

I. Introduction

- A. Thank you for worshipping with Neighborhood Church today. If you were here last weekend, God gave you a memorable day, didn't He? We are so excited for 174 lives, 174 families, 174 sons and daughters of God who took a huge step forward for Jesus. You might have heard that we offered spontaneous baptisms last week. Don't over think it. Don't bring up a million objections. God said do it, so do it. And when we made that offer, we were flooded with happy, nervous people. 174 people got baptized last week, and we're happy with you.
- B. I want to say **THANK YOU** to everybody who helped. Jim Botts and his team did an amazing job and a ton of work.
- C. Some people, with itty bitty faith, were surprised at how many people came forward last weekend. I wasn't. Okay, I was, and my faith wasn't so big. When we planned this none of us knew if we were heading toward either **MONUMENTAL SUCCESS** or **EPIC FAILURE**.
- D. So we ran out of T-shirts, and we ran out of gym shorts. And people were getting baptized, and running down stairs, and pulling off their wet gym shorts, and giving them to somebody else to go get baptized in wet shorts.
- E. It was cool.
- F. I'm not going to tell you all the awesome stories—just these.
 - 1. A couple that just got engaged, and then got baptized.
 - 2. Four people who received Jesus first, waiting in line, and then got baptized second.
 - 3. A 77 year old man, here for one day, who got saved and baptized on Sunday, and flew home to Wisconsin on Monday.
 - 4. Baptizing double-doubles—I've never seen that before.
 - 5. Jim Botts was shivering by the last service last week, and somebody lent him a wet suit for this week.
- G. I have to say, one of the best compliments I heard last weekend was this one: Somebody told me, "Bill, you know what was so cool? People weren't responding to hype, they were responding to truth." I thought that was great.
- H. If truth doesn't motivate something, it's not worth motivating. Long after emotion fades, long after the adrenaline wears out—truth endures because God endures, and His Word is settled forever.
- I. And for every single person who stood up in that baptism tank and said, "I believe in Jesus. I belong to Him, and He belongs to me," you claimed your identity and it is **TRUE**, even when the sun burns out and the mountains crumble into the sea. You belong to Jesus forever.
- J. That was last weekend, and we have to move on. Because here you are, right now, today. And I believe God wants to speak to you, through His Word, the Bible, today.
- K. And for some of you, this will be a day of decision. No manipulation. No hype. We are going to literally open a door, and invite you step through it. And when we do that, say **YES**.

II. Birthright

- A. My message today is number seven in a series called BirthRight. We are learning how to collect our inheritance from God.
- B. Here's our paragraph from the Bible for today:

III. *10 Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. (Joshua 5:10, 11, NKJV).*

- A. Here's the story. The Jews finally entered the Promised Land. God did a miracle, and parted the Jordan River, and they crossed through on dry ground.
- B. They are finally in the land where their hopes and dreams will come true.
- C. But this is hostile territory. So, in hostile territory, with enemies getting ready to pounce, what does Joshua do? He orders all the men of Israel to be circumcised. He incapacitates his entire fighting force. Some scholars say it takes three weeks to recover!
- D. So why do something so irresponsible and nonsensical?
- E. They had to own their identity before they could experience their identity.
- F. And that's what we did last week. We owned our identity through baptism. And maybe you missed it, or maybe you sat on your hands, and all week long, God has been convicting you.
- G. Well, today's another day, isn't it?
- H. But now, they've recovered from circumcision and they have a next item of business. Verse 10 says they observed the Passover.

IV. Passover

- A. Passover is a Jewish ritual. This is the third time in their history that the Jews celebrate Passover. From here on out, they are supposed to observe Passover every year. Here's the story.
- B. The story starts 40 years before Joshua—when the Jews are still slaves in Egypt. The Pharaoh of Egypt wouldn't let them go, so God sent 10 persuaders called Ten Plagues.

