

Joshua Series #1: Possessing Our Possessions

by Richard Siple

The sermon emphasizes the importance of believing in and actively possessing the promises of God for a victorious Christian life.

Duration: 46:24

Scripture: Joshua 1:7

Topics: "Faith And Action", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker introduces a unique series on understanding how God has created each individual and their role in the world of work. The series will also touch on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not missing this series, especially for young people and those in midlife. The sermon then transitions to the Book of Joshua, where the Israelites are on the brink of entering the promised land. The speaker highlights the challenges they face, including high-walled cities and giants, but emphasizes that God has already given them the land and they must step out in faith to possess it.

Transcript

You have seen various advertisements in your bulletin about not just the one series, but the two this morning, beginning with the book of Joshua and going on through in the morning services in the book of Joshua, possessing our possessions, how to live the Christian life and have victory and success. But Sunday night, this is a very unique series, Fit or Misfit. If Gordon hadn't been away this weekend, I would let him promote this one.

He is very excited about this one. Having gone through it once, you would think that maybe he didn't want to go through it again, but he's looking forward to going through it. And so I don't know how to, you know, it's hard to promote your own sermons, but this is a very unique series.

And this is not just a series on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. That'll be dealt with before it's finished. But this is a very careful biblical approach to how God has created each and every human being and how they fit into the whole matter of work in this world and how God has made us to fit and how it blesses us and blesses the people around us.

This is extremely important. I would say if you're a young person or even in midlife, up to midlife, you must not miss this series. If you have not been in the habit of coming on Sunday nights while this series is on, just do whatever you have to do and get here on Sunday nights for this series, okay? This can change your life completely.

It can change your marriage. It can change your relationship with your children. I wish I had heard someone preach this series before I brought up my children.

It would have made a difference in how I raised my children. This is extremely important material. So make sure that you are part of this series which begins tonight.

Well, we did have a good summer. And in July, I was up in Saskatoon speaking in a school on revival and prayer and enjoyed that, been doing that for the last number of years in different places. Last year, we had two of them.

This year, there were two of them. I was teaching in the one in Saskatoon. And then in August, our son came to visit us from Ohio and they are in the process of adopting a little girl who is six years old.

And we had met her at Christmas, this last Christmas, and had a great time at their home with her. And she accepted grandma and grandpa. But anyway, my son brought her alone and flew and brought her and spent a week with us.

And he has more courage than I thought he had. And he did a great job. And we had an absolutely marvelous time.

And grandma just happens to have a picture of her that I took while she was there, if you wanna see it. But that was a great blessing to us. And we enjoyed that.

Now we're ready to get back to work and trusting that God will bless us together. We're going to take the next few weeks to let the Old Testament Book of Joshua speak to us about how to live the Christian life and to live it successfully. Why should we study the Old Testament to learn about Christianity? Well, it's a very simple biblical answer.

In 1 Corinthians 10, the first six verses, let me read those to you. The apostle Paul said, "For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea." Now you're aware of that. When they left Egypt, they were under this cloud that led them.

And then they went through the Red Sea and God parted the waters of the Red Sea. And they went down into the sea and went through the sea to escape from Egypt and the terrible bondage they were under. They were all baptized.

That's a Baptist church, isn't it? Yeah, it is. Okay. They were all baptized into Moses, who was a type of Christ, in the cloud and in the sea.

They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Clear, isn't it? Now, these things occurred as examples to us. So there it is, clear as it can be.

The Old Testament saints were saved through Jesus Christ, the same as we are saved. There's not two ways to be saved, the Old Testament way and the New Testament way. Right? I mean, no one is saved any other way.

There's none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me. So Christ is the only way of salvation.

And they look forward to his sacrifice on Calvary, and we look back to his sacrifice on Calvary, but we're all saved through Christ. We're all saved by grace, and we're all saved by faith. That includes the Old Testament saints, as well as the New.

They were not saved by keeping the law. They could not be saved by keeping the law. They never did keep the law.

They were saved, if they were saved at all, by God's grace. And so what happened to them, God says, is an example for us. So when we study the Old Testament, we find the New Testament truths illustrated in a very physical and graphic way to help us to understand them.

