



“Be Strong and of Good Courage”

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Friday and Saturday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

How does Joshua leading the children of Israel into the Promised Land remind you of the Savior’s mission? Dr. George Pierce explores the importance of names, the power and faith of Rahab, and the importance of children gaining their own testimonies.

Part 2:

Dr. Pierce returns and explores the importance of remembering the hand of the Lord and tackles what modern readers do with violence in the Hebrew Bible.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. George Pierce
- 01:11 Introductions to Dr. George Pierce
- 04:28 Review of Deuteronomy
- 07:46 Deuteronomy is the “second law”
- 11:08 Moses completed his mission
- 14:01 Joshua begins his command the children of Israel
- 16:55 Joshua’s name foreshadows Jesus Christ
- 19:32 “Be strong and of good courage”
- 20:54 The gospel is optimistic
- 25:38 Joshua sends spies and they meet Rahab
- 30:32 The spies return to explain the plan with Rahab
- 31:13 Songs are used to transmit stories and information
- 34:47 Israel is told to sanctify themselves
- 38:00 The water didn’t part until they stepped out onto the water
- 39:08 The Jordan River is pivotal
- 44:50 Memorials for remembrance: 12 stones
- 47:02 Memorials for our children
- 51:25 Tell your children know what God has done for you
- 60:30 End of Part I–Dr. George Pierce

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. George Pierce
- 00:07 Circumcision, manna ends, they observe Passover
- 00:56 Joshua receives instruction regarding Jericho
- 05:20 Obedience over bravado
- 07:49 Harem in the Bible
- 09:40 Violence in scripture
- 11:41 Hyperbole in Joshua and Judges
- 14:52 If we have a problem understanding God’s commands, the problem lies with us
- 18:49 Eschatological Continuity
- 21:24 Gospel Topics Essay: “Peace and Violence Among 19th century Latter-day Saints”
- 24:55 If you lack information, ask Google. If you lack wisdom, Ask God.
- 27:55 Archeology and Joshua
- 29:44 The Biblical idea of “rest”

- 31:16 Covenantal renewal in Joshua 23 and 24
- 36:06 Dr. Pierce's personal faith journey
- 44:08 End of Part II—Dr. George Pierce

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Biographical Information:



Dr. Pierce was born and reared in Okahumpka, Florida. He received a B.A. in History from Clearwater Christian College, an MSc in Archaeological Information Systems the University of York, an MA in Biblical Studies (Archaeology concentration) from Wheaton College, and a PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures from the University of California, Los Angeles. Prior to commencing his doctoral work, Dr. Pierce served as research faculty at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beer Sheva, Israel. Additionally, he is certified in architectural and mechanical drafting from the State of Florida. He has taught courses on ancient Near Eastern civilizations, Jewish history, and Jerusalem the Holy City at UCLA. Dr. Pierce has worked with archaeological excavations in Florida, Scotland, the West Bank, and Israel, including Tell Dothan, Tel Kabri, Ein Gedi, Beersheba, Jaffa, and the Philistine city of Ashkelon, in addition to excavating for the Israel Antiquities Authority. He is currently the lead

architect and supervisor of the Geographic Information Systems team for the Tel Shimron Excavations in the Jezreel Valley, Israel. Dr. Pierce and his wife, Dr. Krystal Pierce, have two children – Victoria and George III.

Courses Taught: Book of Mormon (REL A 121 and 122), Old Testament (REL A 301), New Testament (REL A 211), and Jesus Christ and the Everlasting Gospel (REL A 250)

Areas of Expertise: Archaeology of the southern Levant; computer applications in archaeology; Bronze and Iron Age Levantine ceramic typology and seriation; historical geography of the Holy Land

Areas of Research: Regional settlement patterns; digital data structure, creation, maintenance, and dissemination in archaeology; archaeological and geographic aspects of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament

Languages: Hebrew and related NW Semitic languages (reading); Akkadian (reading); Greek (reading); Middle Egyptian (reading); German (reading); French (reading)

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Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to FollowHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:10	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:15	As together, we follow Him.
Hank Smith:	00:20	Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host, and I am here with my co-host. Now, let me describe him for you. And there arose not a co-host since in Israel like unto John Bytheway, whom the Lord knew face to face. Deuteronomy 34:10, altered just a little bit.
John Bytheway:	00:42	Could be a slight exaggeration.
Hank Smith:	00:44	There arose not a co-host in Israel like unto John Bytheway. So, John, welcome. It's going to be a great day. We're going to be in the book of Joshua today. Joshua has big shoes to fill with Moses leaving and him coming in, stepping into that role. So we needed someone who could be like unto a Joshua for us, and we found a Bible expert.
John Bytheway:	01:11	We did. We found Dr. George Pierce and as I read his bio, I thought, "I don't know if we've had a more interesting bio the whole time we've done this." Dr. George Pierce was born and raised in Okahumpka, Florida. He received a Bachelor's in History from Clearwater Christian College, Master's in Archeological Information Systems from the University of New York, and an MA in Biblical Studies from Wheaton College and a PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures from University of

California, Los Angeles, also known as UCLA. Prior to commencing his doctoral work, Dr. Pierce served as research faculty at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beer Sheva, Israel. Additionally, he's certified in architectural and mechanical drafting from the State of Florida.

- Dr. George Pierce: 02:02 I can draw your house plans if you need to.
- John Bytheway: 02:03 Yeah. How old are you? 300 years old? He has taught courses in ancient Near Eastern civilizations, Jewish history and Jerusalem the Holy City at UCLA. He's worked with archeological excavations in Florida, Scotland, the West Bank and Israel, including Tel Dothan, Ein Gedi, Beer Sheva, JOFA and the Philistine city of Ashkelon. In addition to excavating for the Israel Antiquities Authority. He is currently the lead architect and supervisor of the geographic information systems team for the Tel Shimron Excavations in the Jezreel Valley in Israel. And Dr. Pierce and his wife, Dr. Krystal Pierce, whom we have had on the podcast, they have two children, Victoria and George III. George published a book called covenant and compassion. We're just thrilled to have you here, Dr. Pierce and excited to learn from this incredible background that you've got there.
- Dr. George Pierce: 02:59 Well, it's great to be here. I don't know if I can live up to my bio, to be honest. I don't know who wrote all that stuff because I've been around the block a couple times. How about that?
- Hank Smith: 03:07 George is one of my favorite people. And if I run into George in the Joseph Smith building, it's a good day. I've been looking forward to this for a long time. Those of you who heard his wife's episode, Dr. Krystal Pierce, that was our sixth episode of the year and she just did a fantastic job talking about Noah. She got you prepped for our interview, right, George? She told you what it was going to be like, yep?
- Dr. George Pierce: 03:28 She did. She warned me about you both. So let's... Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 03:31 I want to come to your house for the third hour Come, Follow Me and see what that's like with you two there.
- Hank Smith: 03:38 If I remember right, John, we asked her about, "What's conversation like at your house?" And she said, "Well, this is what we talk about. This is what we do."
- John Bytheway: 03:45 Yeah.

Dr. George Pierce: 03:46 Funnily enough, just this morning after breakfast and we got the kids to school, I was sitting down and writing some things while we had some work going on in the house and our conversation turned to one of the funny things about Joshua is how do we understand the conquest and God's commandment about the Canaanites? It led to an hour of us sitting there, hashing out theologically, archeologically, philosophically, here's how we can best understand this and at the end of the day still have attention. So yeah, that's what conversations revolve around in our house.

John Bytheway: 04:18 Did you bring the recording of that? We could make that a bonus feature today.

Dr. George Pierce: 04:23 We could just splice it straight or a bonus feature, here's some extras.

Hank Smith: 04:28 Dr. Pierce, George, let's come into Joshua by talking a little bit about Deuteronomy and just making a couple of highlights and giving Moses a good sendoff before we introduce our next prophet, our next in line. What can we say about Deuteronomy?

Dr. George Pierce: 04:46 Yeah, let's set some context with the book of Joshua. I'll just go back to Deuteronomy one. And just the first verse tells us where they're at, where the children of Israel are and says, "These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side, Jordan, in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red Sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab." So places that we're not entirely sure where they're at, but we can cut through the mustard and just say, the children of Israel are on the east side of the Jordan. What would now be the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as a nation state.

