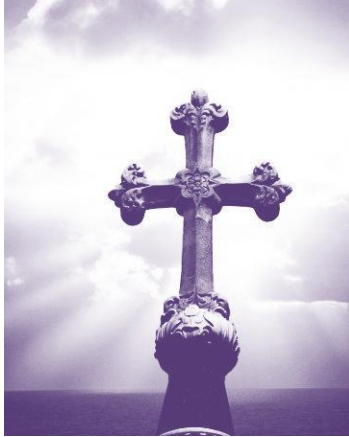


Jericho

“Places in the life of Christ”



“And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.” Mark 10:52

Jericho a small town in Judaea in the valley of the Jordan is remembered very much with the walls that just fell down after the soldiers marched around it for seven day. The kids are taught this story through the song “Joshua fought the battle of Jericho.”*

Spies from the Israelites slipped into the city of Jericho and stayed at the home of Rahab. She hid the spies from the king's soldiers, and then helped them escape out a window and down a rope. The soldiers hunted them, but in vain because God was protecting them.

Meanwhile, the Israelite people continued towards Canaan and Jericho. They were carrying the Ark of the Covenant with them and when they reached the Jordan River, the water stopped just as he had done for Moses, by parting the Red Sea. God works in mysterious and wonderful ways. He didn't have the men attack the city. He just had them march around it once each day for six days. On the seventh day, they gave a large shout when Joshua demanded them to do it, and the wall fell down. Everyone except Rahab and her family was killed and the Israelites had control of Jericho. In the New Testament, we learn that God favored her by making Rahab one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World.

But there is also much that happened in Jericho during the time Christ spent of this earth. Jericho is mentioned many times in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

One day as Christ was leaving Jericho two blind men who were sitting by the road called out to Him and the other people told them to keep quiet. But, Christ stopped and asked “What will ye that I shall do unto you?” And they ask that he return their eyesight. Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes. Immediately their eye sight was restored and they followed Jesus.

One of the best known parables of the Bible is “The Good Samaritan.” Christ told this parable in response to the question of who our neighbor is. Christ tells that a man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was beaten and robbed and then left by the side of the road. A priest and a Levite both avoided him. Finally a Samaritan stopped to help him. This is especially significant because the Jews and the Samaritans did not get along at all. But Christ was telling them they had to love everyone both Jews and Gentile.

Today we have come to accept the term good Samaritan as someone who helps a stranger and many hospitals and charitable organizations are named after the Good Samaritan.

I am reminded of one of my favorite Dr. Seuss books "To Think that I saw it on Mulberry Street." To think that it happened in Jericho. Just a place on the map that has caused many of us to wonder what we should do in a given situation. Do we step out as Christ did? We can't heal the blind, but we can help them.

Do we cross the street, physically or figuratively, to get away from a situation where we should become involved? Many times we think about what will happen to me if I stop more than what will happen to the person in need if I don't stop.

The parable brings us back around to the same question again – Who is our neighbor?

An Australian poet Henry Lawson wrote a poem on the parable of the Good Samaritan. It brings it up to a little more modern times. Lawson was born in 1867, but we can all see the same thing today as Christ saw over 2000 years ago. Part of Lawson's poem is given here.

"The Good Samaritan"

"Once upon a time there lived a man"--
But he has lived alway,
And that gaunt, good Samaritan
Is with us here today;
He passed through the city streets
Unnoticed and unknown,
He helps the sinner that he meets--
His sorrows are his own.

"He shares his tucker on the track
When things are at their worst
(And often shouts in bars outback
For souls that are athirst).
Today you see him staggering down
The blazing watercourse,
And making for the distant town--
A sick man on his horse.

"He'll live while nations find their graves
And mortals suffer pain--
Though colour rule, and whites be slaves
And savages again.
And, after all is past and done,
He'll rise up, the Last Man,
From tending to the last but one--

The good Samaritan.”

Prayer: Lord God, You are awesome, but we take so much of what You have done for us for granted. We fail to see the problems and hurts of others because we are worried about ourselves. We are often hesitant to step out, not because we fear for our lives, but because we like our comfort zone. Help us to see the needs of others and respond as You would have us respond. Thank You Lord for stopping by to spend time with us always. Amen.

1. Would you have wanted to be in Jericho at the time of Christ? Why?
2. Think for a minute on the gossip and the actual arguments that must have been going on among the citizens of Jericho at the time of Rahab and the battle of Jericho. They were a strong city.
3. Think for a minute on the gossip and the actual arguments that must have been going on among the citizens of Jericho at the time of Christ and His preaching and healing.
4. Why do we teach kids about the walls of Jericho tumbling?

**“Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho* (Children’s Song)

Chorus:

“Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
and the walls came a-tumbling down
You may talk about your men of Gideon
You may talk about the men of Saul
But there's none like good old Joshua
at the battle of Jericho (that mornin')
(Chorus)

Up to the walls of Jericho
They marched with spears in hand
‘Come blow them ram horns,’ Joshua said
‘Cause the battle is in our hands.’
(Chorus)

Then the lamb ram sheep horns began to blow
The trumpets began to sound
Joshua commanded the children to shout
and the walls came a-tumblin' down (that mornin')
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
and the walls came a-tumbling down

Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
and the walls came a-tumbling down”

©Gail Kennedy Keffer