Now, let me take just a moment to give the setting. I know you're familiar with it. The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years, and it was now time for God to bring them out.

And I'm not going over the whole story of Moses, but God called Moses from the backside of the desert and brought him back to Egypt. He was now 80 years old, and God had called him to lead them out of Egypt. And you know how God brought all the plagues upon Egypt, and brought them out with great power, and set them free.

Now, he intended for them to go straight into the promised land. And the promised land is not a type of heaven, because brother, when we get to heaven, there won't be any giants to fight, or any failures, or any sin to deal with. Amen? They are in heaven, and we're going to the same heaven.

Now, that's, I want you to get that straight. So the promised land was that promised existence as God's people. And they were meant to come out of the world, and out of slavery, and out of bondage, and to be set free, and to be baptized under Moses in the cloud, and in the sea, and to come through.

Of course, that night when the judgment fell, they were under the blood, and they were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. And they were meant to go right straight into the promised land, and live there in victory as God's people. And that's what God intends for us as soon as we are born again.

As soon as we are forgiven of our sins, set free by God's grace, born of the spirit, delivered from the hand of Satan, brought out of the life of bondage in the world, God means for Christians to go directly into a victorious Christian life. Do they? Well, some do, some go farther than others. But you know what happened.

They sent out the 12 spies, and they came back, and two of them said, hey, God will be with us, let's go. And 10 of them said, no, they have great cities with high walls, and they have giants in the land, and we felt like grasshoppers there. And they had a grasshopper complex.

And by the way, Irwin Lutzer wrote a good book on that, get it and read it sometime, the grasshopper complex. They said, we look like grasshoppers to them and to ourselves, and there's no way we can do it. And they were about ready to stone Moses and Aaron, and it was only Joshua and Caleb that believed that they could do it.

And so God said, all right, you're not gonna do it. And they wandered around the desert for 40 years. I hope none of you have been wandering around for 40 years, but there are Christians who are born of God who kind of found around for 40 years, sometimes 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, don't seem to get anywhere.

And I would encourage you, if you've been in the wilderness, I wanna encourage you that during this series of messages, God wants to show you how you can go into the land of victory. Okay, I said, okay. It's impolite to sit and stare when someone asks you a question.

You forget that over the summer. So now here they are, they've gone all the way around and all of those adults have died in the wilderness. And now here they are about 3 million people and they're here right on the edge of this wonderful land that God has promised to give them as his people.

And now here they are about to go in. And of course, the land is still full of these high walled cities and giants and everything. It's even worse than it was 40 years before.

And they're sitting there waiting to go in. And that's the picture as you begin with Joshua. Moses has died, the archangel has buried him.

And now Joshua has been called to lead them and they're ready finally to go in to the land of promise. So I want to begin this morning by reading from Joshua chapter one, the first nine verses. Joshua one, the first nine verses.

After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' assistant saying, Moses, my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people to the land which I am giving to them, the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have already given you.

Very interesting, he said, your foot will tread, that's future, but I have already given it to you. As I said to Moses, from the wilderness in this Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites into the great sea toward the going down of the sun, that's the Mediterranean, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

Only be strong, now he's gonna say this over and over, be strong, only be strong and very courageous that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses, my servant commanded you, do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left that you may prosper wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night. So as to be in your mouth, as to be in your mind, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.

You're to say it, to think it and to do it. There it is. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid nor be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Now that's a tremendous challenge and a tremendous call.

God is saying, I have given you this land, now go in and take it. It's yours, it's not that I will give it to you, I have given it to you. I've already given it to you, I promised it to you long ago.

It is yours and even though you haven't set foot in it yet, it's yours already. Now just step out and go in and take it because I have given it to you. And this is very encouraging, you know, because God is saying that to us this morning as Christians and God is saying that to this church.

I tell you, this is a very exciting time in the history of this church. And you know, I'd like to get you so stirred up and so excited that when David lands here, you'll be already running full tilt. Because God is calling this church to step out and to move into this city and to do everything that God intends for it to do.

And there are great days that lie ahead. Are there giants? Sure. Are there high walls? Yes.