Dr. George Pierce: 05:19 Moses is then going to take the opportunity in Deuteronomy, hence the name to restate the law for them. Deuteronomy means second law. Moses is taking the opportunity to restate it and reformulate it in a way that it's a series of curses and blessings. Now that sounds harsh. We'll simplify down and you'll see a pattern here of the Book of Mormon. The blessing is, and all the blessings are, if they're obedient to the commandments that the Lord has given them, then they'll be prosperous and they'll be able to go into the land to get their inheritance, to be able to build houses and have a good family structure and generations of children and grandchildren, et cetera, et cetera. And the curses aren't so much curses that we think about it, but it's missing out on God's blessings for disobedience. If they're not obedient to the commandments, then they don't get the

blessings and life is going to be harder and there's going to be a lot more difficulties.

- Dr. George Pierce: 06:17 So Moses sets this up in Deuteronomy. You do these things, you'll be blessed. You do these things, you won't receive your blessings. And then toward the end of it, starting in Deuteronomy chapter 32, we have, what's called the song of Moses and Moses talks about Israel and how right they've acted and all the rest of these incidents in which he's effectively setting them up and praising the Lord. And then he blesses the tribes of Israel specifically. So the tribe of Levi, so that they will be able to teach Israel about the judgments and the law. So the Levitical priesthood taking on that role of teaching the law to the people and performing sacrifices and blessing Benjamin and the house of Joseph. So Ephraim and Manasseh and all the rest of the tribes.
- Dr. George Pierce: 07:03 And then we have in chapter 34 as the Bible has it, Moses goes up to Mount Nebo and he looks over, he's able to see the promised land, but he is not allowed to go in. And that's the end. And it's then mentioned that his successor is going to be Joshua, who's been his right hand man ever since they left Egypt. This is what sets us up. So when Joshua opens then, Moses is now off the scene, Israel now has this new leader. The mantle of leadership falls on Joshua. And then they're poised and ready to go in to effectively take over the promised land, if that makes sense.
- Hank Smith: 07:46 Yeah, that's awesome. So Deuteronomy is not a lot of storyline, just a restating of the law and Moses' goodbye. I remember last week we studied quite a bit, the phrase, don't forget, don't forget what the Lord has done for you. That seemed to be a major message of Deuteronomy. And if you do forget, life's going to be hard, but he's given them a good setup, the land that they're about to go in, they knew from the spies that they sent earlier, this is an awesome place. They're going to do really well if they follow the commandments.
- Dr. George Pierce: 08:19 Absolutely. And just to tie it back to that story, Numbers, of the spies going in. Joshua and his compatriot in that story, Caleb, they're the only two that are left of that entire generation after wandering for 40 years in the wilderness. Those two are left, because they were the two who were faithful and said, "This is what God wants us to do. We can do it in the strength of the Lord." This is why Joshua has lived so long. And you see in the book of Joshua later on, Caleb comes to him and says, "I want my inheritance in the land." And so they give Caleb his inheritance and his family and all the rest of this. So these two,

this is their reward. They're two who originally came out of Egypt 40 years plus before and now they're able to go into the promised land and that's such a great reward for their obedience.

- Hank Smith: 09:05 Yeah. That was back in Numbers chapter 11.
- John Bytheway: 09:08 I'm glad you mentioned it's the second law. I think people have seen that word Deut and you see two in there, "Is this a duet?" I've spelled it wrong my whole life. It's not Dueteronomy, it's Deuteronomy. And now I love that we're getting back to some storyline. Do you ever have students or people that feel that was harsh that Moses didn't get to enter the promised land?
- Dr. George Pierce: 09:30 Moses did so much. And he was so foundational and for the rest of the time, including into the modern era, I mean, currently Moses is held as the paragon of what it means to be a prophet in Israel and a law giver. And he also acts as a priest as we see, in many cases. And he acts as a proto king, Moses is the complete package and to not be able to go there, as I talk to students, I say, "It's about obedience." And not to sound harsh about it because I mean, on some level we're like, "Man, I wish Moses could just step over the river Jordan and get there. And everything's going to be great." When Moses is disobedient at times and Moses has this great relationship with Jehovah in which sometimes Jehovah and you guys have probably encountered this in your study. Sometimes Jehovah's like, "Step aside, Moses, I'm going to wipe out everybody. And I'm going to start again with you."
- Dr. George Pierce: 10:19 And then sometimes Moses comes to the Lord and says, "Could you just wipe out everybody and start again with ..." And so you had this back and forth and they're tempering each other. And that's a great relationship that he has, but in the cases where he's disobedient, it's very striking to use a pun. He was told the first time, "Strike a rock and the water's going to come out," and that's fine. And the second time he is told to speak to the rock and in his anger with the children of Israel, he and his frustration, he strikes the rock a second time down the story line and water comes forth. But the Lord says, "Because you weren't obedient to me, you're not going to go over there." Now there's a whole lot of interpretation there. The apostle Paul says the rock that followed him around that provided water, it was Christ. And so Christ is only struck once, not twice folks, in terms of this.
- Hank Smith: 11:01 Oh, okay.

Dr. George Pierce: 11:02 Which is an interesting interpretation, but it comes down to being obedient to what the Lord's asked us to do, even in the small things.

John Bytheway: 11:08 Could we say George also that Moses had fulfilled his mission and this is now Joshua's role?

Dr. George Pierce: 11:16 Absolutely. Moses has fulfilled his role. He's done his mission. He's done everything that the Lord had probably intended him to do. It's time for that chapter to close. And we see this at the end of the book of Joshua too. So spoiler alert, we'll just get to the end, they all die. So at the end of the book of Joshua, Joshua passes away, Eleazar or the high priest who is the son of Aaron, he passes away. And it's closing the chapter on the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings. So Moses, is now out of the picture. Joshua is going to die. The high priest who succeeded Aaron in the wilderness wanderings and got them right into Canaan, he's going to pass away. And then at the end of the story, they also buried the bones of Joseph, which is really closing the chapter on Israel's time.

Hank Smith: 12:04 The Genesis story.

Dr. George Pierce: 12:05 Yeah. So all these things have to finish up if you will, for the Israelites to take that next step forward in the chapter of their history and their life and the promised land.

John Bytheway: 12:17 I've also thought that Moses, in the Lord taking him back home, that's even better than the promised land. Moses could rest and be in the rest or the presence of the Lord. I remember as a kid watching the 10 commandments, I felt bad he didn't get to go into the promised land, but Joshua did.

Hank Smith: 12:34 And we're not done with Moses. We'll see him again in the New Testament. We'll see him again in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord has more for Moses to do this is an interesting point. A transition point from Moses to Joshua in some way, we all go through this with a new Bishop or a new Relief Society president, or a new president of the church. It's a transition period that's difficult. I remember pretty much the only person I ever knew and when I was a teenager, was Gordon B. Hinckley. I just didn't know the church without Gordon B. Hinckley. I just figured he was the church. And then when he passed away and I remember looking at President Monson going, "No, no, where's President Hinckley? You're the first counselor, President Monson. You've always been the first counselor, President Hinckley."

- Hank Smith: 13:19 But I remember seeing President Monson stand up that first time and there was a change in him, at least in my perspective. And then again with President Nelson and we could talk about last year, John, when we talked about Brigham Young, taking over for Joseph Smith, this is no fun to be in this position.
- John Bytheway: 13:36 Yeah. I don't remember anybody ever in general conference, whether it's being set apart as the president of the church, or even a calling to the 70, or to be one of the 12 saying, "Yeah, I'm totally prepared for this. I got this. Been waiting my whole life. I know exactly what I'm doing." I mean, it's totally the opposite like, "I didn't ask for this. I was asked to do this. I'll do my best, but wow, I'm overwhelmed." That's what you always hear.
- Dr. George Pierce: 14:01 We see that with Joshua too, right at the tail end of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy chapter 34, verse nine, "Joshua, the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom for Moses had laid his hands upon him and the children of Israel hearkened unto him and did as the Lord commanded Moses." But as we look at the first chapter of Joshua, especially the first nine verses or so, and then beyond that, we can see that the gravity of the situation is affecting Joshua in a way.
- Hank Smith: 14:27 It might. If someone said to you, "Okay, Moses, you're out, Joshua you're in. Joshua, how you feeling?" "Please no. I don't think I can do this." Those are particular big shoes to fill.
- Dr. George Pierce: 14:41 Absolutely. And so I think he feels that, and he's got his own mission. Moses had his to give the law to lead them through the wilderness, to go through all that with the Exodus. And now it's Joshua's turn to settle them in the land and to get them going into what they should be doing.
- Hank Smith: 14:57 Well, I love this idea of trusting in the Lord and looking to perhaps a new leader when that time comes, no matter what organization it is, a ward, a stake, a Relief Society, a quorum, a class in Young Women's, president of the church, a new apostle. When these things happen, being able to trust that the Lord is whom he has called, he will qualify. So tell us about Joshua, George.
- Dr. George Pierce: 15:21 We get the introduction to Joshua actually back in Exodus. It's interesting. Joshua is the son of Nun. We really don't know much more other than that, about the family, but we do know that they're from the tribe of Ephraim. So if you identify with that through your patriarchal blessing, or are just a big fan of the tribe of Ephraim, this is Joshua's tribe. Let me just throw this out here as a parallel, isn't it interesting that the two spies who

live long enough to see and go into the promised land, Joshua from the tribe of Ephraim and Caleb was from the tribe of Judah. We have these two, my very strong tribes represented in faithfulness.

