# God will do wonders

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Preacher: Rev W.J.Campbell

[0:00] I would like to draw your attention this morning to words we find in Joshua chapter 3 where we read and also relating them to the passage in Luke which we also read.

Joshua chapter 3 and verse 5 and 9 in particular.
And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. And at verse 9, and Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither and hear the words of the Lord your God.
And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you and you will hear him. So, particularly to draw your attention as we meet on a Saturday of communion season, to the obligation that is here indicated, the call to prepare, sanctify yourselves.
But also to look at the promise that is given and how that promise comes through in the experience of Joshua on the people of God that day.
[1:41] There is one particular phrase that the Apostle Paul uses in Colossians 1. And that is what he gives thanks to God for and what looms large in our thinking and in our prayers even today.

And that is what he gives thanks to God for, Colossians 1.12.
Giving thanks unto the Father which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. This concern of being qualified, having a right, having an entitlement, and being duly engaged in the hearing of God's word, and the willingness to obey the word of direction and command and exhortation.
And that concerning the sacrament as we seek to prepare for it. Our concern is whether our hearts or minds are rightly placed, whether our interest real, true, genuine, and vital in Jesus Christ.
And the indicators that God gives in his word by which we ought to be encouraged to look at and to discover the genuineness of our approach and of our interest in Jesus and in hearing his word of command, do this in remembrance of me.
[3:48] To this end then, we look first at the passage in Joshua, where we have Joshua taking over the reins of command and of guidance and leadership of the people of Israel, and they are right up at the brink of Jordan.

And before they pass over, before they are allowed to proceed and enter into the land of promise, they are called on to have special regard to the Ark of the Covenant of God.
It would appear that it is the morning after the spies had returned and reported. But the interest was to be in the Ark, because the way forward, the way of entrance, the way of participation in the deliverance and in the wonder and the miracle of God had to do with their attention to the word spoken and to the command given.
To this end, it was the Ark of the Covenant of God that was to lead them, and the preparation they required for that end.
Now the Ark was made of acacia wood, four by two and a half by two and a half, and overlaid with gold, carried on poles by the priests. And within it, early the tables and the other items that were of special significance in telling the people of the presence of Almighty God.
[5:52] And for this end, the Ark is brought out, and the Ark is prepared, and the priests prepare themselves.

But the people had to prepare themselves, sanctify yourselves. The call to prepare, the sanctification, the consecration in a purity of life, a separation from a sin and from everything that would defile, a separation from the world, a separation unto God, and an attention to hear, to listen to what God had to say.
Their personal responsibility and so with us. to hear the word of God, to hear the challenge of that word, to this day to prepare ourselves to a devotional life, setting ourselves apart with all our

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religious, spiritual services designed and designated for this end.
We have such a pattern of preparatory services that there is the danger of falling short, of looking to the final goal, to the purpose of it all, that we should be sanctified unto the Lord.
And no one can do it for us. No church, no office bearer, no curccession, no higher authority. the basic duty lies with ourselves under the hand of God.
[8:04] And it was in the measure and by this channel of preparation that the discerning, the vision, but also the deliverance by the mighty and wonderful hand of God was to be made known.

now the purity of life of conduct on a private, personal level, physically and spiritually that we have to attend to these things so that the law of God, the principles offered and the endorsement of that law by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that this is the way we are to know and to set ourselves apart and fulfill our basic purpose and function of being alive to love God.
We do so by hearing his word, hearing his word of command and doing it. When we turn for a moment to the passage in Luke the declaration by Jesus himself as to how his followers his mothers his sisters and his brethren are to be identified by their ability by their willingness and eagerness and alertness to hear the word and to do it.
and this is where we have to learn from the Old Testament principles of spiritual devotional life and the application offered and the continuance of that obligation to the New Testament church and to us who live so much longer from a longer and a later part in the history of this world.
Yet the principles are still vital still obligation of that kind reaching to us.
[10:31] So as we hear the call to prepare let us make no mistake God wants us to be pure and holy consecrated set apart separate from sin and from the world and our separation must be in obedience to the word of God we must have the directions correct we must have the specifications and we must be prepared to follow them to follow the Lord in this way and all who engage in this way it is not just a call to prepare as if so closely associated and without going any further past into the linguistics of it they're right up against one another two words sanctify yourself one word and the promise the