Are there problems? Of course. But is God bigger than those problems? Amen. He is.

And so there's a wonderful time ahead. Many years ago, the younger son of a certain family in England disgraced his name and family by outrageous conduct. The family told him that if he would leave the country, he would receive a check each quarter that would permit him to live in some comfort, but that he would be refused all income if he remained in England.

They kicked him out. They said, get out of the country. We'll take care of you financially.

If you stay here, we'll cut you off. He emigrated to Canada. Well, we kind of are very gracious to whoever comes.

And he received his check every three months. He spent it within a few days. And the rest of the time, he lived the precarious existence of a semi-bum.

He drifted down to the United States after making arrangements for the Canadian bank to send him his money at a certain time and place. Now, that must have been way back when the exchange was the other way. In the meantime, his father died suddenly and his older brother was killed in an automobile accident all within a matter of hours.

His father and his brother died within a few hours of each other. By British law, he became mayor to the title, the castle and the estates, but he had dropped from sight in the United States and could not be traced. His wife left England, arrived in New York and undertook the search for her husband.

He had just drawn a remittance and supposedly would not be heard from for another three months. The best detectives were employed to locate him. And within a few days, he was traced to a small town not far from Chicago where he was eking out a precarious existence as an elevator operator in a cheap hotel.

Now, I want you to get the picture because this is some Christian, you know. Please get this picture. His position, his position by right, was that of a noble Earl of England with access to the house of Lords.

That was his position. His condition was that of an underpaid starveling in a cheap job at a Midwestern town. His wife flew to meet him and flew him back to New York.

It was then that the newspapers discovered the story and printed the details. The man was in New York in the process of acquiring a new wardrobe. He was awaiting passage on the steamship that was to take him back to his ancestral castle, his estate and his new life.

His position was one thing. His condition or experience was different. My friends, I want to say to you this morning that in Jesus Christ, God has given you all things that pertain to life and godliness.

Everything, it's yours, it's yours. If you're born again, the Holy Spirit has taken you and placed you, baptized you into the body of Christ, submerged you into the body of Christ. You are now a member of the body of Christ and Christ by the Holy Spirit has come to live within you and you are a child of the King.

You are a person of royal blood. All that God is and all that God has is yours. Why not take it? Why not take it? It's yours.

I have a scripture pasted in the flyleaf of my Bible. It's one of my favorites, 2 Corinthians 1, 19 and 20. Listen, for the son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you was not yes and no, but in him, it has always been yes.

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are yes in Christ. And so through him, the amen, that is so be it, is spoken by us to the glory of God. He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also along with him freely give us what? All things, all things.

For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come, all are yours and you are Christ's and Christ is God's, hallelujah. How much are you willing to take? How much are you willing to have? How much are you willing to experience? How much are you willing to enjoy? It's all yours in Christ. But how do we possess our possessions? How do we take advantage of it? Three things quickly.

Number one, we have to believe what God says about it. Do you believe it? Do you believe it? We say, well, wait a minute, that may be so for you, after all, you're a preacher. Or that may be so for Dave Martin or it may be so for these missionaries or it may be so for an evangelist or somebody else, but I mean, after all, God didn't mean for everything that he has to be my experience.

Why not? You say, well, I'm not worthy. Well, join the crowd. Who is worthy? Not one of us.

Even the apostle Paul said, I don't count myself to have arrived. Said, I'm still pressing on, reaching out to take a hold of everything God has in mind for me, for which he's taken a hold of me. And we have to come to a place where we believe what God says.

We need to read these scriptures, meditate on these scriptures, repeat these scriptures with our mouths and think of them in our minds and put them into our hearts until we say, look, this is true. This is the truth of God. 2 Peter 1, verses two to four.

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Now that means just normal human life. You say, is God interested in my normal human life? Yes, he is.

And my heart's been going out to these people in the Southern United States. I pastored a little church right down on the Gulf Coast. The first revival crusade ever held was in Biloxi, Mississippi, where there's nothing but pieces of wood.

And we lived there in that area. And my heart goes out to them. And I've been praying, Lord, somehow in the midst of all this, turn their hearts toward you somehow.

