

*Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." Joshua 3:5*

## **Week 6**

# **SETTING THE STAGE**

### **START**

Welcome to session 6 of Kingdom Men Rising.

Last week we talked about the call for kingdom men to get along. In the personal studies we looked at the crucial aspect of race and racism.

**What was one lesson you learned from Dr. Evans' teaching on race?**

This week we will be we be talking about the crucial spiritual disciplines for kingdom men.

**Share a time when you have had to trust God, though your circumstances were overwhelming.**

During the year this study was written (2020), the world was turned completely upside down. From global pandemic caused by a virus infecting millions to the economic repercussions that followed, to the cultural unrest wrought by racial tensions, the year was daunting for many of us. Yet, despite all our hardships, time will tell and begin to reveal the faithfulness of God throughout a troubling year. Perhaps you're seeing the fruit of His faithfulness despite overwhelming circumstances. Often, God uses our circumstances to set the stage for His incredible faithfulness.

Today, we'll look at an event in the life of Israel where God asked His people to show up. He was setting the stage for them to take their place in the land that He had promised. All they needed to do was show up, prepare themselves, and follow God's directions.

## WATCH

Use this space to take notes during the video teaching.

## MAN UP

**Read Joshua 3:5 together.**

*Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." -Joshua 3:5*

Prior to Joshua leading the Israelites across the Jordan River and into the promised land, God asked him and the people to do something. He asked them to "consecrate" themselves. To "consecrate" means to dedicate something or someone to a special purpose or service.

God asked that Joshua and the people of Israel dedicate themselves for one purpose—crossing the Jordan River. He asked them to focus. He asked them to prepare themselves—emotionally, spiritually and physically—for what He was about to do for them and through them.

**What might it look like for us to “consecrate” ourselves or set ourselves apart for God’s purposes today?**

**How does God grow us as we prepare to serve Him?**

The people of Israel would have to trust God to make it across the Jordan. That’s why their preparation mattered. Israel was to set out across the Jordan River at the height of flood season. The water spilled over the banks, and the ground beneath the waters was muddy. God would need to perform two miracles in getting the Israelites across the pregnant river. He would need to stop the waters from flowing but He would also need to dry up the land enough for them to cross.

**Imagine standing on the shores of the river knowing that somehow the next day you and thousands of people, animals, carts and belongings would somehow need to cross. What do you think the Israelites were thinking the day before they were to cross the Jordan River? What reasons did they have to be confident in God?**

Life gets overwhelming, sometimes. We get overwhelmed with medical disasters, career challenges, financial burdens and troubles with our family or culture. We live in a flood zone, and often the flood is overwhelming, but as Dr. Evans said during flood season, God is setting the stage for the supernatural to invade the natural to show us how big God really is. God allows flood season so that He can demonstrate He alone is God.

**How has God demonstrated to you that He alone is God, during a difficult time in your life?**

Only God could have performed the miracles necessary to get thousands across the Jordan River. He worked that way so that all the credit would be His. To remember what God had done, the Israelites

took twelve stones from the Jordan and placed them in their camp. All throughout the Scriptures God calls His people to remember what He's done and share His work with others.

**How can we use the opportunities we have to witness God's strength and power in our lives?**

**How can we create a culture where men feel a greater need to focus on God and consecrate themselves for the purpose of witnessing God's greater involvement in their circumstances?**

**Who needs to hear about how God has been faithful to you through a flood season? When will you set aside time to tell them?**

## **PRAYER**

*Father, You have the power not only to dry up the flood waters which seek to overwhelm us but You can also help us pass through the storm on the firmness of dry land. Help us to keep our eyes on You, stay focused on You, and consecrate ourselves to do the work of Your kingdom. In Christ's name, amen.*

## **HIT THE STREETS**

### **THREE PRINCIPLES FOR A PURPOSE-FILLED LIFE**

Never measure God's movement without first taking a look at your own. Far too often, God is waiting on us as men to do something before He will make His move. Whether it is Moses holding out the rod before He parts the sea, or Peter keeping his eyes on Jesus before He rescues him from the storm—God frequently waits to see how we respond in faith before He fully reveals His hand in our lives.

# 1

## Listen.

The priests had been asked to dedicate themselves for the specific task at hand—stepping into the flooding Jordan River. In order to do this, they needed to focus on what God said by consecrating themselves before Him. They wouldn't be able to hear Him if they had distractions in their lives at that time. Kingdom men need to set aside distractions in our lives as well so we can better hear God in order to understand His instructions clearly.

