

I love the story of Joab doing what was necessary to achieve his dream of being the general of Israel's army!

Blessings and favor always!

## **Part 17: Build Your Dream**

### ***Live the Life You've Always Wanted!***

#### **Texts:**

**James 4:14 (NKJV)** - "For what is your life?"

**Jeremiah 24:6-7 (NKJV)** - "For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. [7] Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart."

**Philippians 3:13-15 (NKJV)** - "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, [14] I press toward the goal for the prize of the ***upward call*** of God in Christ Jesus. [15] Therefore let us, ***as many as are mature, have this mind;*** and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you."

**2 Samuel 5:4-10 (NKJV)** - "David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. [5] In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah. [6] And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot

come in here." [7] Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). [8] Now David said on that day, "Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites (the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul), he shall be chief and captain." Therefore they say, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." [9] Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the City of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward. [10] So David went on and became great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."

A. I enjoyed Andrew's message last Sunday. He said so many good things, it made me wonder how I could follow him this Sunday!

1. Joke: What Can I Say?

Boudreaux, an old Cajun dad, was taking his two boys, Pierre and Claude, to town in his wagon. To keep from being bored, the two boys decided to play a game to pass the time. One of them said, "Let's see who can think of the best things to eat." His brother agreed, so the first boy said, "Sauce piquant, étouffée, barbecued soft shell crabs, gumbo, candied yams, collard greens and butter beans with ham bone."

With a loud squeal, the younger boy began fighting his brother.

Boudreaux stopped the mule, pulled the two boys apart and asked, "Now what here is dis all about?"

The younger one said, "It's Pierre's fault. We was playing dis game about who could say the best things to eat and Pierre, he done said all the good things and didn't leave me nothin' good to say!"

2. I appreciate all our staff so very much!

B. In Paul's epistle to the Philippians, the verse about the call of God being an **upward** call has impacted me. I believe God receives glory when our lives reflect His goodness and grace.

1. At times, that upward call means you're "climbing up the hard way" and things aren't going as expected. But just because the enemy is opposing whatever you do and someone misunderstands or hurts your feelings, you must never give up!
2. Have you heard the old saying, "getting down and dirty"? The dictionary gives this definition: marked by or given to fierce and often unscrupulous competition, such as: down and dirty campaigning; to be overly aggressive in physical activities; making the full effort.
4. This phrase has other connotations that are not so good. But rather than focusing on the negative "getting down and dirty" in this series, let's think about a more positive viewpoint:

## ***Pay It!***

### **"Getting Up after Getting Dirty!"**

- C. From our text in 2 Samuel 5:4-10, many believers have misunderstood how long it took for Israel to inhabit their promised land.
1. Hundreds of years after the Israelites had crossed the Jordan River, they still had not conquered all the land God had promised them.
  2. According to the map, Zion was situated right in the middle of the promised land.
    - a. More than being strategically located in the heart of Israel and having a prophetic destiny, Zion was known as the City of God, where His presence dwelt.
    - b. **Hebrews 12:22-24 (NKJV)** - "(We) have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, [23] to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, [24] to Jesus

the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”

3. Zion had already played a significant role in shaping the nation of Israel. Mount Moriah, the location where God instructed Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, was a part of Mount Zion.
4. Israel's future destiny would also involve Zion because it included the threshing floor of Araunah. This is where David's repentant sacrifices halted the Angel of the Lord from destroying more Israelites.
5. Mount Zion's significance is further emphasized by the fact that Solomon's temple would be built there.
6. Centuries later, it became known as “Calvary,” where Jesus, the Son of God, shed His blood for the atonement of our sins.
7. Known today as the “Temple Mount,” it is still significant as the exact location where Christ will establish His earthly headquarters to rule over the governments of mankind.

D. How God's people gained control of Zion is an amazing story.

1. After Abraham's death, the enemy reclaimed this vital location called Mount Zion.
2. When Israel entered their promised land, Joshua fought to take Zion from the Jebusites, but was defeated.
  - a. Scripture reveals that in spite of many victories, Judah (or Praise) was not strong enough to conquer Zion.
  - b. Some Kingdom victories can only be claimed through praise and worship. If your worship isn't strong enough, you may never enjoy certain levels of your inheritance.
3. To David, it was unthinkable that the city where God had established His Name and His Presence should remain under enemy control. Too many promises were attached to Zion for David to ignore it. Once his rule had

been established, he was determined to recover Mount Zion as God's rightful dwelling place.

