

LENT 2007 A COMMITMENT TO CROSS OVER

JOSHUA 3

It seems everything in life has a place to cross over.
 There is a time of preparation then movement.
 We come thru the vestibule to the sanctuary
 From the foreword into the book,
 From childhood into an adult..
 Shouldn't it be that way?
 That a political campaign ends in an election,
 An interview with a job
 An engagement with a marriage.
 A pregnancy with a birth?

There comes a time to stop all waiting, preparation,
 And do the thing were called to do.
 Let's make sure that what we do is smart.

SLIDE -- Consider this picture! (PENGUIN)

Sometime it takes that kind of drastic action in a marriage.
A man was asked if he had bought his wife anything for Valentine's Day.
 "Yes", he said, I remember. "I bought her a new belt and a bag." The Pastor said: "That was very nice of you, I hope she appreciated the thought." He said, "So do I, and hopefully the vacuum cleaner will work better now."

SLIDE -- Jesus 30 years of ministry we're coming to a close.
 The people were either going to worship him or whip him.
 They were to follow him or fault him.
 Praise him or crucify him.
 We know exactly what they did.
 But Jesus moved forward and crossed over.

**SLIDE --- A COMMITMENT TO CROSS OVER REQUIRES A
 I. CERTAINTY OF GOD'S DIRECTION.**

SLIDE--- Jesus had come to a certainty of direction early in his life.
 Even at 12 years of age in the temple.
He was about his father's business.
 All through his ministry he was about building the kingdom.
 Even in his death, he said,
"I must go to Jerusalem."

We all have that need to feel directed.
 To feel like our lives are headed somewhere.

SLIDE- **Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk in 16th century Germany.**

He became the leader of the Protestant Reformation
Which changed the Christian world forever.
He could only nail his Thesis to the door,
When he had absolute certainty.

SLIDE -- John Wesley was an Anglican priest when

He became the founder of the Methodist movement and great evangelical awakening.
But he could only do it after he found his heart strangely warmed
He had confirmed certainty of his salvation.

SLIDE --- Wilber Wilberforce—went off into retreat and came back

with an absolute certainty that England's parliament
must move to abolish England's slave trade.
Without that commitment he never would have lasted the 11 years it took.

SLIDE--- **Billy Graham spent a sleepless night on an empty fairway of a golf course**

Stretched out in prayer that God would give him certainty about God's message.
The next morning he stood up ready to cross over.
Billy Graham marched off that golf course into destiny.

SLIDE -- NONE of these men could have done it without a certainty of faith.

We need God's guidance not only for the future,
But for the unfamiliar future.

That's where we are today.

In making a decision about a pledge and a commitment to fulfill our vision.

None of us knows what rests on the other side.

Nationally, economically, medically, vocationally, and in our family.

We cannot know the future.

We can only trust God

Next week we will face a moment of destiny.

We will all be given a pledge card.

We will all take pen in hand and fill in our commitment to the vision before us.

Believing that God will lead us.

That is exactly what Jesus had to do.

He took aim at the cross.

HE got ready

And then, there in the garden the night before

He made his commitment and gave his resolve.

And he fired his greatest love and force at Satan

And defeated him.

SLIDE--- **CROSSING OVER REQUIRES A
I. CERTAINTY OF GOD'S DIRECTION.**

II. A PERSONAL CONSECRATION.

SLIDE ---Jesus could never have gone to the cross had he not personally consecrated himself in the garden.

Bowed before his father, submitted his will.

When Joshua was to take his people into the promised land.

On the night before the crossing over, he commanded the people.

”Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. Joshua 3:5

The Hebrew word here is Kadosh—it is closest definition to our concept of radioactivity than anything else.

The word refers to a positive, kinetic energy that can either bless or blast.

When we deal with God we face absolute transcendence .

Our only response is to fall on our knees and worship him.

That alone will be our salvation in dealing with this sick world.

Richard J. Foster in his Devotional “Celebration of Discipline.”

Said we need the discipline of meditation. In contemporary society our adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry and crowds. If Satan can keep us engaged in muchness and manyness he will rest satisfied.”

That’s why prayer and meditation are so important.

It doesn’t come easy.

Even Jesus had to work at it.

Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there he prayed.” Mark 1:35

You and I have made a personal decision to be a part of this church.

God has placed us here at this time for this ministry.

And if our prayers are needed they are needed now.

As we move forward against the many obstacles that would discourage us.

Like the women who told her husband about her mental block.

She said; I went to the bank to withdraw \$40 dollars,

But for the life of her she couldn’t remember how to spell Forty or Fourty.