- C. Each time, the Pharaoh agreed to let the Jews go, only to change his mind and keep them as slaves.
 - D. Finally, God raised the stakes to the maximum. Moses warned Pharaoh and the Jews that God's destroying angel would pass through the land that night, and destroy the firstborn son in every family.
 - E. The only exception would be as follows: Jews were to gather in their homes for dinner. They were to offer as a sacrifice, a lamb. God would accept the death of the lamb instead of the death of the firstborn son. They sacrificed the lamb, and painted its blood on the doorposts and above the door of their homes.
 - F. That night, when the destroying angel passed through Egypt, he did not destroy any sons behind blood painted doorposts. He passed over those homes. His wrath passed over those people.
 - 1. The death of the lamb ensured the life of the people.
 - G. The Passover meal was a symbol of Jesus. Everything in that meal taught about Jesus and His amazing salvation.
 - H. Have you ever participated in the Lord's Supper (a.k.a., the Eucharist or Communion)? Do you know that when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, He did that as part of a Passover meal?
 - 1. He said wine that was drunk, represented His blood, shed for our sins.
 - 2. He said the bread that was broken, represented His body broken for us on the cross.
 - 3. And the lamb that was slain represents Jesus, the Savior, who was slain so the Destroying Angel would pass over when it saw HIS BLOOD.
 - a) *For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.* (1 Corinthians 5:7, NKJV).
 - I. So the Jews celebrate Passover. Notice the sequence.
 - 1. First, they cross through the Jordan River into the Promised Land—we'll let that represent the day you received Jesus. The day you were born again.
 - 2. Second, they do a mass circumcision—we'll let that represent the day you were baptized—the day you fully owned your connection to Jesus Christ, and quit being ashamed to own His name. You put on your wedding ring.
 - 3. Third, they observed the Passover—and we'll let that represent communion—which is an ongoing reminder that everything good in your life happens because you have a Savior who lived and died and rose again, FOR YOU.
 - J. What's going on here is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, and more Jesus: Jesus in symbolism, Jesus in ritual, Jesus in theology, doctrine, instruction, and teaching, Jesus and His sacrifice, Jesus and His Cross.
 - K. When Jews entered the Promised Land, everything they did first nailed down the unspeakable gift of Jesus Christ.
 - L. So why? Joshua's a smart leader. What's he saying? What's he saying to his generation, and what's he speaking forth to future generations, like ours today?
 - M. Are you ready? It's cool! Ready?
 - N. Last week I gave you three words: identity precedes victory.
 - O. Today, I'm giving you 6 words, but not yet. Pick it up at Joshua 5:11.
- V. *11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. 12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.* (Joshua 5:11, 12, NKJV).
- A. Remember the sequence: Circumcision, Passover and now, for the first time, they ate the produce of the land on the day after the Passover.
 - B. And the next day, the manna ceased.
 - C. Manna was the miracle food that God provided for the Israelites. Every day, when Jews got up, they went outside and gathered this fluffy looking stuff from the ground, and they ate it.
 - D. The first time they saw manna, they rubbed their eyes and said, "Huh? What's this?" which in Hebrew sounds like manna, so the name stuck.
 - E. For 40 years, God fed them with manna.
 - F. Ever wonder what manna tasted like? I know. Want to know? Manna tastes like deep dish pepperoni and sausage pizza piping hot out of the oven. That's what manna tastes like.
 - G. Actually, God did something pretty cool. If your heart was far from God, manna tasted terrible.
 - 1. *"Our soul loathes this worthless bread"* (Numbers 21:5, NKJV).
 - H. But if your heart was close to God, manna tasted like the food of angels
 - 1. *"Men ate angels' food..."* (Psalms 78:25, NKJV).
 - I. And I know that angels are eating deep dish pizza, so that's how I know what manna tastes like.
 - J. And for 40 years, they ate manna UNTIL they came to the Promised Land. They personally experienced that the Promised Land could sustain them.
 - K. And Joshua tells us "so the manna ceased."
- VI. What's going on?
- A. What's going on? We're dealing with 4 events in a sequence:

1. Circumcision, Passover
 2. Eating the Produce of the Land—the manna ceased.
- B. The first two steps represent unfinished business with the past. Circumcision and Passover remind them of their past. It's like you're driving, and every so often you glance in your rear view mirror. Circumcision and Passover deal with the past: Past identification with God, past salvation, past deliverance from slavery. They're looking in the rear view mirror. They're playing catch up.
- C. And then they eat the produce of the land, and the manna ceased. And now they're looking forward, out the windshield.
- D. Manna was their normal. Manna was all they had, and for some of them, all they knew. Manna was God's provision for that period in their lives.
- E. But now, God was moving them out of manna-land into the Promised Land, and they didn't need manna any more.
- F. How many of you know that God knocks away your crutches before He teaches you to run?
- G. What is Joshua doing with his people? He's doing with them exactly what God wants to do with you and me and us today.
1. He's honoring their history, but not letting it hold them back from their destiny.
- H. Six words: Settle your history, embrace your destiny.
- I. Before you can embrace your unknown, but glorious destiny, you have to say good-bye to your well-known and comfortable history. Honor that history, yes. Remember it and commemorate it, yes. **BUT YOU CAN'T LIVE IN THE PAST AND EXPERIENCE YOUR BIRTHRIGHT.** And yes, God was in the past, leading and providing. But that was yesterday.
- J. And everything in your psychology wants to hold onto yesterday—what you know, what is normal—and God holds an intervention and dries up the manna and says your Promised Land is that way. Go!
- K. So what do you do when God says go?
- L. With God, you have to nail down your history before you can step into your glorious destiny. That's what's happening in Joshua, and that's what I want to have happen right now, here, today, at Neighborhood Church.
- M. Six words: Settle your history, embrace your destiny.