- Hank Smith: 15:58 George, when we do have a divided kingdom later, those are going to be the two heads.
- Dr. George Pierce: 16:01 Yeah. Those are going to be the two central tribes in both of those kingdoms, the Southern kingdom of Judah, obviously, and the Northern kingdom of Israel by far, the two most populous tribes in the Northern kingdom are those of Ephraim and Manasseh. So the house of Joseph and Ephraim is actually going to be the territory in which the capitals of the Northern kingdom are going to be located. Joshua's name interestingly enough, because I love names. I love the meanings of names and Joshua's name, it comes from the Hebrew, meaning either Jehovah saves or Jehovah is salvation. I like Jehovah is salvation. So Joshua and Hebrew, Yehoshua, sometimes Yeshua comes to us. And if you're familiar then with Jesus's name in Aramaic, as he was here in his earthly ministry is Yahshua, effectively it's Joshua. It means the same thing, Jehovah is salvation.
- Hank Smith: 16:51 How does that become Jesus, George? Is that just the Greek form of Yeshua?
- Dr. George Pierce: 16:55 So you have Yahshua in Aramaic, which goes to Yesus in Greek, which then comes in as Gesu in Latin. And then because of the Germanization of the word, that initial, I becomes a J and then we get Jesus. And so that's how we get it in English.
- Hank Smith: 17:11 So Jesus has the same name as this old prophet.
- Dr. George Pierce: 17:14 When you look at the life of Joshua and what he does, it's a foreshadow of seeing the Saviors' ministry. Joshua effectively in a lot of places, quote unquote, "saves the Israelites," and helps to keep them in the right way and adhering to the commandments and being victorious. When the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that they're going to call his name Jesus. And part of that is because he's going to save his people from their sins and Jesus performs that same role of salvation. I think there's a lot of good parallels as we think about that and ponder it.
- Hank Smith: 17:48 So watch for those as we go along, watch for the Joshua, Jesus parallels as we read?

Dr. George Pierce: 17:54 Absolutely.

John Bytheway: 17:55 It just seems like so often, especially in these times, in which we're talking, a name indicates a mission, doesn't it?

Dr. George Pierce: 18:03 I love biblical names and pointing out biblical names. Place names, people names, because they matter in the story, we read it and we go, "Okay, Joshua takes over. That's great. Moving on." We need to sit and think and say, "Okay, his name means something and it's particular for this time." And again, the ultimate example is that of the Savior, both in Luke and in Matthew, Mary and Joseph are both told individually that his name is going to be Jesus for that very reason of saving his people from their sins. I don't think the Savior's name could have been anything else. It had to have been Jesus.

John Bytheway: 18:40 Oh, I love the way you put that. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 18:41 And George, as I'm looking at chapter one, I'm seeing that the Lord does notice that Joshua needs a bit of a pep talk. Verse five says, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage under this people."

Dr. George Pierce: 18:59 If you or anybody else has a habit of marking in their scriptures or highlighting in their gospel library app, take a look and see how many times he says, be strong and of good courage. Verse six, be strong and of good courage. You go down and there's the charge to keep the book of the law. And in verse nine, have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage. It's not just a good suggestion, it's a commandment to Joshua. Be strong and of good courage. So it's twice then that the Lord says this to him, "Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Dr. George Pierce: 19:32 Further on as we, as we look, and Joshua's reminding these other tribes that are trying to settle on the east side of the Jordan. They tell him in verse 16, "Everything thou commandest, we will do. And whithersoever thou sendest, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee. Only the Lord, God be with thee, as he was with Moses." And they go down the very last statement in verse number 18, they tell him, "Only be strong and of a good courage." So three times in that initial chapter, twice from the Lord, once from the other tribes of Israel, they're reminding Joshua, "Listen, we know that it's a big responsibility." And Joshua's got to be feeling the pressure. And he's reminded, dare

I say, commanded in verse nine to be strong and of a good courage.

- Dr. George Pierce: 20:24 And so I think there's a parallel there for us. We're tasked with sometimes very difficult things at work in our family situations, maybe our callings that give you a calling to teach youth Sunday school and you're really not sure how to handle 16 to 17 year olds in any way. That's just a personal aside, but we have this assurance that God's going to be with us if we're faithful to him and we can be strong enough, good courage. And if anybody needs that pep talk it's Joshua.
- Hank Smith: 20:54 This could be such an applicable chapter to anyone who's facing a daunting task, a new calling, a difficult trial, be strong and of good courage. I wanted to quote Elder Holland here. This is a talk called The Tongue of Angels. He quotes another apostle. So we have an apostle quoting another apostle. Elder Holland says, "I love what Elder Orson F. Whitney once said, "the spirit of the gospel is optimistic. It trusts in God. It looks on the bright side of things, the opposite or pessimistic spirit drags men down and away from God, looks on the dark side, murmurs, complains and is slow to be obedient." Then back to Elder Holland, he says, "We should honor the Savior's declaration to be of good cheer. Indeed it seems to me, we may be more guilty of breaking that commandment," this from Elder Holland, "Than almost any other." So you're right. This is a commandment, be of good cheer from Jesus or in Joshua chapter one, be strong and of good courage. I have commanded it.
- John Bytheway: 21:57 We all remember the call of Moses and, "Who am I to lead the children of Israel out of bondage and I'm of slow tongue and of slow speech. And they won't listen to me." And the Lord's answer was not, "You're the best. You're awesome. You were saved for this." The Lord's answer was, "I will be with thee." And what I like about this in Joshua in verse five, "So I will be with thee." As it was with Moses, So I will be with thee." And then he said it again in verse 17, "only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses." And that's why you can be strong and of a good courage, because I'm right here and I'll be with you.
- Hank Smith: 22:37 That's great, John. The people recognize that, George just showed us that, verse 16, they answered Joshua. "All that thou commanded us, we will do. Whither you send us, we will go ..." But down in verse 17, "The Lord thy God be with thee as he was with Moses."
- Dr. George Pierce: 22:54 And they close that statement, "Be strong and of a good courage."

John Bytheway: 22:56 Yeah, that's great.

Hank Smith: 22:57 George, there we see the children of Israel backing up their new leader. When I see a new Bishop in my ward, I don't only feel bad for him, but I support him. I say, "Whatever you call me to do, I will do, I will go. I will support you."

John Bytheway: 23:11 Having watched a congregation raise their hands to say they'll sustain you as a Bishop, that was a moment for me, because that means something. I didn't think it meant that much until I was sitting there on the stand shaking in my boots and the congregation, some with smiles on their face, raised their hands and I thought, "Okay, maybe I can do this if the Lord's with me." So it's a beautiful story of Joshua here, starting out.

Hank Smith: 23:42 Chapter one finishes, "Be strong and of a good courage." I think we have a theme for chapter one. All right. What are we going to do next?

John Bytheway: 23:51 And that's it ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much.

Hank Smith: 23:53 Yeah. Thank you for coming. Be strong-

John Bytheway: 23:55 Be strong and of a good-

Hank Smith: 23:55 ... and of good courage.

Dr. George Pierce: 23:55 Good courage. Yeah. We'll see you guys.

Hank Smith: 23:57 If only it was that easy. Be strong and of good courage. And maybe the Lord is telling Joshua, "Be strong and of good courage because-

John Bytheway: 24:06 You're going to need it. You're going to need it.

Dr. George Pierce: 24:10 We got this guys. We got this.

Hank Smith: 24:11 Now, what's this called, George? Joshua is supposed to go through the people and tell them to prepare because we're going in, in three days.