**What are you hearing from God recently?**

# 2

## Obey.

I don't know about you, but stepping into the water of a river in order to get that same water to go away doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me. Yet that is what God asked the priests to do. Obeying God as a kingdom man doesn't always involve understanding His methods. Faith doesn't always make sense. But it can make miracles. Be willing to obey God when He makes your part in His plan clear to you.

**Look back to the question on the last page. How are you obeying based on the time you spend listening to God?**

### 3

## Stand.

In verse 17 we read that the priests had to stand their ground in order for the Israelites to pass safely. It says,

*And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.*

Kingdom men must never waiver when called upon to serve God. Standing in the middle of what was previously a raging river isn't the safest place to be, from a human perspective, but God doesn't call us to live safely, He calls us to live by faith. Sometimes that means standing strong where you are and in what you believe in so that those you love can get to where they need to go as well.

**Why is it better to trust in God's power than in human limitations?**

## BIBLE STUDY 1

### Life on Life Discipleship

Developing strong muscles involves a process of tearing the fibers in your body in order to give your body the opportunity to produce muscle growth. The process of building muscles is painful because you cannot strengthen your muscles any other way.

Similarly, developing your spiritual walk as a kingdom man often comes during the difficulties and painful scenarios of life. That is when most men will see the most growth, if we respond to our challenges rightly. Yet if you choose to simply nurse your wound and complain about the experience, you will not grow. It's only when you push through the pain that you discover glory on the other side.

**Read Ephesians 1:11 and answer the following questions.**

*We have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will. -Ephesians 1:11*

**Summarize this verse in your own words.**

**In what ways can God use pain and brokenness “after the counsel of His will” (see Romans 8:28)?**

**What might it look like to develop your spiritual muscles? In what ways might that process be painful?**

**Why must we grow to in order to help others grow others?**

Kingdom men have obtained a spiritual inheritance from the Lord, but this inheritance is not only for them, it is for all who come into contact with them. To honor what they’ve been given, kingdom men must focus on their spiritual growth and development. It is the responsibility of every kingdom man to take the kingdom inheritance and share it with others. This is the process of discipleship. It is the process where one kingdom man takes the values of the kingdom and transfers them to another who will then transfer them to another man.

This is our responsibility. This is what Abraham did with his son Isaac. What Elijah did with Elisha. What Jesus did with the Twelve. What Paul did with Timothy. We are to do nothing less. Even if that means stepping out of your comfort zone. Standing for God will not always be popular, but it will always reap rewards.

**Why is it often easier to go with the flow of cultural norms rather than speak up for God’s truth in the midst of worldliness?**

**When has following God called you to step out of your comfort zone? What did you learn?**

**Think of someone who impacted your own spiritual growth. Describe qualities about this person which stand out to you.**

Discipleship takes boldness. Confidence. Love. Awareness. Commitment. Perhaps you used some of these traits to describe the person in the previous question. Difficult conversations on subjects of truth, sin, and redemption aren't easy. They require courage. People don't always want to hear the truth. Discipleship isn't necessarily fun. But neither are drills, conditioning, or weight lifting. Yet all of that is necessary to strengthen our muscles. Similarly, discipleship is necessary for a kingdom man to pass on a spiritual inheritance.

Transferring kingdom values must take place on a regular basis through personal examples and authentic conversations about those examples. It's not done only through seminars, books, or radio broadcasts. Those things are good, but they are supplemental. The transferring of kingdom values, as clearly outlined in Scripture, takes place person to person and heart to heart, like Paul instructed his young kingdom protege, Timothy.

*You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. -2 Timothy 2:1-2.*

**Define "discipleship" based on the Scriptures above.**

**In what ways does discipleship influence and impact our culture for good?**

**Who discipled you? Who can you disciple?**

At the root of all the issues we face in our nation, communities, churches, families and in our own individual lives is this lack of transference of kingdom values. Discipleship is a simple process, but it isn't



easy. That's why we need to be strong in the grace Jesus gives. However, we can always be certain, the grace we need will always be supplied as we become more like Jesus.

**Read Luke 6:40 and John 13:15 and answer the following questions:**

*A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.  
-Luke 6:40*

*For I (Jesus) gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.  
-John 13:15*

**Describe the cycle of discipleship, based on these two verses.**

**Why is it sometimes tempting to leave the role of "discipleship" to those we consider to be "professional Christians" like pastors and small group leaders?**

**What should it teach us that Jesus' first disciples were ordinary men with no formal education?**

Transferring kingdom principles doesn't only happen in small group settings when we share about past adventures, although that is important. Life lessons often must be experienced by the individuals themselves in order to root deeply. Discipleship doesn't take place only through discourse. It comes through relationship, partnering, and doing life together.