Lord will do wonders for you for those who are prepared to hear the call to prepare cannot be divorced from or separated from the promise of the assistance or the help and the confidence that you require Joshua trembled Joshua himself having seen so much having heard so much that he could never forget the shadow of Moses whom he felt was so greater that he could not undergo and meet the challenge of the leadership to sanctify himself or to lead the people in their sanctification or further still to lead them into the experience of their deliverance by the miracle and the wonder working power of almighty God in taking him through to the promised land
Moses was behind Jordan was in front and he knew and he felt his weakness and his trembling there but he could not escape the call and the challenge the call to prepare and the promise of help they had all to take regard to themselves but their regard to themselves was never in any way to blind them to the hearing of the word and the obedience to the call of their leader Joshua was to put their trust and confidence not not so much in him as a new leader as one commissioned to take them there but in the God whom he served he called the people and they had to keep their distance they had to keep their eyes focused on the ark on the symbol set before him for as a seal of God's presence with them he had to call them to look at that and then he had to call them to look at themselves and to wait and see God coming and delivering there they by God's law and command were forbidden to approach too close to the ark in all the ministrations of the tabernacle and then of the temple and so on there was the reverence the fear the respect there was the love the devotion and the attention to the ark of the covenant oh my friend it is to Jesus Christ it is to him alone to Jesus in his words in his person in his love in his mercy to us sinners that all this and all our words are geared to all our intentions all our endeavor to prepare ourselves to enter into the true spirit of worship as we engage one step after another ready willing to look to him as the evidence and the seal of
God's presence and his mighty power to say to deliver and as we're called to prepare to set ourselves apart and to be sure that we rid ourselves of all the wrong patterns of thought and of thinking by paying attention to God's words and let it operate and focus upon our shortcomings and failings so that we know where we've gone wrong and seek a recovery through God's grace so that we are in the right mind so that we have so that we are meet so that we are suitably equipped entitled by God to hear his word to respond to it and to trust in his promise that he has sent help will send help the preparation is to bring us to the true and the proper spirit of reverence and respect

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that is linked with confidence and trust and an anticipation and an expectation to see and to discover by participating by looking to God by looking to the ark by looking to Jesus by hearing his word and a willingness to come and see the deliverance come hither and hear the words of the [17:27] Lord your God in this way then we are to establish whether we have that hearing that can and must be tested by a willingness to follow to obey the deliverance that the people of Israel had to experience was the crossing over Jordan and the directions and we are not going to take up much time over the specific directions as they are because we read them all together the preparation on the personal level the preparation of their devotional trust and confidence in the promise their readiness to walk to go in the way that God had commanded and left them for them all the lighthouse in the desert of this world the word of God there is one place we are told in the desert place of the

Sahara where there is a building like a lighthouse it speaks of the presence of water the lighthouse which is the signal of danger to those that are at sea for the danger of shipwreck the lighthouse in the desert is there for appeal for approach and the camel rider they are we are told when they're getting near the end of their resources they make a pact and send one one after another out at intervals until the front first one so that when the first one finds and discovers the light of the water the oasis the command is given to the one going out that before there is a taste of the water there must be the sounding of the word come the lighthouse in the desert so that the pacing of them of these riders are at such a distance that they will hear the word and they all take up the chant come so that the direction is indicated the lighthouse of
God in his word the lighthouse of God in Christ the well of salvation that is opened for sinners and all who come to this well are welcome to come but as they come there they feel an obligation to others and the indication and the expression that they give is come come thou with us come thou to Christ here is water here is life here is power here is the one to help to deliver and revering back to the experience of the crossing of the
Jordan they were to pay attention to the ark and it being conveying on the poles on the shoulders of the priest as they approach and to go to the brink and to go and to see and to watch carefully what happened as the priests put their foot forward into the water at that late stage in the instruments of the persons of the priest the power of God reached and touched the water but the significance to the people was not so much in the priests themselves but in the ark that they were carrying and it was the ark that was carried right into the Jordan and the feet of the priests that bear the ark were dipped in the brim of the water right at the time when
Jordan was in spade many would say why not wait why not linger the reason why not because God had spoken God had spoken and given directions God had given promise God had given command to prepare and God was waiting for and they had to show their obedience can you picture these poor people in the face of the Jordan of what it was and what it meant the ark of God the ark of witness and testimony that God was with them that now that God was going before them into the land of promise to the experience of the enjoyment of the promised land the promise of mercy and salvation and deliverance of liberty and of peace to enjoy they had to cross the Jordan for many the public profession of faith is a
[24:11] Jordan of terror of anger where the thrust of the force of God's word cannot be evaded or avoided or escaped from and the promise of God is as close and as near and as relevant and pertinent as the command and the challenge is the readiness to go on and to go forward and to meet the Jordan not on your own but as your eye upon the ark of the covenant that little box of wood some people may call it to the Israelites that day it was the sign the signal the seal it was the place it was the encapsulated promise but it was also the challenge to go on can you see them coming to and following that ark into the

Jordan and passing through and walking through to the other side it is of that nature that we have to come to the river impossible or impossible that we lift that we see for ourselves or that we imagine it so to be because this is what it seems to be but as it seems to be and it is not a belittling of your feelings or awareness or appreciation of its meaning and of its significance we would want but rather lead rather concentrate and focus upon Jesus because he has said the ark of the covenant they had to look at and put their confidence that the power of
God in delivering them would take them right through and give them a right an interest and an assurance and it was only through passing through the river that that assurance could be obtained and the enjoyment of the promised land we have no right to us or God of God that we be assured of