4. The enemy ridiculed David by saying he would never reclaim the city unless he first dwelt with their lame and blind.

E. To build your dream, you must **learn how to effectively deal with distractions.**

1. The Jebusites' mockery of David stemmed from the fact that Zion (which means 'fortification') was so well constructed, defeat was impossible. Hadn't they successfully defeated the tribe of Judah under Joshua's leadership?
2. To besiege the city would be extremely difficult because of its springs of water and its elevation. Jesus was referring to this city when He compared the church to "a city set on a hill." Zion was known not only for its beauty, but its seemingly impenetrable defenses.
3. Refusing to be frustrated by the enemy's distractions and taunts, David promised that the first man to enter and reclaim Zion for God would be promoted to "captain of the armed forces," or in our day, the rank of general.
4. While all his companions agreed that it was impossible to defeat the Jebusites and enter Zion, Joab accepted this challenge as an opportunity for promotion.
5. Desire causes you to see what others overlook!

F. To build your dream, you must want it so badly, **you're willing to "get up and get dirty!"**

1. After closely examining the Jebusites' supposedly impregnable fortress, David discovered a way to enter the city.
2. By climbing up this route, Joab could enter the city and then open the gates for the rest of the army to come inside and defeat the Jebusites.

3. However, the path he must take was **not** easy or accessible. It wound through what newer Bible translations refer to as the “water shaft.” But it had nothing to do with the city's water system.
  - a. If you've ever visited a developing or third world nation with living conditions similar to Bible days, you'll know that the King James Version more accurately describes Joab's route as the “gutter.”
  - b. Without electricity or modern pumps, water had to be drawn from the many springs and wells for which Zion was noted. The 'gutter' David referred to was the carved system through which the sewer and waste water was drained from the city.
  - c. The one and only entrance the Jebusites would never have suspected was the mire of their sewage system.
  - d. The Jebusites' mistake was failing to comprehend how desperately Joab craved this promotion—even if it meant climbing through the muck and filth of sewage water!
4. Most people only desire what is easy to obtain—that is, if proper recognition is given for their accomplishments. Clearly, some pursuits would be out of the question for them. They're either too busy to serve or uninterested in menial tasks in the Kingdom of God. Unless their exceptional skills and talents are showcased by the limelight, they aren't interested.
5. Not Joab. They just didn't understand his passion to win this battle for God.
  - a. None of David's other soldiers made a move. But once Joab had gained entrance into the City of Zion, pandemonium broke out!
  - b. Covered with the stench and filth of sewage water, Joab entered the city and threw open the gates for the others to help capture Zion.
  - c. When it was time to take selfies for Facebook or Instagram, no one wanted to stand near the guy with the foul odor. But because he

was willing to “get up and dirty,” Joab became the general over the armies of Israel!”

6. While Joab's climb up the sewer isn't exactly the strategy we would choose to reach the next level, it does illustrate an important principle.
    - a. ***You must want it so badly, you're willing to endure all the junk to see your dream become a reality!***
    - b. Like the children's fairy tales, to win the heart of the beautiful princess and become the king, you must first conquer the dragon.
  7. A long-time member of our church has worked in difficult circumstances for some time.
    - a. Though he was in control of a huge project with enormous responsibility and a budget in the tens of millions, his bosses took credit for his work and received the salary that belonged to him.
    - b. Not only did they claim his ideas and take credit for his accomplishments, he was treated as a nobody.
    - c. A few days ago he sent an email saying that all four of his opponents were called into the office and fired on the spot. I don't know what more God will do, but I'm expecting a big promotion for him.
    - d. If you're not being treated well by people who lie and steal your ideas, just keep doing your best. Since you're doing it for God—not them—He will surely reward you!
- G. Born in Waller, Texas, Marcus Lutrell is an exceptionally brave hero of this state who should never be forgotten.
1. He and others like him have paid a great price to defend our nation.
  2. As a U.S. Navy Seal, his story is recorded in the book, *Lone Survivor*, and later in a movie by the same title, starring Mark Wahlberg.
  3. While still young boys, both Marcus Lutrell and Morgan, his twin brother, dreamed of being in the U.S. Special Forces.

- a. Since Navy Seals are the most effective fighting force in the world, the boys knew a price must be paid to become the best of the best.
  - b. Of the 40,000 who apply for the Seal's training program each year, only about 1,000 are accepted.
  - c. Of those 1,000, only 200 to 250 (or 5 of every 1,000 applicants) complete the course.
  - d. According to the instructors, it's not the most capable recruits who graduate; it's the determined ones who are willing to pay the price.
4. While other 14 year-olds did what was normal, Marcus and Morgan persuaded Billy Shelton, an ex-Special Forces neighbor, to prepare them for acceptance in the Seal program after high school.
    - a. Every day, until the proper age, they endured grueling physical exercises. And when they applied, both were accepted into the world's most rigorous training program—the U.S. Navy Seals.
    - b. Both men are true American heroes who put their lives on the line, time after time, for our great nation.
  5. What does this prove—especially if you have no desire to be in the military? It demonstrates the one thing you must possess to excel in any endeavor, whether it's music, family or finances, career or character: to be the best, or have the best, you must pay the price!
  6. As Jim Rohn said, "You can't hire someone else to do your push-ups for you."

