God giving them up to what they asked for. They rejected Him.

And so, God gave them up to their sin. So, if God hardens a heart, it's because that person rejected Him and would never freely submit to Him. God is perfect in holiness and His wrath is an extension of His holiness.

A just God will punish sin. And God is patient. That's the other thing we have to see here. They had 400 years and they rejected the Word of the Lord for 400 years.

God is patient. And that same truth, by the way, applies still today. Right? There's a reason we don't stand under divine judgment when we reject Christ before we accept Christ in this life.

Right? Because God is patient. 2 Peter 3.9 says, The Lord does not delay His promise as some understand delay. That's talking about Jesus coming back. But is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

[30 : 50] So, here's the thing. There is a consequence of rejecting God's Word and opposing His work. And that is divine wrath, punishment, separation, separation, eternal death. But, if you're still alive and can still hear the Gospel presented, I want you to see it's not too late.

God is patient. So, if you stand opposed to God's Word and you know that, in your heart, I do not believe in Jesus as the Son of God. If you believe that, well, here's the thing.

It's not too late. The punishment for rejecting the Word of God and opposing the work of God is eternal death. It is way worse than what these Canaanites faced.

It's eternal. But there's hope. So, I want you to see also the blessing of committing to God's Word. The blessing of committing to God's Word.

If you believe in Jesus Christ, you have to understand that His Word doesn't just, it's not just like pretty good to have, it is your life, it is the authority in your life, and it should lead you to action.

[31 : 57] Obeying God's Word and participating in God's work leads to God's blessing, which is rest. And I want you to see that this participation, this committing to God's Word is not a quick, you know, momentary commitment.

It is a enduring commitment. Verse 18 says, Joshua waged war with these people, with all these kings, for a long time. This was not a short battle. This was about five to seven years that it took for him to take the land.

But Joshua endured because he trusted and committed himself to the Word of God. When we face enemies in life, we can't just, when we finally get past one level of temptation, be like, alright, I made it, I'm good.

No, we can't give up. I mean, there's this great example. Okay, so in 2009 NBA Finals, the Los Angeles Lakers were playing the Orlando Magic. The Lakers went up two games to none.

And maybe you'll remember this, maybe you won't. But in the post-game press conference, after they went up two games to none, Kobe Bryant, he's not alive anymore, but Kobe Bryant, he was sitting at the podium and he looked mad.

[33 : 06] And this reporter asked him, like, Kobe, why aren't you happy, man? You're up 2-0. And he's like, so? The guy's like, you're up 2-0. Job's not finished. That was his mentality, right?

It wasn't, I've got these two victories, let's celebrate, pop the champagne and, you know, have fun in the locker room. It wasn't celebration time. He was focused. Job's not finished.

Joshua stayed focused, right? Joshua knew the job wasn't finished when they had victories, when they burned the city of Hazor. That wasn't it. They had more to take, more to conquest, more victories to win.

So, faithfulness, commitment to God's word, is not a short-term commitment. It is a call to lifelong endurance. And the longer you stay faithful, I want you to see this, the longer you stay faithful, the smaller the enemies, the smaller the foes appear.

Okay? So, verses 21 and 22 says, at that time, Joshua proceeded to exterminate the Anakim from the hill country. Okay? The Anakim. The Anakim. And just so you know, the Anakim were the giants in the land, the descendants of the Nephilim, who freaked the spies out so badly that they came back to Moses and the people at Kadesh Barnea and said, we cannot go into that land.

[34 : 20] They will crush us. We cannot, because the people are stronger than we are. This is Numbers 13. So they gave a negative report to the Israelites about the land they had scouted. The land we passed through to explore is one that devours its inhabitants, and the people we saw in it were men of great size.

We even saw the Nephilim there. The descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim. To ourselves, we seemed like grasshoppers, and we must have seemed the same to them. Remember that? The ten spies? They were terrified of these people. Well, after Joshua and the people had fought and seen the Lord give them victory, and then they fought and saw the Lord give them victory, and they remained committed to God's word the entire time, the longer that they fought, the endurance that they built, led them to this place where suddenly the Anakim weren't as big of a threat as they thought.