Dr. George Pierce: 24:21 That is his instructions to the people. So remember what the Lord's commanded you to do. Once this is going to be set, you're going to get this land, but your wives, your little ones, your cattle, they're going to remain here. You're going to come with the rest of us. We're going to get ready. And we're going to go and we're going to take possession of this land,

apprehensions aside and being strong and of good courage ringing in his ears. He's going to instruct the people that it's time to go. I mean, this is their whole purpose. This is why they left Egypt and why the Lord brought them out of Egypt was to come back in to settle in the land that's part of their Abrahamic covenant blessings, is to have this land as it was promised to Abraham and his descendants. This is it. This is going to be the moment when they fulfill all these.

- Dr. George Pierce: 25:10 And I say moment, it's a process. It's not just an event. So this is a process by which that covenant is going to be fulfilled by going in here and taking the land. And so it's going to require a few things ahead of that. As we look at Joshua, he's gearing up and I think with, be strong and of good courage, just echoing in his mind, he's going to lead them across the Jordan.
- Hank Smith: 25:34 And as we open up chapter two, it seems like the Lord is preparing the way.
- Dr. George Pierce: 25:38 He absolutely is in Joshua chapter two, before they go over, Joshua sends a couple spies into the land to see how things are and to gauge what's going on here.
- Hank Smith: 25:51 Reconnaissance mission.
- Dr. George Pierce: 25:52 That's right. So Joshua and the children of Israel on the east side of the Jordan, he's going to send two guys across the west side of the Jordan. And this is going to be in the area of Jericho, if you have a Bible map. They go to what's described in chapter two, verse one as a harlot's house, whose name is Rahab and they lodge there. Now people have debated, does it really mean a harlot harlot or is she an innkeeper who can provide other services or whatever. Regardless, it's a public place where they can find somewhere to stay with somebody who isn't going to turn them over to the authorities, if that makes sense. So they're, they're smart enough to know where they're going. They're good spies, they know what they're doing.
- Dr. George Pierce: 26:34 And so in a James Bond type manner, they go here and of course the king of Jericho, the guy who's in charge of the whole town, has heard that there are spies out. And so maybe they weren't as good as they could have been. And they know that they're in Rahab's house and Rahab brought them up to the roof of the house and she'd hid them in the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. So we see that she's not maybe only a lady of the night or an innkeeper or whatever. She's also engaged in producing linen. She has them hide on the

roof and she covers them over with a bunch of flax. So hiding in the haystacks, if you will.

- Hank Smith: 27:13 So Rahab is going against the king of Jericho here?
- Dr. George Pierce: 27:16 Absolutely. She says, "Yeah, they went out the gate. It's dark. I don't know where they went. They probably went over there." And so the people who are chasing the spies, go down toward the Jordan River to pursue them. And when they're gone, she brings them out of the flax, brings them out of the haystacks. And she says this in verse nine, "She said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side of the Jordan, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath."
- Dr. George Pierce: 28:04 She says, "Listen, we've heard the stories." So it's not like the Israelis are an unknown entity. The stories are now circulating around Canaan, "Hey, there's this group of people. And their deity allowed them to cross the sea and their deity preserved them and helped them in these battles against these very strong kings on the Eastern side of the Jordan River in their territories." And we know, as she says, "he is God in heaven, above and in earth beneath." We have Rahab, regardless of her occupation, regardless of her reputation, she expresses a faith in the God of Israel, something that's very rare in these stories. We have somebody outside of Israel expressing this faith, but it's worth pointing out. It's worth pointing out.
- Hank Smith: 28:51 She's a golden convert.
- Dr. George Pierce: 28:52 She is, right?
- Hank Smith: 28:54 Yeah.
- Dr. George Pierce: 28:55 They didn't have to go through too many discussions with her. She's like, "I'm in, I'm in. When can I get spared from all this?" And we see this in verse 12, she says, "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I've shown you kindness, that you will also show kindness unto my father's house and give me a true token that ye will save alive my father and my

mother and my brethren and my sisters, and all they have, and deliver our lives out of death." Save the pets, save the cousins, nephews once removed.

- Hank Smith: 29:22 Rahab's family.
- Dr. George Pierce: 29:23 Save them all, make that agreement. They say, "Yeah, sure. We owe our lives to you. So we're going to spare you."
- Hank Smith: 29:29 And so there's some sign, that-
- Dr. George Pierce: 29:32 There is. We can see that her house because they're being let down out of this window, is part of the city wall. And so she lets them down by a rope of some sort or as it says, a cord here because she dwells upon the wall. Her house is part of the wall, part of the fortifications of the city. And so the spies say, "Listen, if you hang this red rope outside your window, we'll know which house is yours. And we'll remember which house is yours, and your family will be spared. And if anybody of your family runs into any trouble with the Israelites, we'll take responsibility for this." And so she says, "Okay." And she trusts them and she lets them down out the window. And then she ties the red rope there, the scarlet line in the window, just so that when the Israelis are going to come to Jericho, they'll know that it's her house.
- Dr. George Pierce: 30:23 The spies come down, they rejoin Joshua. They tell them all this stuff. And Joshua knows then, verse 24 of chapter two, "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands, all the land, for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us." So the spies' information that they bring back to him, isn't just, "Hey, we're alive because this lady saved us and hid us in some flax stalks and she's got a red rope outside her window, so don't kill her." They would say the tales of what the Lord's been doing for us, are going all throughout Canaan and they're getting scared. And we had this convert by the way.
- John Bytheway: 30:55 Yeah. So intrigued by Joshua chapter two, verse 10, how did they hear? They weren't posting this anywhere. I mean, did some of them skip the old wandering thing and make it there somehow?
- Dr. George Pierce: 31:13 The Israelis have had interactions with the Canaanite since Numbers 21. And that's where the conquest truly begins, is Numbers 21. They start to get in contact. But they've had contact with some of these Canaanite groups, the Moabites and others probably in that, there's this repeating of the tale. When

we look at Exodus 15, it's called the song of the sea. It is that because Moses sing and the children of Israel sing and then Miriam, his sister picks up in a repeat, but songs are very easy to remember. So I'll just throw this out to you. You can probably remember probably all the words, let's pick something easy. I Want to Hold Your Hand by the Beatles.

- John Bytheway: 31:50 (Singing). Yeah.
- Dr. George Pierce: 31:51 And so we know all the words to that. How many of us know all the words to Psalm 82, not many. And if you can even think of what Psalm 82 is, I'd be surprised. Songs are easy for us to remember. And so the song of the sea, would've been easy to remember for them and to repeat time and again, so as they're having these interactions with Canaanite groups or Moabite groups or whatever, they're able to recount these things and tell them, "Yeah. And so I will sing unto the Lord for he has triumphed gloriously, the horse, and the rider are thrown into the sea. And the Lord is a man of action and a warrior and my salvation." And those are going to get repeated and start to spread around.
- Dr. George Pierce: 32:25 And so just like a popular song starts to get picked up and shared on social media or online or back in the day, people would go to their local record store and buy a 45 and then share it with their classmates or trade it or something. This is how these tales probably transferred. After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, by the time they get to Canaan, the song of the sea is a top 40 hit. That's my best guess.
- John Bytheway: 32:52 I love that answer. We've heard about this. So other groups that we're traveling had contact with them while they were in the wilderness and those tales got passed around. I think that's fascinating. And I like what it says in verse 11. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts did melt. I didn't know that was a biblical phrase until right now.
- Dr. George Pierce: 33:16 Oh, absolutely. To put it in our lingo, the fear of God was put into them quite literally as to what's going to happen. And so she recognizes this, Rahab the harlot. Now, the interesting thing, just to draw attention to this, these stories like Rahab and others, they're meant for a purpose. And they're meant to show us that sometimes even those outside of the house of Israel are faithful and recognize that God is God in heaven and in earth beneath. The beautiful part about Rahab's story. If you turn to Matthew chapter one, verse five and the genealogy of Jesus, and there's a lot of begats, begats, begats, but verse five, "And Salmon begat Booz of Rahab. Rahab's faithfulness and the

beauty of the story is that regardless of her occupation, she, because of her faithfulness is included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

- Dr. George Pierce: 34:11 And I think part of that genealogy teaches us that it's not just people from the house of Israel. It's not people that are 100% faithful all the time. There's people from outside the house of Israel who are brought in because of their faithfulness. And they get to be the however many great grandmother of Jesus. And it's a beautiful story.
- Hank Smith: 34:33 In Joshua too, I'm seeing a little bit of the Passover. "Put this scarlet thread on your window and we'll pass by you. We'll pass over you." So there seems to be a bit of a type there, even the spies know how this works.
- Dr. George Pierce: 34:47 We have the instructions and just the beginning of Joshua chapter three, that they're going to move the ark. And when people see the Levites carrying the ark, they're going to follow the ark. And as Joshua says, in verse five, "Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."
- Hank Smith: 35:06 What a great verse.
- Dr. George Pierce: 35:07 And how amazing would it be if President Nelson put out a social media post or at general conference said, "Sanctify yourselves, because tomorrow the Lord is going to do wonders among you." I don't even know how many of us would sleep and try and get ready to sanctify ourselves. But Joshua says, "This is what's going to happen." They start to move the ark and everybody takes their tents up and they go to pass over the Jordan. And we have the story then in Joshua three verse 15, "They that bare the ark were come unto the Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped into the brim of the water, for Jordan overfloweth all his banks, all the time of harvest. That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap." And verse 17, "The priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground until all the people were passed clean over Jordan." Now, what does that story sound like?
- John Bytheway: 36:06 Parting of the Red Sea.
- Dr. George Pierce: 36:07 It's the Red Sea. It's the Red Sea narrative all over again. But we have to remember this generation of people who are passing over the Jordan were not involved in the Red Sea crossing. They

might have heard about it from their parents. They've obviously sung the song of the sea and repeated it to each other.

