

Back to Life 3 - Cross Over

Benji the Dog rescued - Hope for Paws

Chris Fluitt

Welcome everyone to Redemption Church in Plano TX. My name is Chris Fluitt and I welcome everyone joining us online and everyone joining us in the church sanctuary, today. God bless you all!

Please turn in scripture to the words of Jesus in John 5:24.

Back to Life

We have been talking about Jesus coming back to life. Too often we

relegate the resurrection story to the Easter holiday weekend.

The resurrection story of Jesus is powerful enough to be lived out 365 days a year, 24/7, all the time, forever.

John 5:24 (NIV) “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

I want to talk to you today about the **cross over**.

The Cross Over

We just read Jesus' use of the phrase, "crossed over from death to life." The idea of crossing should make us think of an important landmark in scripture.

The children of Israel were instructed to 'Cross Over' the Jordan River.

Deteronomy 3:18 (NIV) |

commanded you at that time: "The LORD your God has given you this land to take possession of it. But all your able-bodied men, armed for battle, must **cross over** ahead of the other Israelites.

Let's make sure we understand the story.

-The children of Israel had been slaves

in Egypt.

-God enlisted Moses to deliver the people from slavery and have them return to the land God promised their father Abraham. This land is known to us as Israel.

-God puts 10 plagues on Egypt and Israel is set free, but on their way out of Egyptian slavery they are trapped at the Red Sea.

-God parts the Red Sea and they walk through on dry ground.

-Israel struggles 40 years in the wilderness until God brings them to the edge of the Promised Land.

-Instead of crossing over like the Lord had commanded, they sent in 12 spies. 10 of the 12 spies said we can't take this land and Israel refused to enter the

promise of God.

-Israel spends another 40 years in the wilderness until God brings them where? (The unbelieving generations die off)

-God brings them to the Eastern boundary of Israel - the Jordan River. Here under the leadership of Joshua and with the Ark of the Covenant before them, they crossed over.

Our Jesus tells us about crossing over from Death to Life. The crossing over at the Jordan River is also a cross over from death to life.

God has a promise for all of us and it is essential that we cross over into His promise.

I want to teach you 4 things about the

Cross Over today.

The Cross Over is a place of inconvenience.

Do you know where the Jordan River is? If you read your Bible, the Jordan River shows up in many important stories. So you may be familiar with the name of Jordan, but unfamiliar with its location.

Israel / Jordan

The Jordan River is the Eastern boundary of the nation of Israel. It was this boundary in the time of the Old & New Testament and it is still today the Eastern Boundary between Israel and the nation of Jordan.

The Children of Israel were traveling from Egypt. What direction is Egypt from Israel? Egypt is West of Israel. If they are traveling from the west, then why do they end up at the Eastern border? It would have been much more direct, faster & easier journey for them to have entered on the Western side of Israel. On the western side there would have been no obstacle like a river to cross.

Why did God do this? Why did God make them walk all the way around the promise land to enter on the Eastern border through the boundary of a rushing river?

The Cross Over is a place of

inconvenience.

I think God did this because He has something to teach us – all of mankind.

God not only had the Promised Land as a destination. God had also mapped out where He wanted them to cross over and into their promise.

Learn this! God not only has a planned final destination for you, but has also mapped out some of your battles, your obstacles, and boundaries.

The cross over is a place of inconvenience. God will call you to places that make your journey a little longer. God will call you to a location that has obstacles, and then tell you to cross over them. God will bring you to a boundary that will cause you to walk by

faith and not by sight (1 Cor 5:7). God's path will cause you to trust in the Lord with your heart and lean not on your own understanding (Proverbs 3:5).

We make the mistake of believing if life is not easy, fun, & happy then we must be out of the will of God. Sometimes preachers will preach prosperity as a sign that God is for you and loves you. This is not true!

If you are in a place of inconvenience you may not be out of God's plan. You may be right at the spot where God has marked your cross-over.

God not only brings the Israelites out of the way and up to a rushing river in flood season (Joshua 3:15), but God has them enter inconveniently near an

enemy city of Jericho. This was a city famed for its defenses and military might... God brought a group of slaves who had never been known as an army, to a place within striking distance of the strongest militarized city in that region.

You may feel like everything is going wrong in your life. Do not give up! Your doctor may have told you the worst news. Don't give up!

You may have an enemy who is bigger; more trained, and defended breathing down your neck... **BUT DON'T GIVE UP!**

God is just taking you the long way around to your victory.

God is just going to show you His ability to bring victory over any obstacle.

God is just serving up your greatest

victory.

The Cross-over is a place of inconvenience and...

The Cross Over is a place of Transition

Let's read this scripture again.

Deuteronomy 3:18 (NIV) |

commanded you at that time: “The LORD your God has given you this land to take possession of it. But all your able-bodied men, armed for battle, must **cross over** ahead of the other Israelites.

These slaves were wandering nomads in a desert wilderness, but when they crossed over they were LAND POSSESSORS, MIGHTY WARRIORS, no longer underdogs but the TOP DOGS!

The Cross Over is a place of transition!

It is at the Jordan River where Elisha transitioned into a prophet with a double portion promise. Before, he had been a farmer who had followed a prophet... but at the Jordan River he Crossed Over! (Transitioned)

Naaman, a leper who did not know the Lord, transitioned as he dipped 7 times in the Jordan River. He was healed of his leprosy (a type of sin) and he gave honor to the Lord.