Yet it seems that we often get so focused on weekly meetings, or programs that we have forgotten this truth. We have forgotten what actually accomplishes the outcomes we desire and so desperately need. Especially when you are standing on a riverbank staring at a raging river you have been asked to cross with your family, livestock, and possessions.

The Israelites faced this river in Joshua chapter 3. But we as men face our own rivers today. In order to rise up and cross through that which seeks to stop us, we are going to need to commit to this thing called "doing life together." We are going to need to embrace the call to kingdom discipleship on a deeper level.

*Pray about anything in your life that may inhibit you from fully living out your call to be discipled and disciple others. Ask God to remove any obstacles in your way so that you can leave an impact on the lives of those around you. Be willing to embrace life's difficulties and pain as a way of growing spiritually, and spend some time seeking the Spirit's discernment on how you are to grow through the challenges you face.*

## **BIBLE STUDY 2**

### **Take a Step. Grab a Stone.**

**Read Joshua 4:1-24 before completing this study.**

It's fun to get to see God show up in your life. It is in those times when He makes Himself real that our faith grows and we discover the satisfying feeling that comes with resting in God. But like a Super Bowl winning team who becomes too content with their victory, reveling in the past won't do a whole lot for your future. What's more, it won't do anything for anyone else's future either.

**What would happen to a championship sports team who decided to focus more on the previous year's championship than on the next season?**

**Have you ever noticed the slumps that can occur for business executives, athletes or any others after a momentous accomplishment is made? What would you say attributes to that slump?**

**How can you guard yourself from falling into a similar slump after spiritual victory or success?**

The miracle of the crossing of the Jordan River was a tremendous miracle, on all fronts. But God didn't want the miracle to get lost in the merriment of its celebration. He knew that He needed to seed this miracle deep into the hearts and minds of the Israelites. He chose to do this by having them set up what

we often call “stones of remembrance.” These enormous stones would serve as a reminder to them about what God did to provide a way out when there was no way as He ushered them into the promised land.

But God didn’t have Joshua set up just one place of stones. One set of stones would remain in the middle of the Jordan River (4:9). The other would be set up at Gilgal, the city where Israel established their first camp (4:20), and serve as a reminder as well as a conversation-starter for generations to come.

**Why did God call Israel to set up stones in the middle of a river where no one would see them again?**

**Why does God ask us to continually remember what He has done for us?**

**“To this day”(v. 9) is a repeated phrase in Joshua. While we might not make monuments to God’s faithfulness like the Israelites, what are some ways we can keep the work of the Lord in the front of our hearts and minds?**

The stones placed in the river would be visible during the dry season as a reminder that at one time thousands crossed the dry river. The stones in the camp were a reminder to all who encamped at Gilgal. God did not want the Israelites to forget what He had done there for them. He didn’t want them to forget where they came from and how they had gotten there. He had them set up a perpetual reminder that it was not by their might nor by their power that they had come this far. The twelve stones solemnly declared that they were there because of the supernatural hand of God.

“To this day” is a repeated phrase in the Book of Joshua. It is a signal for us to pause and remember the work of the Lord. God does this for the Israelites’ good. He had seen how quickly His people had forgotten the miracle of the ten plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the food in the barren desert, and the water from a rock. He knew His people were prone to forgetfulness. So this time, He established a visible reminder of His sovereignty in the midst of humanity’s struggles.

Remembering who God is and what He has done is critical for each of us if we are to effectively transfer the principles of biblical manhood throughout the generations. That's one reason God emphasized this so much in Scripture.

**Read the following verses and circle or underline any repeated concepts.**

*Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. -Deuteronomy 4:9*

*Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, then watch yourself, that you do not forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.  
-Deuteronomy 6:10–12*

*Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today. -Deuteronomy 8:11*

*Then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. -Deuteronomy 8:14*

*But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God. -Deuteronomy 8:18–20*

**What are some of the recurring themes that show up in these passages?**

**What are some common outcomes which happen when we do “forget” God?**

**What processes do you have in place to remember what God has done?**

**How has God set the stage for your spiritual success lately?**

**How are these memories helpful to you as you seek to disciple other men?**

God does miraculous work in His people's lives all of the time. But the problems arise when we forget what He has done and, as a result, either start taking the credit for ourselves or ignore His future guidance, or both. Setting up reminders of what God has done and how He has worked not only serves a mechanism for our own personal spiritual stability and growth, but it also enables us to become better at sharing about the details of His power with others.

*Take some time to think through ways you might want to memorialize events in your life where God has worked wonders. Pray and ask for the Spirit's guidance as you look to keep the memories of these breakthroughs fresh somehow. Also seek God's hand and will for how you can better share about these testimonies in your life so that other people may become challenged to grow in their faith as well.*