- John Bytheway: 36:23 Good point. Yeah.
- Dr. George Pierce: 36:25 But they've never experienced it. And I think there's something there about hearing a tale or hearing something versus the experience of it. Could they have found a fort in the Jordan? Probably. Could they have just waded through, up to their waist or something? Yeah. But then they'd all have soggy socks on the other side. The point of it is that they experienced the same thing that their parents experienced coming out of Egypt. And they can witness the miracle that when the priest's feet hit that water of the Jordan, that river stops and it piles up and they cross over on dry ground and we have this duplication of the Red Sea miracle. And so if anybody's really questioning in their mind, if Joshua is the true inheritor of Moses' position, this is it. This is it.
- Hank Smith: 37:15 It reminds me of Joseph Smith's statement, "I have learned for myself."
- Dr. George Pierce: 37:20 Absolutely. I've learned for myself.
- John Bytheway: 37:22 George, for 40 years, we're confident in saying this is a generation that was not there except for Joshua and Caleb. This is a generation that had only heard about the Red Sea being parted, didn't remember it. That's really significant, I think.
- Dr. George Pierce: 37:37 After that incident with the spies in Numbers, chapter 11 and the Lord comes down with a judgment and says, "Okay, you guys are going to wander around for 40 years." It's actually 38 and a half years, but what's a year and a half among friends? He says effectively that all of that generation is going to pass away, not a single one of them are going to get to the promised land because of their faithlessness in the spies episode.
- John Bytheway: 38:00 This incident where the water's parted there. I remember Elder Bednar, talking about this once. And it was a talk he gave called, According to Thy Faith at BYU, Idaho on August 29th of 2000. And this is what he said, "Interestingly, the waters did not part as the children of Israel stood on the banks of the river and waited for something to happen. Rather, the souls of their feet were wet before the water was parted. The faith of the Israelites was manifested in the fact that they walked into the water before it parted. They walked into the river Jordan with a future facing assurance of things hoped for. As the Israelites

move forward, the water parted. And as they crossed over on dry ground, they were able to look back and behold, the evidence of things not seen."

John Bytheway: 38:45 Do you know what it reminds me of? Is to me, it's a Luke 17 parallel, the 10 lepers. They lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, master have mercy on us." And Jesus said, "Go show yourselves to the priest." Which is what you would do if you were already healed. And they could have just stood there and said, "We can't show ourselves to the priest."

Hank Smith: 39:07 I don't think you understand.

John Bytheway: 39:08 "He'll throw rocks at us. We're not healed yet." But it says three words, "As they went, they were cleansed." And then we usually focus on the one that turned around to give thanks and he was a Samaritan, but I love that part, as they went, they were cleansed, not as they just stood there and waited. And so that reminds me of this too. They just started walking in the water and that's when it parted.

Hank Smith: 39:28 That's great, John. This is the same Jordan River. And this is the same Jordan River as Naaman and Elisha, Jesus is going to be baptized.

Dr. George Pierce: 39:38 Same Jordan River that we have yes, separating right now, would be the west bank and parts of Israel from the nation state of Jordan, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan flowing from the Sea of Galilee down into the Dead Sea in all these great moments. So Joshua with the Israelites, crossing the Jordan to go into the promised land. As you mentioned, Elisha and Naaman, John the Baptist baptizing in the Jordan and baptizing Jesus. My daughter, Victoria, was baptized in the Jordan. So there's another famous moment.

John Bytheway: 40:06 Wow.

Hank Smith: 40:07 Yeah. That is a good moment.

Dr. George Pierce: 40:08 The Jordan is a pivotal river because it's unlike other rivers in Israel. It's one of the few what we call perennial rivers. It's always flowing. Others are dependent on rainfall and so they're seasonal, but the Jordan is always there and it's always a source of either traffic east, west, or water coming from the north.

John Bytheway: 40:27 Isn't it fair to say that it's the lowest river in elevation, in the world?

Dr. George Pierce: 40:31 Definitely. Because it runs into the Dead Sea and yeah, that's the lowest point.

John Bytheway: 40:35 And adds to a layer of meaning to the Savior, descending below all things, even to be baptized, because you can't go lower than the Jordan river.

Dr. George Pierce: 40:45 Absolutely. You can't get lower than the Jordan at that point to get baptized.

Hank Smith: 40:49 I also wonder if next year when we talk about John the Baptist, if he's not hearkening back to Joshua, by baptizing in the Jordan river saying, "Let's go back to our roots. Let's go back to who we really are instead of what we've become."

Dr. George Pierce: 41:04 Absolutely. I think as John is out there redefining baptism because just before Jesus' time, it's become this ritual if you will. So in order to go to the temple and to present your sacrifice, you need to be ritually clean. And originally when we look at washing and anointing in the Old Testament, it's only for the priests and the Levites serving at the tabernacle and then the temple. And eventually after the exile and they return back to the land and we're in that inner testamental period, baptism becomes this thing where, well, it's not just priests, everybody. Let's just get everybody clean. So when you show up to the temple with your sacrifice, you're ritually clean.

Dr. George Pierce: 41:39 But if you make your sacrifice and you go away and you do something else that breaks the law or you become ritually unclean, before you go to the temple again, you have to get rebaptized, rewash. And John comes along and says, "That's not what baptism's about folks." Baptism is about the remission of sins and leading a changed life. And this is in anticipation of Messiah is coming. And so this is what baptism really means. He's the Alma the Elder figure at the Waters of Mormon. As Alma the Elder defines, this is what baptism means and lifting up these hands that hang and mourning with those who mourn and all the rest of these things that Alma the Elder defines there.

Dr. George Pierce: 42:17 And John the Baptist says, "Listen, this is what baptism really means." And I think, Hank, you're right in the sense of that he goes to the Jordan. Well, number one, because it is a perennial source of water. Number two, it is reworking that Joshua, Israelite story again, and saying, "Let's redo this and let's have this renewal."

John Bytheway: 42:35 It's historically meaningful to all of them as well. And what's it called, the mikvah bath?

Dr. George Pierce: 42:41 Yes. So when they are purposefully built and they collect rain water, it's called a mikvah in Hebrew.

John Bytheway: 42:47 And I think it's intriguing that when the Pharisees came out to see what John the Baptist was doing, they didn't say, "What are you doing?" It was more of, "Who are you?" Because they knew what he was doing.

Dr. George Pierce: 42:56 Yeah. They give him the, "Why are you doing this?" And a, "Who do you think you are?" And the interesting thing to go back to a Moses discussion, they ask him, "Are you that prophet?" And when they say that prophet, they're referring to Deuteronomy 18, in which the Lord speaking through Moses says, "I'm going to raise up another one from among your brethren, like unto Moses. And he's going to tell you what you should do and you should follow it." Now, as we look at it, we clearly see through Matthew five and other places, Jesus is the second Moses. But the Pharisees are like, "Wait, are you the second Moses?" And he's like, "No." And they're like, "Well, are you Messiah?" "Nope. Not Messiah." "So who are you?" And that's when John has a famous statement, "I'm the voice of one crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord. That's me." And of course the Gospels paint him in an Elijah like manner with the camel hair garment and wildness out in the wilderness, which is totally Elijah, 100%. So it's great stuff.

Hank Smith: 43:53 John, I cut you off earlier, but I think it's an important point that we hit again, is the idea of they had to move forward in order for the water to part. And I've heard you say this before, that the Lord doesn't steer a parked car. That if you want to see the miracle, you have to act. We stand at the edge of the cliff and the Lord says, "Jump and I'll catch you." And we say, "Catch me first." Right?