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our interest in Christ unless we prepared to follow it to obey we cannot we shouldn't we must not demand of God the certainty that is conditional upon in God's word upon our obedience to his command if it were so it would be based our assurance of faith our confidence and trust would be reliant on in some measure upon the act upon the participatory deliverance itself our confidence must be firmly holy completely securely upon the power of
God in craft as certain as these people going through the Jordan they went through and they knew they did and they knew very well how they went and who brought them there no one else could have done and it was that power of God revealed and secured and established for them that they were then confident and their song of deliverance on the other side spoke greatly by reason of that of the mighty hand of God God's hand delivers the priests that carried the ark were special to them but not half as special as the ark itself your need of blessing your need of promise is ungod you can see the hindrances you can see the stumbling block you can see you can discern many things within that would harm and hurt and keep you back many things in the past many things in the present and only
God's mercy in Christ and his promise of health is sufficient for each and everyone all in the same boat all of the same kind with the same kind of problems the devil has a special ploy that he tries to use on God's people in particular and he says and he comes some way or other often frequently you are not like all the rest you are different you are separate you are not like any one of God's people and anything that you have or have experienced is all so totally individual that you can't be remember what Peter says remember that all your tribulations all your experience are of a common kind with all the brethren that are in the world we're not special at all we're all like one another all
[30:50] God's children are of a same kind not identical not similar in every degree or in every pattern of thought or of experience but in their behaviour in relation to the word of God in their obligation to follow God's will and God's laws and they're seeking to love the Lord and to express it and to express it in our form and in our pattern of services where the coming to the Lord's table and engaging in this way professional food comes to be identified through testimony with God's people in this world and we meet this challenge and we meet it again and again and every time we meet what's our authority what's our confidence and what's our preparation what

God has done what he is doing remember that poor man who had the legions remember what he was called on to do after the declarations of Jesus the light that is given is given for a purpose to let it shine so that others that the world may see your light ye are the light of the world the description the identification of those who are his brothers and sisters his friends are those who hear the word and do it and immediately following on that through their experience of their focusing through the storm upon Jesus and his deliverance and in the other gospels where it is said where he identifies himself for them be not afraid it is
I it is it is God in Christ God coming through in his word to challenge to call to prepare to trust in his promise to come to Christ to come and identify and meet the river of challenge today and tomorrow in the strength of the Lord but this poor man he wanted to follow Jesus the way Jesus was going in leaving his homeland his hometown and he wanted so passionately and fervently he even asked if he could and his wish was not granted dead and we told why because he had an obligation to say and to speak of the name of
Jesus in his hometown in his home city to go back the rescued wreck and speak of how he was rescued the wonder done to me and to you to say it in a way that is meaningful God has given us this way of saying of saying that Jesus is my Savior that I identify with them because he has called and he has rescued he is now calling to those who know me for this following and for this confidence in the Lord to trust in his promise be not afraid to decide the
Lord our God the one who sent and sealed his presence in the ark in the Old Testament the sign and the seal of his presence withers is by the spirit sealed in our hearts in our willingness to hear the word in our willingness to obey the word of God and what is Jesus saying come to me come and do this in remembrance of me your confidence must be in the finished work of Christ your preparation must be in your reliance on him and him alone the preparation you must have to be circumspect in your life to obey
[36:33] God's word God's law and when you're filled with the brokenness of your vows of the past and of the commands in the present that there is our refuge for guilty sinners guilty we all are guilty we all remain but the promise is so relevant so near in Christ God in Christ reconciling us to himself to come with our gift with our hangups with our complexes with all our past excuses for ourselves

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and come to Jesus and acknowledge him and be assured in your coming of his interest in his calling in his challenge in his in specifying the way that you may not be in doubt as to your obligation and what you ought to do and what you must do if you are to be assured of your salvation in the world

God has ordered it in that way it is not a church or a community or a background or a tradition and we are glad that it is not the warrant the warrant that will be read and referred or the administering of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a command is a challenge it is a door oh remember my friend the words of one man he he had 50 years of hearing the gospel and he read one day in the local paper a little insight and it went like this the gospel brings us not a work to do but a word to believe in that our work was done and his comment on his experiences in reading that where all my days working at the keyhole to discover that the door is open all the time my friends who are interested concerned about your profession of faith the courts of the church are the way of access of the door open not not the one that is a jar or locked or that needs to be pushed you apply by going there and you'll find an open door if you love the
Lord and seek to obey let us pray gracious and ever blessed Lord do you lead us in thy truth this day take care of thy people of thy flock grant them good pasture and nourishment and care and love and surround them and give us to be interested and aware of all that is around of all that is their concern and those that are outside and who want and who wish to be with them this day Lord be close by all who are still in such a state we remember the lost to our in rejection of the truth and who seek to that life and that living of forgetfulness and abandonment from
God O Lord do thou reach and bring them in from the far country Lord be near to us now and go before us throughout this day in all the preparations and in the prayer meetings in the evening may thy power and presence be known and felt by thy people here pardon freely our sin for Christ's sake

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