

Live Up to Your Capacity

Text: Joshua 13:1b NASV

I have been attending church for 69 years and I have never heard anyone say, "Well, my favorite verse in the Bible is Joshua 15:23 which reads: "Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan" the reader might say, WHAT in the world does that have to do with me and my spiritual life? I've already had my children so I don't need any more names for boys

Well, I admit it's not very interesting reading. But I do agree with the apostle Paul who wrote these words to his understudy Timothy. "Everything in the scriptures is God's word." All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. II Timothy 3:16 CEV contemporary English version. The first 12 chapters of Joshua are filled with dramatic war stories and then the reader finds oneself dumped into geography and land surveys.

But I'm certain if a lawyer called you and said, "You have a relative who died and has named you as one of the beneficiaries of his estate. Are you interested in the details? You bet I am. How much will I get? Could you send me an inventory of possessions? When can I get it?"

Well chapters 13-19 of Joshua were words to a people who had for over 400 years no land of their own. Now they get a new address. Believe me their hearts were pumping. They listened to all these names to see if their family name was included. Their hearts were thankful to Yahweh for assigning them property. These chapters are a precursor to us who have believed in Jesus. By faith in Jesus we have been given phenomenal promises. *No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.* **I Corinthians 2:9** [The communicator can choose other texts that show the riches that the believer has in Jesus.]

There is a difference between INHERITANCE and POSSESSION. I read a story about a family who made their way across the ocean in a ship. They frugally ate the crackers and fruit they brought on board. They barely made the trip because of the hunger in their stomachs. What a jolt it was to be told at the end of their journey that the tickets they purchased allowed them to have eaten the fabulous meals that were served on board. The beneficiaries of Palestine needed to step up and claim their inheritance. The strongholds had been captured. The major battles had been won. Now it was time to occupy the land. Claim the land, settle down and enjoy it.

The goal is to possess the FULL inheritance. Live up to your capacities. I know that many believers do not reach their capacities. We are so big on building our children's self-esteem, but seem to lack challenging them with competency. I don't speak alone. This article was in our newspaper recently written by Tom Purcell who was upset because the UK barred the teachers from marking student's paper with red; they were instructed to use colors

such as green, blue, pink and yellow. The claim is that those colors are less severe. Well, all I can say is that red really got my attention.

In the book of Joshua one can gain insights about living up to his/her capacity. You will live up to your capacity when.

- You know you've been included. Joshua 13:15 He should have been excluded. Genesis 49:4 tells of his awful sin against his father. What good news that in spite of his sin he was included. The apostle humbly recognized that he had been included in the inheritance. Read I Timothy 1:12-13. Even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor, and yet I was shown mercy, because I acted in unbelief. Transition: Another insight into living up to your capacity is.
- You are thankful for your share. Joshua 17:14 and 17:-18. Jesus spoke of workers who served according to their abilities, be thankful for what you have been given; those who are faithful in the little things are often given more. THIS PAST TUESDAY BEN GORDON AGE 17 WAS BURIED. When he was an infant he became blind. Yet he accomplished something usually found only in bats or dolphins. It is a skill called echolocation. By making clicking noises with his tongue he learned to identify objects and get around safely. Because of this he was able to attend mainstream schools. He played basketball, danced, practiced karate and rode a bicycle. He mastered video games by memorizing scenarios and identifying sounds that characters made just before they changed positions.

As a motivational speaker he was invited to Japan, Britain. He was the guest of television programs throughout America. He became friends with the famous Stevie Wonder who recently visited him in Elk Grove. He loved Jesus and in his last days spent much of the time listening to gospel music. Read I Corinthians 12:4-7. Transition: There is a third insight I would like to share with you. You will more quickly reach your capacity when:

- You are connected with winners. Joshua 14: 6-13, 15:16-20. Caleb served as a role model to his daughter and held out incentives to her and her husband, 15:16-17. Othniel goes on to be one of the Judges. Transition: We also find in our study of Joshua another insight. It is when:
- You are motivated by urgency. Joshua 13:1. Joshua had ten more years to show them how. Joshua 24:15; Judges 1:27, 29, 30, 31 etc. Jesus certainly came primarily to be a Savior, but he also came to open up a whole new life for those who acknowledge him. He describes it as life to the full. His life within us allows us to aspire not only to live up to our natural quests, but to the plan of God for our life.

I encourage you to not waste your talents, gifts, dreams, mind and courage. Don't sell yourself short. I think it is a slogan of Marines, "Be all you can be." God can make you what you ought to be.

*I pressing on the upward way, new heights I'm gaining every day,
Still praying as I onward bound, Lord plant my feet on higher ground.
Lord lift me up and let me stand, by faith on heaven's tableland,
a higher plane than I have found.
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.*

John Oatman