John Bytheway: 44:16 Yeah. It doesn't work.

Hank Smith: 44:17 That's not how it works.

John Bytheway: 44:18 I think it was President Marion G. Romney that said, "You cannot expect God to guide your footsteps unless you're willing to move your feet." There's a certain step out into the unknown. And then the way is opened up" to paraphrase President Packer, The Candle of the Lord talk that he gave. So I love the principle here of move forward in faith. Okay. 1 Nephi

4:6. That's the one that I want. "I was led by the spirit, not knowing beforehand." So are these waters going to part? And they step in it and boom, it works. And Joshua was right, God is going to work wonders among you.

- Hank Smith: 44:50 Is this where once they get across, the Lord says, "Set up a memorial"?
- Dr. George Pierce: 44:54 Joshua chapter four then brings in this concept in which the Lord tells Joshua to choose one person from each of the 12 tribes. And they're going to go out and the ark's going to go out there and stand in the middle of Jordan. And they're going to go before the ark. And they are going to then set up 12 stones. So pick a guy who can actually carry a fairly large stone from each tribe. And he's going to haul this stone across the Jordan and when we get to the other side, the 12 of them are going to set up these stones. Now in Hebrew, it's called a Matzevah, the plural's Matzevot. We get these standing stones archeologically at various places, Matzevot.
- Dr. George Pierce: 45:32 The sentiment is, as we get this in verse six, and the Lord explains what's going on here or at least Joshua explains what the Lord's instructions are. And Joshua says this in Joshua four verse six, "That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come saying, what mean ye by these stones? Then you shall answer them that the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever. The Lord instructs Joshua, Joshua instructs the people, "This is what we're going to do. We're going to carry these big stones over. We're going to set them up and this is going to be a memorial so that when you and your kids come by here and they say, hey dad, what's up with all the stones over there? You can tell them, this is what the Lord did." And it's a miracle and we remember it.
- Dr. George Pierce: 46:24 And we see later on at the end of the chapter, once they come over in verse 20, it says, "And those 12 stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel saying, when your children shall ask their fathers in time to come saying, what mean these stones? Then you shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until you were passed over, as the Lord, your God did to the Red Sea when he dried up from before us, until we were gone over. That all the people of the

earth might know the hand of the Lord that is mighty, that ye might fear the Lord your God forever."

- Dr. George Pierce: 47:02 Joshua says, "This is what we do. And we're going to set these stones and it's going to be a memorial for you to be able to teach your children." And I think it's a great lesson. I mean, it inspires me as I have two children and thinking about it, what memorials am I setting up for them? What am I doing in terms of lasting things that they can look to it and say, "Hey Dad, what's this about?" And I can tell them about what the Lord did for our family or for me personally, or for Dr. Pierce Prime as we call her, for Krystal. It just inspires me to think, "What memorials are we setting up for our children? And how do we memorialize what the Lord has done for us and recount those things?"
- John Bytheway: 47:39 That's great. I remember President Henry B. Eyring, changing my whole understanding of why we keep journals. I remember before Hank's time, President Kimball, when I was a teenager talking about, keep a journal and I probably wasn't listening closely enough to know why, but President Eyring said, "Document the hand of God in your life." Then you have something to show your children. Here's where the Lord intervened or helped me in my life. And as a memorial, that's what the journal's for, not just your trips and your trophies, but how did God intervene and help you in your life? So I love that. Here's another place where the Lord's saying, "I want you to remember this." I mean, how many times are we getting these? From Passover to Tabernacles to now here's... I want you to remember this.
- Hank Smith: 48:27 John. I know you've had this opportunity as well. One of the great opportunities, I feel like a blessing in my life is taking groups on church history tours. And there's these memorials, when you go out to Susquehanna in Pennsylvania, or you go to Kirtland. George, I've been to Kirtland with you.
- John Bytheway: 48:44 And it's like, "What happened here?" Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 48:47 Taking my children with those groups and, "Dad, what happened at Carthage Jail? What happened here at Nauvoo?" It doesn't have to be a church history trip. It can just be something in your life that you have in your house. "Dad, why is that rock on your shelf? Where's that from?" "Well, this is a reminder of when God did this thing for me." I don't know. Can you see these for family home evening? Did they walk down to the Jordan River and look at the original stones and say, "Let's talk about what happened here. I was a kid. I remember this."

John Bytheway: 49:19 Yeah. We have a tendency to forget. So the Lord gives us memorials and tells us to make them.

Hank Smith: 49:25 Yeah. How often last year, John, did we hear the Lord telling Joseph to, "Make a history, make a history?"

John Bytheway: 49:31 Can somebody write this down?

Dr. George Pierce: 49:32 It's interesting because the author of Joshua, because it's clear, the book was not pen in Joshua's day, but the author Joshua says that the stones are there unto this day. So whenever that was, even centuries later, they could still see the stones and they could go down there and say, "Yeah, this is potent. It's a reminder." It's how in our family, on Memorial Day, we typically take trips to various places that are associated mostly with Krystal's family because as a convert, my family, we're not pioneers, but her family was. And we read off the stories to the kids. And I know at some point, they're going to be like, "Dad, not this story again." But we're like, "This is important, it's a memorial." Part of Krystal's family came over on the ship Brooklyn, traveled all the way around to San Francisco, Yerba Buena, and then traveled across land to Utah only to be told as soon as they got here to go to Provo.

Dr. George Pierce: 50:21 And they went to Provo and within, I think it's just a matter of weeks, the wife and one of the children had died. And we're not sure why, we're not even sure where they're buried, but there's a memorial at the Provo Cemetery. And so we go every Memorial Day and we say, this is the story of people who had faith, who put feet to that faith and ships to that faith to sail on the ship Brooklyn, and then come across the opposite way from California to Utah. And to do that because they believed in the Restoration, they believed in the church and this is what they felt that the Lord was calling them to do, just to suffer and to have death befall them and all kinds of other troubles and tribulations. But that's their memorial in Provo Cemetery. And it's a powerful thing to recount those things, and how the Lord preserved them and continued to preserve the church through their faithfulness.

Hank Smith: 51:12 Yeah. Joshua four is an important chapter. The Lord is worried about their children. Let your children know, when your children ask, let them know.

John Bytheway: 51:22 Yeah. Isn't that true?

Hank Smith: 51:23 This is the testimony.

- Dr. George Pierce: 51:25 Yeah. I think we also got an important confirmation, Hank, in Joshua four verse 14, so the day that they're crossing the Jordan, "On that day, the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all of Israel and they feared him." So they respected him and obeyed him. "They feared him as they feared Moses all the days of his life." All that worry that Joshua had beforehand, which I'm sure the anxieties are still there, "How are we going to take over Canaan and what are we going to do?" All that though gets put to the side as Joshua's magnified in the crossing of Israel, across Jordan and all of Israel's like, "Yeah, we're going to obey him just like we obeyed Moses because we see what's going on here."
- Hank Smith: 52:05 Some great trust from chapter one to chapter four, "Move forward, the Lord will magnify you." All this talk of children in chapter four has made me think of a talk from Elder Holland called A Prayer for the Children, which we've quoted before on this show. And here's Elder Holland. This is a portion of that talk. He says, "If in matters of faith and belief, children are at risk of being swept downstream by this intellectual current or that cultural rapid, we as their parents must be more certain than ever to hold to anchored unmistakable moorings clearly recognizable to those of our own household. It won't help anyone if we go over the edge with them. Explaining through the roar of the falls all the way down that we really did know the church was true and that the keys of the priesthood really were lodged there, but we just didn't want to stifle anyone's freedom to think otherwise."
- Hank Smith: 52:59 No, we can hardly expect the children to get to shore safely if the parents don't seem to know where to anchor their own boat. I think some parents may not understand that even when they feel secure in their own minds regarding matters of personal testimony, they can nevertheless make that faith too difficult for their children to detect." And to me, that's Joshua 4:22, "Let your children know what God has done for you."
- John Bytheway: 53:27 The line I remember is, "If you flirt with skepticism, don't be surprised if your children turn that flirtation into full blown romance," he says.
- Hank Smith: 53:36 Someone accused me once of brainwashing my children with religion. And I said, "You call it brainwashing, I call it teaching. I call it letting my children know what God has done for me." My heart of course goes out to anyone whose children are not part of the faith, who have left the faith. And by no means, are we saying that you didn't tell them enough, but we are saying to

those of us who are parents now, and grandparents, "Let's let our children know."