VII. Glorious destiny

- A. These people are entering the Promised Land. In this place, they have peace, happiness, blessing, and victory **DIRECTLY FROM GOD.** That is their future.
- B. For us today, it's the same. You are destined for greatness, destined for glory, destined for heaven. Destined for purpose, peace, happiness, blessing, and victory from God to you! And that's just in this life.
- C. In the life to come: no more sorrow, or suffering or pain, or tears. God saved you, the Bible says, so that:
1. *7 That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:7, NKJV).*
- D. There's your future. Will you embrace it?
- E. Then nail down your history, finish your unfinished business with God, and move on. **SETTLE YOUR HISTORY.** Quit letting an unfinished past hold you back.
- F. **I WANT YOU TO SETTLE YOUR HISTORY, RIGHT NOW, TODAY.**
- G. That requires two items of unfinished business.

VIII. Two items:

- A. First, you need to embrace Jesus as your Savior. You need to put your faith in Him and be born again. He came for you, lived for you, and died for you. You fell under condemnation from the wrath of God, but Jesus took the hit for you. He was your Passover lamb.
- B. You need to do business with God, and tell God that you are receiving Jesus, right now, today.
1. *12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12, 13, NKJV).*
- C. If you do not have a born-again moment on your historical record, you need to take care of that today.
- D. You have a boundary line to cross as real as the Jordan River. You have to cross over from death to life, from sin to salvation, and from self-effort to Christ effort. You have to live out the truth of amazing grace: I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see.
- E. Have you ever taken hold of Jesus' hand and asked Him to save you? In two minutes, I'm going to show you how to do that, in prayer.
- F. You are frozen in place, spiritually, until you receive Jesus. Settle your accounts with Him. Settle your past.

- G. And then, I'm going to ask you to do what millions of new Christ-followers over centuries and millennia have done. I'm going to ask you to go public right away, and tell the world you believe in Jesus by being baptized. Tell God. Tell the Devil. Tell the angels, tell the demons, tell this church, and tell the world in the Internet.
- H. The children of Israel crossed the Jordan—that represents getting saved.
- I. Then they got circumcised—and thank God—that represents getting baptized.

IX. Second Item of Business

- A. This is the second item of unfinished business on your historical timeline. If you have Jesus as your Savior, what is keeping you from being baptized?
- B. You might say, Bill I'm not dressed for baptism. We have everything you need. We have shorts and shirts and towels and hairdryers.
- C. Maybe you talked yourself out of it last week—okay, here's another chance.
- D. You might say, but Bill, I'm a lousy Christian; I'm not ready to get baptized. To you I say, maybe you're a lousy Christian because you're not yet baptized, you are holding corners of your soul back from Jesus and you won't find victory until you first own your identity as a Christian.
- E. He loves you with an everlasting love. Forget about what other people might think. Think of Jesus. Think of what would make Him smile today. Settle your past, and get ready to embrace your future, your birthright, your inheritance, and your indescribable destiny with Him.

X. Saturday and 12:30

- A. We're baptizing kids during this service, but only down to age 12 and only if a grown up goes with you, and gives permission.
- B. We'll go down to age 10 if you did a baptism training course with your mom and dad.
- C. Or we'll also go down to age 10 if you have a grown up in your family being baptized with you.
- D. Nail down your history. Nailed down history precedes glorious destiny.
- E. It's time to nail down salvation.
- F. It's time to nail down baptism.
- G. Today I have preached truth. Let it motivate you.
- H. 90 seconds away from baptism, first salvation. Let's pray.