

The Problem of Senseless Clutter

by: Adrian Rogers

"And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, ... And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee." Joshua 17:14-15

Do you want to live in victory this year? Joshua had some advice for the Israelites that can help you as well. The children of Israel had gone into the Promised Land but had not cleared the land of trees or of the pagans living there, as they had been instructed to do. They had not claimed their full victory.

Some of the tribes of Israel came to Joshua and said, "Now, Joshua, look. We are a great people, and we want to grow. We want big things done for us, and we don't have enough room. Joshua, we want more land."

What was Joshua's solution for these people — these people who are so boastful, these people who said, "We are great people?" Joshua said, "You see that mountain over there? You want more land? You want a bigger inheritance? Get some axes and cut down those trees that clutter that mountain. There's plenty of room, but you're going to have to clear out those trees." In other words, Joshua was telling them, "Why should you have more land until you've dealt with the land that I have given you?"

First Things First

How many of you would like a greater opportunity? Let me ask you a question: What are you doing with the opportunity God's already given you? You want a better job? What are you doing on the job you already have? You want more money? What are you doing with the money you already have? Some people wish, "I want to be a missionary." Do you think two thousand miles of ocean is going to make you a missionary? If you're not winning souls here, why should you go overseas and do nothing?

Joshua was saying, "Look, you're asking for more opportunity. You're asking for a bigger place. You see that mountain? Go clear the trees."

Harmless Clutter

We too must clear out the harmless things that clutter our lives. There's nothing wrong with trees. They are beautiful. But if you want to build a farm, put out pasture land, or build a house; you have to clear the ground.

The reason many people are not living in victory is their lives are cluttered. Do you have enough time for prayer? Do you have enough time for Bible study? Well, if you don't, you're doing something you ought not to do — you're doing something God never assigned you to do. It may not be a harmful thing — overtly harmful — it may not be a sinful, wicked thing; but if it is cluttering your life, you need to get rid of it.

There's enough time in every day to do gracefully everything God wants you to do. You say, "Well, I just need to find time." No, you need take time. You need to make time. You don't waste time when you're at Jesus' feet. You just have to get the clutter out of your life. Some people are so busy doing good, they don't have time to be godly or to get alone with God. You must clear out the harmless things that clutter your life.

Harmful Corruption

There are the harmless things that clutter your life, and then there are the harmful things that corrupt your life. The Israelites had some pagan Canaanites whom they wouldn't get rid of and were continuing to inhabit the Promised Land. But which came first? You may be surprised, but God's order was to cut down the trees first and then drive out the Canaanites. Joshua 17:18 continues, "... it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and ... thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong."

In other words, God is saying, "Get the clutter out of your life. Get down to worship. And then, you can establish a beach head to fight against your 'Canaanites.'"

Do you want to live in victory this coming year? Get rid of the things that clutter your life, clean up the things that corrupt your life, and live in victory as God intended.

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