He husband ask: What did you do? She said: I took out \$50.

We’re standing on the edge of completion.

We need to make this campaign a good one

So that our financial loan demands

Don’t keep us from the ministry that will begin in this new

Community life center.

What kind of sacrifice would God have me make?

Joshua said: “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. Joshua 3:5

CROSSING OVER REQUIRES

- SLIDE**
- I. A CERTAINTY OF GOD’S DIRECTION.**
 - II. A PERSONAL CONSECRATION.**
 - III. A DEPENDENCY ON DIVINE INTERVENTION.**

SLIDE --- When Israel crossed over the red sea
 First the leaders had to step out.
 And then the people stepped out into the Jordan.
 They were between a rock and a hard place,
 But Then God acted.

SLIDE --- Exodus 15:8 By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood firm like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.
 Congealed can be translated froze.
 And the translation says the Water Froze in place as a solid wall.
 They crossed over.

SLIDE The Egyptians 600 chariots followed.
 They Egyptians said:
I will pursue, I will overtake them. I will divide the spoils; I will gorge myself on them, I will draw my sword. And my hand will destroy them. Exodus 15:9
 But

SLIDE Vs. 10 Your blew with your breath, and the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters. Exodus 15:10
 and
 God caused the water to come back upon them and
 Drowned the whole Egyptian army.
 Miriam sings:
Exodus 15:11 Who among the gods is like you, O Lord? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders? You stretched out your right hand and the earth swallowed them.

What a miracle they experienced.
 But they had to step out.
 Mothers clutching their babies stepped out.
 Wide eyed children squeezing their father’s hand stepped out.
 Old men and women hobbled on their staffs.
 Young wives clutched their husband’s arms.
 But to be saved, they all had to step out in faith..

History has changed shape because Godly people crossed over.
 When the Apostle Paul crossed over to Macedonia from Asia,
 the direction of Christianity moved west rather than east.

History has seen few such moments.

And we have so little opportunity to be a part of these moments.
At first UMC, We have our part of history in this moment.

Our personal lives contain a series of crossings over.
When first we leave home we cross line that changes life permanently.
We can go back but it's never the same.

SLIDE -----When we stand in front of the marriage altar we cross a line that last forever.
When we join the armed services, change careers, or move across the country,
we may cross lines that shape life permanently

When we come to accept Christ as our Savior we cross over.
We are never the same again.

SLIDE ----- Friends when Christ went to the cross.
He crossed over death---
And changed our world for time and eternity.
He bought with a price that which nothing else could buy.
And because of it we are set free.

So next week.
As you consider your involvement in our "Vision to Victory" campaign.
We want every family.
Every single mom, dad,
High school teenager,
Youth,
Widow,
Elderly
Even shut- inns.
To consider what sacrifice they will make.
In crossing over to complete what God has called us to do.

A Little elderly woman called me this past week.
She said; I am a shut inn and I got all your materials in the mail.
I just want you to know I live on Social Security,
I don't have a lot of extra money,
But I want to do my part.
I will do something for the church.
I said, "Well praise God for your gift of love."

We are here because those who went before us sacrificed.
We must do no less for the future.
We must do our part
When we step forward
God will use his divine intervention for the rest.

A woman was at work when she received a phone call that her small daughter was very sick with a fever. She left her work and stopped by the pharmacy to get some

medication. When she got back to her car, she found that she had locked her keys in the car. She didn't know what to do, so she called home and told the baby sitter she would be late but the baby sitter told her that the fever was getting worse. Try a coat hanger to open the door.

The woman looked around and found an old rusty coat hanger left by someone on the ground. But, she didn't know how to use it. She bowed her head and asked God to send her help. Within five minutes a beat up old motorcycle pulled up, driven by an old bearded biker wearing a skull rag on his head. The woman thought, "This is what you sent to help me?" But, she was desperate, she said, "Yes, my daughter Is very sick. I stopped to get her some medication and I locked my keys in my car. I must get home to her, could you please help me? He said, "Sure." He took the hanger, walked over to the car, and in less than a minute the car was opened. She hugged the man and through her tears she said, "Thank You So Much! You are a very nice man." The man replied, "Lady, I am not a nice man. I just got out of prison an hour ago for grand theft auto. The woman hugged the man again and with sobbing tears cried out loud, "Oh, Thank you God! You even sent me a Professional!"

Crossing over is not easy.

It hasn't been for me either as your pastor.

Hearing the complaints and criticism

Having the downtown community rally against our progress.

But we are trusting in God's direction and divine intervention as we give.

Will you cross over with me and with others who believe it is our time,

To step us and follow from vision to Victory.