Jesus himself stepped into this Jordan

River and was baptized by John the Baptist. Coming up out of that water, the voice of the Father rang out "this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." Jesus' ministry crossed over at that moment.

Experiencing this, John the Baptist transitioned and declared I must decrease, Jesus must increase.

The cross over is a place where you are changed! Not only will the situation change, but you yourself are changed by the power of God. You cross over from death to life!

Am I preaching to anyone who is ready for a transition?

Are you ready to change?

Are you ready to be mighty?

- Victorious?

-The a possessor of the promise?

Are you ready to defeat the struggles in your life?

In Joshua 4 these former slaves crossed over... They physically crossed from one side of the river to the other side of the river. But, who here knows you have to do more than physically cross over a barrier, obstacle?

Your heart has to transition.

Your mind has to transition.

How you see yourself and think about yourself must transition.

Your purpose and dreams must transition.

It was here on the other side of the

River Jordan that God transitioned the hearts and minds of the people.

In Joshua 5, in the evening the people celebrated Passover (looking forward to promise of the lamb Jesus Christ) and they also circumcised (a type and shadow of water baptism Colossians 2:11-12).

God then speaks in Joshua 5:9.

Joshua 5:9(NIV) Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” So the place has been called Gilgal to this day.

God transitioned them, not just by

location, but emotionally, mentally, and spiritually!

The same, the guilt and reproach of being slaves in Egypt... God rolled it away. They call that place Gilgal which means to roll.

You can cross over today! God can roll away all your past regrets and sin.

Not, “once a drug addict; always a drug addict... an alcoholic, always an alcoholic... or, once a liar always a liar... Let God take you to a place called Gilgal, where He rolls it all away.

The Cross Over is a place of inconvenience.

The Cross Over is a place of

Transition

The Cross Over is a place of Descent

The very name Jordan means descent or place that descends.

The Jordan valley forms the lowest part of Israel. The Jordan River exists because it is so low; all the water collects at the low point and continues to travel lower and lower, all the way to one of the lowest spots on Earth - The Dead Sea. The sea shore of the Dead Sea is the lowest dry land on Earth - 1,300 ft. below sea level.

The Cross-Over is not a place of pride. It

is not a place of exaltation. The cross-over is not the entry of a rich kingdom.

God chooses a low place for your cross over. God loves humility.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

God always chooses the humble & lowly and resists the proud. Moses and David were shepherds... Jesus a lowly carpenter... Disciples were fishermen... The low place makes for an excellent cross over.

When I was at my lowest point... When I was suicidal and had no peace... When I had given up... This is the place where I

repented of all my pride and asked the LORD to be the Lord!

Are you in a low spot today? You are not far from your Jordan River cross over. Could it be that God has brought you to this place for your cross over? Embrace the descent.

The Cross over is a place of Victory & Miracles

Does anyone want miracles? Does anyone want victories? Then you should cross over.

During the cross over, God worked miracles.

As soon as the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant reached the edge of

the Jordan River:

Joshua 3:15-17 15 Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, 16 the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. 17 The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stopped in the middle of the Jordan

and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.

God worked a miracle and they crossed over on dry ground. God caused the water to stop flowing and it piled up all the way back to a town called Adam. I can't help but think that is symbolic. God's cross over promise reaches all the way back to the first man Adam.

If Adam were here today, He would tell you to cross over from death to life. If Joshua were here, he would tell you to not even think about staying on this side of the Jordan.

You will feel very different after you

cross over... but, your enemies will also feel different after you cross over.

Joshua 5:1 Now when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the coast heard how the Lord had dried up the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted in fear and they no longer had the courage to face the Israelites.

Your enemy hopes you don't cross over today. Your enemy hopes that you stay on the other side of your darkness, disappointment, weakness, guilt, shame.

The devil's heart (if he has one) will melt in fear when you cross over. The enemies you fight will suddenly seem to lose courage... if you will just cross over.

Joshua and Israel went on to Jericho where they won the victory. As they shouted their worship to God the walls of the city fell.

The Cross over is a place of Victory & Miracles

Are there any witnesses in here right now? Is there anyone who has crossed over into Jesus Christ and seen miracles & victories? Stand to your feet!

In a moment we are going to cross over

in prayer and worship. I want you to boldly cross over today. I want to see your miracle and your victory.

musician

I started this sermon with an unexpected video. It was the video of a dog named Benji.

This dog was lost. It was in poor health. Its hair was so matted; it was hard to see a dog under it. Covered in fleas and malnourished, this dog was going to die on the streets.

But someone saw this dog and their heart was moved to rescue Benji. They tried to help the dog, but Benji fought them. They ended up catching the dog in a snare, and the dog screamed like it was being hurt... the dog lashed out at

the very ones who wanted to help.

Benji needed a cross over... but he fought it every step of the way.

We are a lot like Benji. God has so much better for us, but we fight Him & His word, we pull against His conviction, we resist His will.

Even know you just heard the Word of God about a better life for you... but there is something in you that may resist the cross-over God has for you.

...But you saw how that video ended. Benji got a haircut and a bath. Benji was given a brand new life. Benji had friends and received healing physically, emotionally and perhaps, even spiritually.

Benji crossed over. Now, do you think that dog at the end of the video would ever want to cross back over and go back to that life on the street? No way. Even a dumb dog would know better than that.

Do we know better than that?

What side of the Jordan are you on today?

Are you resisting the cross-over into God's promise... from death to life?

Are you tempted to cross back over from life to death?

Let's talk to God today.