- Dr. George Pierce: 54:04 Absolutely. I think that's a great statement.
- John Bytheway: 54:06 I love that the Stripling Warriors say, "We do not doubt our mothers knew it." It doesn't say, "We know it." and maybe they did, but they said, "we know our mothers knew." It was easy to know that their mothers knew.
- Hank Smith: 54:19 That's beautiful. And I have noticed, I bet this has been the same with both of you, that the best times to teach my children have not been formal family home evening moments. The other night, my daughter came home from a date. She was discouraged. And I went up to her room to say goodnight. I sat and rubbed her feet and we just talked and it wasn't a formal, we didn't have an opening prayer, closing prayer, but we were able to talk about God and life. And to me, those are the 12 stone moments where she is open to asking, "What mean ye these 12 stones? What mean ye by the things you say, what you talk about?" And it was another one of those moments. I'm sure both of you have had them.
- John Bytheway: 55:02 Oh Hank, can I read a verse that's out of our present lesson today, it's Deuteronomy 6:7 and this is a favorite of our family, you'll be able to tell. "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. Thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." I think it's the Elder Uchtdorf, normal and natural ways. And sometimes it isn't the formal lesson, but we were driving the car, we're outside or something. I say, "You know this reminds me of something." And we can have a little testifying moment like those 12 stones.
- Hank Smith: 55:41 Our producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and many of our listeners know that Steve passed away. It's interesting that he wrote to one of his daughters, Annabelle, every week on her mission. He emailed her every week and she kept every single one of those. And now that he's gone, those emails have been turned into a booklet of testimony that each child has. That to me is a Joshua 4 type memorial.
- John Bytheway: 56:10 This is so important. My dad just sat down. I don't remember when with the yellow pad and wrote his autobiography on a yellow pad and my children don't know their grandpa. He passed away in 2004. So Ashley remembers him a little bit. She was five, six years old, but that's about it. He left something behind, his amazing story of joining the church when he was 24,

after serving in World War II and the Navy and another plug for a journal today is a way to help our children remember important things happen to us, those 12 stones.

- Dr. George Pierce: 56:44 Krystal's grandmother was informally trained. Nonetheless, she was a scholar of the scriptures. And so we have her notebooks, just page after page of her notes and her observations and her thoughts on various different gospel topics and clippings from the newspaper when conference talks were printed, just a fabulous memorial to have. And encouraging all of us, that this generation and again, we're talking about the generation that didn't come out of Egypt, but yet they're still told, "You need to make these memorials because you need to remember the miracles that you experienced and passed them on to your children." And as I mentioned before, the author of Joshua says, "The stones are still there to this day."
- Hank Smith: 57:24 My mother-in-law passed away in 2014, my daughter Madeline was baptized in 2012. At her baptism, her grandmother, my mother-in-law Madeline Savage wrote her a testimony, wrote her a note. I'm sure Madeline did not know that this testimony would be the last thing that Madeline has from her, but it's kept in a little frame on my daughter's desk. And it just says, "Dear Madeline, what a special day this is." I think about that with Joshua 4, what a special day. "You are now a witness for Jesus, all of your life. I want you to know that I know he is our Savior and Redeemer, and he will be your helper and best friend. He can help you right wrongs or mistakes that you make. Your Heavenly Father is real. And he loves you. I know The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is true. And by following those teachings we learn as we attend church, we can return to live with Heavenly Father and Jesus again. Always know I love you, Grandma Savage.
- Hank Smith: 58:28 And my daughter keeps this right on her bedside stand. I had to go and steal it from her. It's going to go away to college with her. And I'm sure it will be one of those things where even her children say, "What mean ye by this note?" And she'll say, "This was my grandmother who passed away."
- John Bytheway: 58:45 These are my dad's scriptures. I opened up and there's all these post-its here. And every time I read a note that he has written, I hear it in his voice. It's fun. And then the back cover as well, all these lists, but it's so fun to see the things that he made a note about. And it's a 12 stone moment for me too.
- Dr. George Pierce: 59:08 I think Grandma Beck probably left us 12 white binders full of notes for scriptures.

Hank Smith:	59:12	Wow.
Dr. George Pierce:	59:12	So I'll have to go count them upstairs when I get home but I think she has, "What mean ye by these 12 white binders?" Well-
Hank Smith:	59:20	Victoria will say, "What are those 12 white binders?" "Well, let me tell you." I'm going to let my children know.
John Bytheway:	59:30	Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:02 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.
- Dr. George Pierce: 00:07 I just want to say a few words about chapter five. They've crossed to Jordan, and it's at that point that we all sort of cringe because everybody has to go through circumcision, at least all the males, to be participants of the Abrahamic covenant. This is the outward physical sign that you are a member of that covenant. In verse 12 of Joshua 5, they've observed Passover and we get this: "And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more, but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." This is the close to the wilderness wanderings. After they observe Passover, the next day, there's no manna, because now they're in Canaan and are able to subsist off of what is growing in Canaan.
- Dr. George Pierce: 00:56 And we get this interesting encounter. Joshua 5, starting of verse 13, we have Joshua, he's going out by himself to kind of check out Jericho, see what's going on. "It came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, 'Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?' And he said," so this stranger with the sword drawn, he said, "'Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, 'What saith my Lord unto his servant?' And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, 'Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.' And Joshua did so."
- Dr. George Pierce: 01:45 And so, we're going to get the instructions in Joshua chapter six about what to do about Jericho, but it's an interesting situation in which Joshua has this encounter. He has this heavenly being with him. Some people will think this is an angel, so you think about the captain of the Lord's host, so Michael the Archangel or someone encountering him. But that statement of taking off his shoes because the ground on which he's standing is holy,

only other places where we see this happening is Exodus chapter three at the burning bush. And that's the voice of Jehovah himself. I'm wondering if this maybe isn't a sort of premortal visit of Christ or something in this sort of sense. Maybe not, who knows? But again, we have Joshua's encounter with the divine. And in this case, we can see that it's not Joshua and the Israelites who are fighting these battles, and they're going to be reminded of that. It's the Lord, and granted the Lord has sent the captain of the host of the Lord. That's how He's showing up. He's in this role to help them and to be able to understand what they need to do to be able to conquer these cities.

Hank Smith: 02:51 Well, I think we're pretty safe here on you saying we're not sure who this, but-

Dr. George Pierce: 02:56 We're not sure, we don't know. However people want to take that, whether it's an angel, Michael the Archangel, people want to say it's a premortal appearance of Christ in some sort of way, and maybe we'd want to argue against that theologically, but I just see it as Joshua knows that he has divine assistance, and he's instructed that this place is holy, and take off his shoes and treat it with the respect. Whether that was in the past, in Joshua's present, or in the future to Joshua, which would be our past, something happens there. And I think it goes a long way to show that the Lord is with Joshua again. So we're going to go back to that be strong and of good courage. He knows, and he's given all these sort of signs and experiences to know that the Lord is on his side.

Hank Smith: 03:39 I think we could also see these as almost bookend moments. These "take off the shoes" moments. Exodus 3 is, "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of the land unto a good land and a large, flowing with milk and honey." Then you go all the way over to Joshua 5, they're there, they're in it, and here's our bookend moment of, "I did what I said I was going to do. I told Moses I would do it." I almost think that the Lord wants to be there when He fulfills a promise He made how long ago, how many hundreds of years ago to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He's saying, "I told you, I keep my promises"

Dr. George Pierce: 04:22 And Jericho has been there for a while. Archeologically we would stretch it back to probably 8000 to 7000 BC. So it's been there a long time. And the reason why is because it's built right next to a spring, which is still used as the main water source for the city of Jericho and the surrounding areas. It's the same spring that Elijah is going to heal in second Kings. It's a crucial

place. It's where the Jordan has always crossed, and then from there, you either go north up to Jordan Valley, through what would be the territories of Ephraim and Manasseh, eventually to the galley, or you would go up the hills to Jerusalem. Jericho is kind of a crucial place, a fortified city, as we see it. And Joshua is given specific instructions to be able to take over Jericho. The Lord knows that they're not just going to rush the gates and that's that. That kind of valor isn't needed here. What they need though, instead of valor, instead of bravado, they need obedience.

Hank Smith: 05:20 Did you just say, "Instead of bravado, they need obedience."? My wife's going to use that against me. I can't tell you how many times would I... Let me write that down.