In their utter desperation and total loss and emptiness, turn their hearts toward you. Because if they cry out to you, you will meet their need. Even though it seems impossible human-wise, yet all things are possible with God.

And he says that God has given us all things that pertain to life, just normal human life and godliness. Our human life in this world and our spiritual life, godliness, whatever has to do with our Christian life. God has given all things to us, whatever we need, they are from him.

And then he goes on. He is the one who has called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceeding great and precious promises. Exceedingly great and precious promises.

That through these, you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world. God said to Joshua, I've already given it to you. I have given it to you.

It is yours. And then in the New Testament, God keeps saying to us, I have given you everything you need in Christ. For my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in Christ Jesus.

That's God's promise. So you have to believe it. Do you believe it? Oh, I hope you believe it.

When Caesar once gave a man a great reward for service, the man exclaimed, this is too great a gift for me to receive. But replied Caesar, it is not too great a gift for me to get. So the smallest promise in God's word is too great for me to deserve.

Yet the most magnificent promise is not too great for the King of Kings to bestow. It is God who is giving. The infinite God whose resources are infinite.

And I was just saying to God last night, I was saying to him again this morning, Lord, I don't deserve any of your blessing, but I need it, right? I don't deserve it, but I need it. I can't plead my goodness. I can't plead my faithfulness.

I can't plead anything on my own account, except that you said I can have it. And so I don't deserve it, but he says it's yours. So we have to believe what he says.

Number two, we have to rely on God's presence and power in our lives. God said, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. He promised Joshua over and over that he would be with him.

And then look with me at Joshua 5. I hope you have your Bibles open to Joshua this morning. And I hope you read through it and prepare for these series. Joshua 5, verses 13 to 15.

And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a man stood opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, are you for us or for our adversaries? This is a man of courage. So he said, no, but as commander of the army of the Lord, I have now come.

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, what does my Lord say to his servant? Then the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, take your sandal off your foot for the place where you stand is holy. And Joshua did so. The captain is the reincarnate Lord.

Before he became incarnate in human flesh, here he is leading his people. And he said, I will be with you. I will be with you.

Joshua 23.10 says, one man of you shall chase a thousand for the Lord your God is he who fights for you as he has promised you. He said to Joshua, no man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Are there people in your life that are defeating you? Claim God's promise.

He said, look, I'm the infinite God and I have promised to be with you all the way. God and one man are a majority. If God is with me, I have nothing to fear.

Matthew 28, 18 to 20. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.

And look, I am with you always even to the end of the age. And America says they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them. The almighty God, not only must we believe what he has said, but we must recognize and rely on his presence in our lives continually.

Pompey boasted that with one stamp of his foot, he could rouse all Italy to arms. But God by one word of his mouth can summon the inhabitants of heaven, earth and all the worlds to do his bidding. Jesus said in Matthew 26, 53, do you think I cannot call on my father and he will at once put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels? Well, it only took one angel to kill 185,000 men in one night in Sennacherib's army.

And Jesus said, I could have 12,000 angels just like that. They could have destroyed the world and the solar system. We get so afraid.

What are we afraid of? When we have the almighty God who has said, I am with you, I am with you, I am within you. Trust me, trust me. First Corinthians one, one of my favorite passages 26 to 31, because I think I fit in there.

For you see your calling brethren that not many wise, you say, well, that sure fits you. According to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen and the things which are not to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence, but of him you are in Christ Jesus who became for us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption that as it is written, he who glories, let him glory in the Lord.

My wife and I have some friends by the name of Runji, Reverend Al Runji and his wife. He is a Jew who was converted as a young man. He has been a pastor for many, many years.

God has used him in a mighty way. He is so blind that if he were speaking this morning and reading these scriptures, he would have it like this. He can see, but he has to read all of his scripture notes and everything like that.

He has a way about him that people laugh at him. But I tell you, God has used him mightily as a pastor and he's built a number of great churches and God is using him in a mighty way now among the Jewish people. When I was in Bible college, I took Greek, a very little of it, as much as I had to.

