OPENER:

Joshua 6:1-20 Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. But the LORD said to Joshua, “I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors. You and your fighting men should march around the town once a day for six days. Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram’s horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams’ horns, have all the people shout as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town.”

So Joshua called together the priests and said, “Take up the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram’s horn.” Then he gave orders to the people: “March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the LORD.”

After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams’ horns started marching in the presence of the LORD, blowing the horns as they marched. And the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant followed behind them. Some of the armed men marched in front of the priests with the horns and some behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns. “Do not shout; do not even talk,” Joshua commanded. “Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!” So the Ark of the LORD was carried around the town once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp.

Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the LORD. The seven priests with the rams’ horns marched in front of the Ark of the LORD, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the LORD. All this time the priests were blowing their horns. On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days.

On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times. The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, “Shout! For the LORD has given you the town! Jericho and everything in it must be completely destroyed as an offering to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies.

“Do not take any of the things set apart for destruction, or you yourselves will be completely destroyed, and you will bring trouble on the camp of Israel. Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron is sacred to the LORD and must be brought into his treasury.”
When the people heard the sound of the rams’ horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it. Once the Israelites crossed the Jordan, they would do mighty things for God in conquering the land, but they would face many enemies and obstacles. Their first obstacle that they had to overcome was the city of Jericho. Would they move forward in faith to take the land that God had promised or would they once again retreat in fear?

BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR PROMISE THERE WILL BE AN OBSTACLE THAT YOU MUST OVERCOME!

As you move forward in possessing all that God has for you, you will arrive at a Jericho in your spiritual walk. You will hit a wall. A wall too big to pull down, a wall too big to climb, a wall that stands in our way, a wall that stops your progress.

WE WILL ENCOUNTER WALLS ON THIS WALK.
HUGE WALLS THAT WE CANNOT SCALE, KNOCK DOWN, OR GO AROUND.

SO, WHAT DO WE DO?

ILLUSTRATION:
“Hit a wall” - In endurance sports such as cycling or running, “hitting the wall” describes a condition that athletes encounter which manifests itself by sudden fatigue or loss of energy.

Hebrews 12:1 .......And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.

WHAT IS THE JERICHO IN YOUR LIFE TODAY?
WHAT’S KEEPING YOU FROM YOUR PROMISED LAND?

We all have them, don’t we- obstacles that stand in our way? Yours may relate to your job, your finances, your ministry, your marriage, your children, your family, your physical health, your relationships, your stage in life.

- Walls of trouble that hinder your progress and seem to bring you to a standstill
- Walls of impossible circumstances that block your path
- Walls of Fear that put up a barrier between you and where you want to go
- Walls of problems that stand in your way.

1. WE TEAR DOWN THE WALLS WITH PRAYER
Joshua teaches us how to overcome these obstacles that would try to stop us from moving forward. The first major obstacle facing Joshua and the people of Israel after they entered the Promised Land was Jericho. If they could not conquer this city then all hope for them of inhabiting the Promised Land was gone.
Vs. 1-2 Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. 2 But the LORD said to Joshua, “I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors

Joshua sought the Lord and the Lord said to Joshua...... “I have given you Jericho, its king and all its strong warriors.”

WHEN YOU ARE UP AGAINST A WALL YOU OVERCOME IT WITH PRAYER.

TO TEAR DOWN THE WALLS YOU MUST TALK TO GOD.
LET THAT BE YOUR FIRST PLAN OF ACTION, RATHER THAN YOUR LAST RESORT.

One of the first temptations that comes when you hit a wall is to stop praying. But, it was in an encounter with Jesus that Joshua received instruction of what to do to conquer Jericho.

Let’s read of his encounter..............

Joshua 5:13-15 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, “Are you for us or for our enemies?”

14 “Neither,” he replied, “but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, “What message does my Lord have for his servant?”

15 The commander of the LORD’s army replied, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.

SO, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
HAVE YOU BEEN ASKING GOD TO FIGHT FOR YOU – TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR JERICHO?
YOU NEED TO FIX THIS FOR ME, JESUS, YOU NEED TO MAKE THIS JERICHO GO AWAY. HERE’S WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO, JESUS.

But Jesus stands before us today and he says, “No. That’s not why I’ve come. Not so you can tell me what to do, but so I can tell you what to do.

“At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. “I am at your command,” Joshua said. “What do you want your servant to do?” (Joshua 5:14).

