

LIVING FAITH XII
Does Not Stop Short
Hebrews 11:30; Joshua 6

INTRODUCTION

- A. In about 1871, a minister by the name of Brundage quoted Acts 26:28 and declared, “He who is almost persuaded is almost saved, and to be almost saved is to be entirely lost!”
 - 1. Struck by these words, Philip Bliss penned the hymn, “Almost Persuaded”.
 - “*Almost persuaded*”, *harvest is past!*
 - “*Almost persuaded*”, *doom comes at last!*
 - “*Almost*” *cannot avail; “almost” is but to fail;*
 - Sad, sad, that bitter wail – “Almost – but lost!”*
 - 2. Perhaps no truer words were spoken.
- B. Judgment Day.
 - 1. There will be numbers who “almost” obeyed the Lord.
 - 2. Rich ruler, Mark 10:21, “*One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess, and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.*”
 - 3. Religious leaders, John 12:42-43.
 - 4. Matthew 7:21-23, “Lord, Lord...”
 - a. Religious individuals,...
 - b. But they had not done the Lord’s will.
 - c. “ALMOST, BUT LOST!”

I. THE BATTLE OF JERICHO. Joshua 6

- A. Hebrews 11:30, “*By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days.*”
 - 1. Living faith – instructed by God, Romans 10:17.
 - 2. Walls fell ***after*** they obeyed.
- B. Explicit Instructions Given.
 - 1. Each day, march around the city one time, for six days, vs. 3.
 - 2. Seven priests carry seven trumpets before the ark, vs. 6.
 - 3. The people were to be silent, vs. 10.
 - 4. Seventh day – march around the city seven times, vss. 4-5.
 - a. The priests will blow the trumpets.
 - b. The people will shout.
 - c. The walls will fall down.
- C. Questions to Consider:
 - 1. What if they had stopped on the first day? Second? Third?
 - 2. What about stopping the sixth time on the seventh day?
 - 3. For the walls to fall, the Israelites had to obey!
 - 4. “Almost” obedience would not have given the Israelites the victory.
- D. “Almost” Obedience.
 - 1. Naaman, the leper, 2 Kings 5.
 - 2. Naaman was healed only after he was obedient.
 - a. Why not a different river, which was cleaner?

- b. Let me dip only three times? Four? Six?

II. STOPPING SHORT.

A. "Almost" Obeyed.

1. There are many who believe that Jesus is the Christ, but...
 - a. They never demonstrated their belief with a living, active faith.
 - b. Their faith, once alive, died when they decided to go no further.
 - c. Faith died when they got caught up with the thinking of the world and teaching of the religious world. Luke 8:13-14
 - d. They have ignored the pure Word of God.
 - i. Ps. 12:6, *"The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times."*
 - ii. Ps. 119:97, *"O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day."*
 - iii. 2 Timothy 2:15
2. They never repented of their sins, Luke 13:3.
3. They failed to confess the name of Jesus, Matthew 10:32.
4. They were not baptized for the forgiveness of their sins, Mark 16:16.
5. But they cried, "Lord, Lord...", Matthew 7:21-23.

B. Christians Today.

1. Failing to grow in the Lord, Philippians 3:8-14.
 - a. Spiritual growth necessary, 2 Peter 1:5-7, 8-10.
 - b. We are to give diligence to our growth.
2. Being "faithful until death", Revelation 2:10.
 - a. Can't stop serving the Lord – no retirement.
 - b. But God's grace will cover, Ephesians 2:4-5.
 - c. This is "grace through [*active, living*] faith, Ephesians 2:8.
3. Living faith...
 - a. Lay aside what hinders our lives for God, Hebrews 12:1.
 - i. Every encumbrance.
 - ii. Sin which entangles us.
 - iii. Run with endurance – ***without stopping!***
 - b. Living faith demands self-discipline:
 - i. Time in prayer.
 - ii. Study of God's Word.
 - iii. Fellowship and worship with the believers.

CLOSING.

- A. Jas 4:17, *"To one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin."*
- B. Judgment Day separation, Matthew 25.
- C. Agrippa told Paul, "Almost you persuade me to be a Christian." Acts 26:28
- D. ***"Almost", ...but lost!***