Bill Cutts was in my first class and then I went back to take a little more and he was in one of the highly advanced classes that I didn't have anything to do with. And Bill Cutts was totally crippled physically. So his legs were twisted, his arms were twisted, his head was over on the side, his face was twisted, he was almost blind, he had to hold everything up, read it with a magnifying glass.

And he decided he wanted to go to the mission field. Crazy Bill. But Bill was serious and he became such an expert in Greek while he was at school, same time I was there, that when the teacher couldn't be there, he taught the class.

And he went on to seminary and he became an absolute expert in Greek and he was past the age the Christian Missionary Alliance would not send a missionary out past that age, but he was so good in Greek that he finally prayed and talked them into it and they let him go to the Baleen Valley in Indonesia to translate the Bible into those languages, which he did. Not only that, he became a great man of prayer and he prayed down the blessing of God and a great revival came in that area where he was working and thousands of people came to Jesus Christ and were converted. And Bill Cutts, if you were to see him, you would say, there is no way he could ever do anything for God.

But I tell you, he has become one of the giants for God and in heaven, he'd probably be in the front row. God is not limited by our limitations. He is God, he doesn't need what we can do, he can do it.

So we have to understand and recognize his presence. Finally, we have to live by God's word. We have to believe what God says about our possessions.

We have to believe and we have to live by God's word. I think that's a great passage, verses seven and eight that we read to you this morning and I wanna read them again to you. Only be strong and very courageous that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded, do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left that you may prosper wherever you go.

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate in it day and night that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success. We need to fill our minds and our hearts and our lives with God's word. We need to keep saying what God says.

We need to keep thinking God's thoughts, what God thinks and we need to keep doing what God does. Say his words, think his thoughts, do his deeds. That's what God has called us to do and we need to do it.

And I am really impressed with that statement. Don't turn to the right hand or to the left. You know what one of our big problems is detours, right? We know what we ought to do.

We know what God has said for us to do. We know what his word says, but we turn just a little to the right or to the left. You know, we don't just keep going straight ahead walking in the word of God.

We think it's okay to go a little off this side or a little off this side or a little different here and God won't mind, but it keeps us from the victory that God wants us to have. The preacher was driving out in the country and he saw a farmer walking along with his dog and the preacher was driving a pickup truck and

he thought the man was from his church and he thought he'd pick them up. So he stopped and invited them to get in and the guy said, sure.

And he put the dog in the back of the pickup truck and got in. The farmer looked fine, but the dog looked terrible. He flopped down, his tongue was hanging out, his sides were heaving, he was panting.

He looked like he was totally exhausted. And the preacher said, long walk. And the farmer said, no, too many detours.

Some of us, when we get to heaven in terrible shape, God is gonna say, long walk. Say no, too many detours, Lord. That's what wore me out.

Right? Right? The reason you laughed is because you are guilty of it. It belongs to us, it's ours. Everything in Christ belongs to us.

God says you can have it, but we're not really taking it because we don't really believe it and we're not really walking in God's word. Finally, we need to do it step-by-step. God said, every place that the sole of your foot, every place you put your foot down is yours.

In fact, I've already given it to you, but you're gonna have to take it step-by-step. You're gonna have to go into that land and you're gonna have to walk through that land and march through that land and take it step-by-step. It's yours, I've already given it to you, but to enjoy it and to live in it, you're going to have to take it step-by-step.

You can't take it all at once. You won't take the whole land in one day. Wouldn't it be nice if there was a Christian experience that would fix me this afternoon? Have you ever wished that? Well, when I was a young pastor, I heard some preaching like that, you know, that there was a Christian experience that would fix you.

Well, you could have perfect, complete, total, sinless sanctification by an experience. And I've known a lot of people since that time. I heard, I was working as a youth worker in a summer camp and a man stood up and said, thank God I haven't sinned for 40 years.

And I was just a young guy and I didn't say it very loud, but I said, you just did, you lied. You know, I mean, no. So you're not going to take it all in one day, but I tell you what, you can start today.

You can take the first step in obedience to God and believe in God today. Something you know that God wants you to do that you're not doing. Someplace you know where you're being disobedient.

Someplace where you know there's sin that needs to be confessed and put away. Something God has told you to do, you're not doing it, you need to start. I mean, you can start today, taking the first step into the land of blessing.