H. Part of the price to achieve your dream is to ***make every moment count!***

1. Joab's claim on the City of Zion tells us that "getting up and dirty" is not enough; timing is also crucial.
2. When Joshua led Israel into Canaan, the timing wasn't right to capture Zion; neither was it the best timing when David first became king. But finally, the timing was just right!

3. I often quote from Leonard Ravenhill, "The opportunity of a lifetime must be seized within the lifetime of the opportunity."
4. In 1280, Niccolo Polo and his brother Maffeo returned to their home in Venice after being absent for 17 years. During that period, the Polo brothers had been trading with a confederation of Mongol tribes who had just become the new lords of Southern Russia, Mongolia, China, Korea and lands beyond.
  - a. The Polo brothers had been sent to convince the Pope that Kublai Khan, the leader of the largest land empire in the history of the world, wished to spread Christianity throughout his realm: from the Pacific to the Black Sea, from Siberia to modern day Afghanistan, which was one-fifth of the world's inhabited land area. The brothers' assignment was to return with 100 missionaries.
  - b. Upon arriving in Venice, Niccolo found that his wife had died and that he was the father of a 17 year-old son named Marco.
  - c. The pope responded to the request ***nine years later***, in 1289, by sending only **two** missionaries. One of them died before reaching the Far East, meaning that only one missionary actually arrived.
  - d. Niccolo was embarrassed that the 100 missionaries were not sent, but he did bring his son, Marco, to enlist in Kublai Khan's service. Through Marco Polo's travels, the western world was introduced to several countries, such as China.
5. Other religions in those regions became hostile to the Christian faith, causing the open door of opportunity to gradually begin closing.
  - a. Finally, in 1338, 58 years after the original request, the church sent 50 missionaries. But it was too late.
  - b. Because missionaries were not sent when the call came, China and other nations of the Far East are now the largest unreached population in the world.

- I. Each of us has the same allotment of 24 hours in a day.
  1. It's amazing how some people can accomplish so much in those 24 hours, while others complain about not having enough time.
  2. Since there are only 24 hours in a day, you'll never have enough time to tackle many things that call for your attention. But if you'll adopt a good time management system, so much more can be accomplished. Still, you must decide what is most important.
  3. (Illustration with a sheet of paper). With this piece of paper, I want to present some amazing statistics about the hours and years of your life.
    - a. (Cut off 1/3 of the sheet, crumple and lay aside). This section represents the time you will spend sleeping.
    - b. (Cut off another 1/3, crumple and lay aside). Working on a job is another third, or 24% of your time.
    - c. (Hold up what is left). These next statistics for the remaining 1/3 of your life are both amazing and frightening. In a study released by Nielsen Ratings on March 5, 2014, children (ages 2-11), watch over 24 hours of TV per week, while adults (ages 35-49), watch more than 33 hours of TV, which will increase as we grow older.
    - d. The average American watches more than five hours of television every day! ***That's over 35 hours per week!*** (Cut off another 20% of the paper, throw it away, and show what remains).
    - e.  $33\% + 24\% + 20\% = 77\%$  of your life, leaving only 23%.
    - f. You will spend  $4 \frac{1}{3}$  years driving a car (cut off more paper).
    - g. Time spent in the bathroom, bathing, doing your nails or shaving amounts to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  years.
    - h. Almost  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years will be spent eating and 6 months just standing in line. The time spent in the bathroom, eating and standing in line totals another  $6\frac{1}{2}$  years of life.
    - i. Cut away another  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years spent on a computer, and how much is left? No wonder you feel rushed and out of time!

4. Now, let me ask, how much of your life has already been lived? There's not as much left as you thought!

**J. Life Application Points:**

1. You must decide how to spend your life. Where is God in the time you have left?
2. Can you commit to reading His Word and praying every day, and worshiping in His house just 1½ hours each week? Is that asking too much?
3. Can you find time to develop a new skill set to take you to the next level?
4. What could you accomplish if less time was spent watching TV?
5. Could you develop or grow a ministry? Or become a volunteer in a ministry?
6. The bottom line is this: you can still make a huge difference with your life if you'll start now!