And they were able to go and fight and wipe them out for the most part. Some of them remained. By the way, there was a really famous person who came from Gath about 500 years later.

Anyone have a guess on who that might have been? Who? Did you say, what? Goliath. Goliath. Yeah. He was a descendant of the Anakim.

[35 : 32] Yeah. We can talk back and forth sometimes. It's fine. Jennifer does it. So we're good, right? So, yeah. So, anyways. They didn't wipe out all of them because Goliath would come later, but David took care of that issue.

Anyways. The point is, the longer they stayed faithful and committed to God's word, the more endurance they built as they fought faithfully, the stronger they grew in their hope and in their confidence in the Lord.

And this is the process of sanctification. The longer we remain committed, the more battles we see overcome by the work of God, by the faithfulness of God, the more victory we experience, the stronger we feel in our faith in God.

And the enemies and the temptations and the struggles that we face, they seem so much smaller I mean, like some of you who have been faithful Christ followers for so long, you know this is true. You know the life-giving nature of just years of trusting the Lord faithfully and patiently and seeing Him give victory. And I want you to see, too, that Joshua, and I promise I'm wrapping up, Joshua is just an example.

[36 : 50] And he's not perfect. Joshua points ahead to someone who's even better. In Hebrew, his name was the same, but we call him Jesus. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was faithful and committed to the Word of God.

John 17, Jesus, during the high priestly prayer, he says to the Father, I have glorified you on the earth by completing the work you gave me to do. So Joshua, who completed the work that God had for him, he's just an example.

He points us to Jesus. The peace that the people of Israel had in the land, verse 23, the rest, that was a short-lived rest.

If you know the history of this nation, they're going to go through the period of the judges. It's going to be tumultuous. Then they have the kingdoms, and boy, is that up and down. I mean, this rest is short-lived, but the work that Christ accomplished gives eternal rest, enduring rest, peace with God that is never going away.

Jesus is the perfect one who completed the work of God, and by his grace and through his power, we also can live faithfully, committed to the Word of God.

[38 : 11] So, we're going to close. We're going to sing a song. We're going to have a time where we sing and we reflect on the Word of God, but I want you to think about that piece of paper that you wrote down earlier, alright, or on your phone or whatever it is.

Pull it out, look at your answers, think through it. Maybe you realize that you don't know God's Word as well as you should. Or maybe you struggle to trust and obey God's Word.

Or maybe you've been focused on the enemies that you face and trying to beat them yourselves instead of turning and relenting and trusting the grace of God in his Word.

The good news for us is that our hope is not in our ability to answer these questions perfectly. You know, yes, I know God's Word. Yes, I trust God. Our hope is in Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith.

Hebrews 12 says that we set aside every weight and encumbrance, every sin that holds us back, and we look ahead to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

[39 : 15] If you want hope and victory in life over enemies that you face, sinful temptations, personal struggles, physical ailments, and I'm not saying like health and wealth, you're going to be great.

I'm saying if you want victory and rest, the only way to find that is in the person of Jesus Christ. And if you stand opposed to God's Word, you have to see that the hope for you is limited.

It runs out when this life ends. The only hope you have for eternal life is with Jesus Christ by putting faith in Him.

So let those questions be a reminder to you. Think through how you can live out faithfully the hope that you have in Christ.

And if you've never trusted Jesus, let this piece of paper or note on your phone be a reminder of your great need to ask Him for the forgiveness of your sins and to have the hope that He offers.

[40 : 18] Let's pray together and we'll stand and we'll sing. God, thank You for Your Word. Thank You for the victory that You have won, Jesus, over sin and death.

Thank You that there is life in You. We love You. We trust You. We praise You and pray now that Your Word would sink deeply into our hearts. We pray all these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.