Joshua fell on his face and said, “Not my will, Lord, but your will be done.” His question changed from, “Are you here to help me?” to “What can I do to help you.”
Do you need to fall on your face? Your Jericho is before you. Christ, the commander of the Lord’s army is here. You’ve been praying, “Jesus help me to solve this problem, to fix it, to resolve it the way I think you should.”

Ask God to forgive you today. Change your prayer. Stop telling God what you want, and start asking God what he wants.

BEFORE THE WALLS OF JERICHO COULD FALL DOWN, JOSHUA HAD TO FALL DOWN ON HIS FACE IN SURRENDER.

And if you’re a military man, like Joshua was, and you know there’s going to be a battle to fight, you’re probably expecting to be given an order to carry out an order that has to do with preparing for battle. But instead of being told to get his boots on and put the troops on high alert, the first order Joshua gets is, “Soldier, take off your boots. The place you are standing is holy.”

THE COMMANDER OF THE LORD’S ARMY CALLS JOSHUA TO WORSHIP FIRST - NOT TO WAR.

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.
I WILL HANDLE JERICHO.

This is always the order in spiritual battle:

- First we worship and seek God’s face.
- Then we go to battle.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP IS WHERE WE DO OUR GREATEST WARFARE AND WIN OUR BIGGEST BATTLES.

IT IS IN THE HOLY PLACE THAT WE RECEIVE THE FAITH TO FACE JERICHO.

2. WE TEAR DOWN THE WALLS THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Vs. 6 - 7 So Joshua called together the priests and said, “Take up the Ark of the Lord’s Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram’s horn.” Then he gave orders to the people: “March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the Lord.”

Joshua obeyed the plan of God. Though he may not have completely understood the plan, or how they were going to have victory, he followed God.
ILLUSTRATION:
God’s instruction to Joshua was to march around the walls of the city one time around for six days and seven times around on the seventh day.
But, when Joshua told the people the Lord’s instruction he left out how many days they were to march. All they knew is the orders he gave them for each day. They went out the first day and marched around the city. They came back to camp that night, got up the next morning, and went out again and marched around the city. They did this for six days.

Isn’t that how it is with the Lord? He often tells us just enough for that day and we must obey? We don’t know a lot of times what we are going to do the next day? We don’t know how long we are going to have to march around the wall before it falls.

ILLUSTRATION:
Some of us feel like we are marching around in circles. But you can’t stop. Because the day that you stop could be the day that the walls fall down.

KEEP MARCHING! YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN THE WALLS WILL FALL!
KEEP WALKING! DON’T GIVE UP!

The Israelites could see the impossibility of the situation, but they walked. Wouldn’t it have helped if maybe on the second or third or even fourth day that God would have at least allowed a crack in the wall to appear? It surely would have helped to keep them going. Sometimes we feel like we are just going around and around that wall that won’t move and we see no progress.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS GO UNANSWERED?
DO YOU KEEP MARCHING?

Galatians 6:9 So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.

THREE TEMPTATIONS THAT COME WHEN WE FACE A WALL:
1. To complain against God.
That is why God instructed the people to not say a word. Joshua told them not to say a word until he gave the signal for the priests to blow the ram’s horns and for them to shout. They would be tempted to talk about how large and high the walls were and voice their question of God’s plan. Sometimes the only thing you can do is praise God. There is nothing good to say about a situation. Just give praise.

HOLD YOUR TONGUE AND PRAISE HIM.

2. To give up.
When you feel like you are marching around in circles it is then that the enemy will come and tell you what a failure you are! There is no use to keep marching. God’s not going to do anything. He is not going to take care of this.
KEEP MARCHING!
MOST BATTLES ARE WON WHEN YOU JUST KEEP DOING WHAT YOU’RE DOING!

3. **To walk away.**
You want to pack up your things and leave and go somewhere else on a whole new path. There will always be a different road that looks like it doesn’t have any obstacles.

    EVERY OPEN DOOR IS NOT FROM GOD.
    SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO MARCH AROUND A CLOSED ONE UNTIL IT OPENS.

3. **THE IMPOSSIBLE BECOMES POSSIBLE THROUGH FAITH**
   *Hebrews 11:30* It was by faith that the people of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls came crashing down.

   So, why did God have them march? *Couldn’t they just have walked up to the walls of Jericho and blew the ram’s horn and shouted and the walls fell? Yes, but God wanted to see their faith and their trust in him.*

   Are you “Trust Tested?”

   The people believed that God could make the impossible possible. *It is when we obey in faith that God has the power to do the impossible and cause the walls to fall!*