Claiming what God has given you, believing him, thanking him for his presence and strength to help you to do it and taking that first step in obedience to walk into the land. In this book, feet are a great thing. They're a great thing.

Joshua 3, 13 to 17. As soon as the priests who carry the Ark of the Lord, now at the Jordan River, of all the earth, the Lord of all the earth, set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap. So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the Ark of the

Covenant went ahead of them.

Now the Jordan was at flood stage all during harvest, yet as soon as the priests who carried the Ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. In this series, I have another message, getting your feet wet. It piled up in a great heap.

As soon, they had to walk into the water. They had to step out and take a step and begin to go. Joshua 6, 1 to 5. Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites.

No one went out, no one came in. Then the Lord said to Joshua, see, I have delivered Jericho into your hands along with its king and its fighting men. March around the city once with all the armed men.

Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry the trumpets. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times.

That's fascinating. God said, every place you put your foot, I've already given it to you, but you have to step out and take it. They had to step into the water.

They had to march around Jericho. They had to march into the land. And he said, it's yours now, but you'll only get to enjoy it as you step out and take it.

And that's the challenge of this great book. Suppose, I'm almost done, sit tight. Suppose a man should row all the boiling and blazing day round and round a beautiful schooner in the harbor.

The next day you should see him like a magnified fly, creeping up and down the mass and spars and examining the rigging. Then you would ask him what he was doing and he should answer, I have heard that this ship is a fast sailor and I want to look at it and see. Could he ever find out in this way? No, let him weigh anchor and spread the canvas and take the wind and bear away if he would know how she sails.

So if a Christian would learn his true state, let him not roll round and round the hull of his self-consciousness and creep up and down the mass and spars of his feelings and affections, but let him spread the sails of faith in God's promises and bear away on the ocean of obedience. Then he should know whether he'd be a dull or a fast sailor. One thing I have enjoyed very much on Vancouver Island are the eagles.

I'm fascinated by eagles. I love to watch them. We have friends, she's part of the church in Campbell River and the eagles come and build a nest right out the corner of her backyard every year and have their little ones.

When an eagle wants to teach its little ones to fly from the nest high on the top of a broken tree, it prods one of the little eaglets with its beak and noses it out of the nest. It tries to hang on, it screeches, but it gets pushed out. The eagle starts to fall and the great eagle flies underneath, puts its wings out, catches the little one on its back and flies high into the air.

Then it turns sideways and down falls a little eaglet, fluttering, squawking frantically. Meanwhile, the eagle circles around the eaglet and underneath it, the eagle catches the eaglet on its wings and carries the eaglet up in the air again. It dumps the eaglet out again and again, letting it flutter down farther and farther at times within a few feet of the ground.

Again, the great eagle catches the little one on its back and up they go again. The little eagle is learning to fly. Way up there in the sky, the great eagle will bow over again and again and little by little, the eaglet will learn to fly.

The eagle knows when the eaglet is tired and so spoons the eaglet into the nest, noses out the next one and starts all over again. God says, that's the way I take care of you. Did you know that? Deuteronomy 32, 11.

Like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, he spread his wings and caught them, he carried them on his pinions. But someone says, I don't like to have my nest stirred up. I like everything cozy and tidy and I just like to stay in my baby ways the way I am.

But God loves us and that's why he won't let us stay as a baby. He wants us to learn to fly. And sometimes we have to be carried aloft and may have a horror of the heights, but it must come if I am to grow.

Some are slack to possess their inheritance, but we have his promises, his presence, his power, his word. What are we going to do? In Joshua 13, one, we read when Joshua was old and well advanced in years, the Lord said to him, you are very old and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over. And I said, yes, I hear you.

What about me and what about you? Choose now this day whom you will serve. Are we going to go in all the way? Do I want to go all the way with God? Then I need to take the first step and may God help us to do it. Let us bow in prayer.

Father, we thank you for your word and what it says to our hearts. I pray that your Holy Spirit will bring forth fruit in the lives of some who have heard your word this morning and that their life will be absolutely changed as they begin to step out for God. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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