Dr. George Pierce: 05:29 How many times do we charge into something without even thinking about it? And if we would've just been obedient to begin with, then things would fall into place. Joshua was instructed by the Lord, "This is what you should do. You're going to walk around the city once, each day, for six days. You're not going to make a sound. You're not going to let things clink against each other. You're not going to say anything. You're not going to be chatting in line," which is nearly impossible with any group of people. "You're not going to be talking, you're just going to do this. And seven priests are going to carry the ark and they're going to carry seven trumpets. And on the seventh day, you're going to walk around the city, not just one time like the previous six days, but seven times around the city." And in verse 5, it says, "It shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast," right? "At the end of that seventh time around the city, the seven priests are going to blow their trumpets, and shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city shall fall down flat and the people shall send up every man straight before him." And so, Joshua then is going to relay those commandments to the Israelites. "Look, everybody, you shall not shout," as he says in verse 10, "nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth," again, good luck within a group of people, "until the day I bid you to shout. Then you're going to shout, right? Shout your heads off at that point."

Hank Smith: 06:46 Yeah.

Dr. George Pierce: 06:46 Now, they're given other instructions as well. When we get to verse 17, we have an interesting situation in which there are other instructions given for Jericho. In Joshua 6:17, "And the city

shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord." And we'll revisit that statement, "accursed to the Lord". "Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord." Israelites go out. They walk around the city one time a day for six days. On the seventh day, they walk around the city seven times, and the priests of the Lord blow their trumpets, everyone shouts, and we have then the situation of, as the song would say, the walls come tumbling down.

Dr. George Pierce: 07:49

What's interesting then is we get a principle in the Bible, and it's called the harem. And the harem is a Hebrew word, it is a description of this sort of total warfare, if you will. And this is going back to that phrase, "accursed to the Lord." Accursed is an interesting way to translate this in the King James version, because the Hebrew word "harem", it either means to be utterly destroyed, or it means to be devoted to something, if this makes sense. This is the commandment that the Israelites are given in terms of a lot of these cities in Canaan. In fact, it dates back to Deuteronomy 7, in which they're instructed to go in and wage this kind of warfare. The harem can be viewed as this sort of holy war of utter destruction, decreed by Jehovah to sort of rid out the Canaanites and their religious elements.

Dr. George Pierce: 08:35

But what it's doing is it's also then devoting all the spoils of war to Jehovah. The harem is both utter destruction and utter devotion all at the same time, and it's an interesting sort of concept. People have tried to sort of reconcile that tension since even before the Middle Ages, "How does this work?" But this is the commandment that they're given. "You have to follow these certain things and be obedient to these certain rituals, if you will, walking around the city, being quiet, shouting on the seventh time, and you have to have hands off, because everything in that city is devoted to the Lord." And this is another reminder to them that it's not their power and it's not their strength that's going to conquer Jericho, it's the Lord. And because the Lord is doing the work, then all the spoils belong to the Lord. This is the instruction that they're given. When they do this, wall comes down, they're able to go in and take Jericho. Rahab is saved, and we can see then that the benefits of being obedient are the blessings of not having to take Jericho the hard way, and that is trying to attack it straight-on.

- Hank Smith: 09:40 George, what do you do when your students ask you about the violence in scripture? I know this is something you've talked about before.
- Dr. George Pierce: 09:47 First of all, the concept of the harem is kind of interesting because when we look at commands in Deuteronomy 7 and Deuteronomy 12 to go in and utterly wipe out the Canaanites, first of all, we want to understand why that commandment is given. And that commandment is given because the intermingling of the Canaanite and Israelite societies, the major threat is going to be that the Israelites are going to be pulled away from Jehovah and start worshiping other deities. Now, we all know, it's not like the Old Testament is a secret, we all know what happens, right? Spoiler alert, they start worshiping other deities. Already in Deuteronomy, it's set up, "Go in there and wipe them out because this is the threat. It's a real threat."
- Dr. George Pierce: 10:29 And it's not like religion now. And I was talking about this with Krystal this morning. It's not like religion now, as some people kind of treat it. Yeah, I can read my scriptures in the morning and then I go about my normal job, which, for you and me, that's studying scripture, so that doesn't really count. But I go about my normal job, I don't know, selling cars or something, or go to worship on Sunday, and then the other six days of the week, I'm living my life, doing my thing, trying to have family home evening every once in a while. But for the Canaanites and Israelites in this period, religion's just enmeshed into all their life, all of it. There is no separation of religion from the rest of their life. It is their life. And so, the Lord recognizes there's a real threat there.
- Dr. George Pierce: 11:00 This raises the question, what do we do with all the violence? What do we do about women and Canaanite women and Canaanite children, because they're going in here. And the book of Joshua says they're wiping out everything and the animals aren't living and nothing's being touched and they're burning it all to the ground and doing all the rest of these things. We have to back up and just think about things.
- Dr. George Pierce: 11:21 First of all, the language that's used within Joshua and Deuteronomy and in 1 Samuel, because we still have more of the conquest going on in 1 Samuel, the language that's used, as scholars like myself would look at it, is similar to language that's used elsewhere in the same period, talking about Syrian Kings and other type of Kings that are conquering things.
- Dr. George Pierce: 11:41 And they'll have all sorts of bravado, "We went in, we wiped out every single person. There was no male that was living. We

conquered this place and we burned it to the ground," all the rest of it. Then, the very next paragraph they're, "And we had to go back and campaign against these people." So, even they recognized the languages is a bit hyperbole. To that point, Joshua himself recognizes that they didn't do all the things in The Conquest that they should have.

- Dr. George Pierce: 12:03 And the book of Judges, in Judges Chapter 1 says they didn't do all those things. The language, it's evoking this military language that's common in this period. Second, if we think about this logistically, and students will come to me and say, "Well, Dr. Pierce, they're still going in, and the Bible says that they took out all the men and they killed everybody," and all the rest of this. Annihilation, and I think that's the word we can use at this point, annihilation like that is logistically impossible during this time period.
- Dr. George Pierce: 12:28 If we go back to Joshua Chapter 2, Rahab says that they've heard about all their exploits. So, let me just put it this way, Hank and John, you're used to living in a town, and you had heard that some people have been very successful in their warfare and their God has done all this sort of stuff. Would you stay in that town very long? Absolutely not. You hear that somebody's coming to attack your town, you do exactly what Lehi did in the Book of Mormon. You pack up the wife and kids, you get a tent from REI, and you head out.
- Dr. George Pierce: 12:55 So, in fancy scholar terms, we call that "an indigenous hardiness structure". It means that these people at this time were able to transition between living in houses to living in caves or living in tents, and very easily, much more than we could. Because I tell you what, I go camping once a year, and I don't transition very well to living up in the Canyon. It's just, that's me. So, I don't have that indigenous hardiness structure. These people did.
- Dr. George Pierce: 13:21 Thirdly, I would probably say Jericho, in Joshua Chapter 6, the city of Ai in Joshua Chapter 7, and I believe it's mentioned in Joshua Chapter 8 as well, and the city of Hazor further on in Joshua Chapter 11, these are the only ones that are listed as utterly destroyed. Nowhere else in Joshua, it doesn't mention the city is being destroyed. So, the major emphasis actually is on taking out the Canaanite kings or defeating their armies in the field, and it's not about destroying cities and women and children and all the rest of these things.
- Dr. George Pierce: 13:52 And I think, finally, as I tell my students, one of the things we need to think about when it comes to violence like this is to realize that when we read it, we are bringing to the text

baggage from the 20th century. We can think about the Holocaust, especially, or the Rwandan genocide, or those in Cambodia or The Balkans, or anywhere else that this has occurred, and we're reading it through that lens.

- Dr. George Pierce: 14:19 This is the perspective of the historian who wrote it, and he is a product of his time, embedded in these cultures. And we had to think this is not a systematic program of an industrialized nation trying to commit a genocide. This is agro-pastoral economy, and people trying to move in and try and conduct warfare against cities and try and take out the power structure in Canaan, so they can eventually settle. It leads to a tension in which we still have to reconcile how does a loving God issue a commandment like this?
- Dr. George Pierce: 14:52 And I think that's a tension that we have to come to grips with. And there have been various schools of thought on this, and I could go into all that, if you really want, everything ranging from outright rejection of the text to using this text to justify current racism, which is completely wrong. I tell my students this, if there's a problem with us understanding God's commandments and His actions, then the problem doesn't reside in Him, the problem's in our limitations of understanding His purposes.
- Dr. George Pierce: 15:24 Hopefully that makes sense. And we may not understand all of it, and I don't think we will without having His perspective. Nephi tries, in 1 Nephi, what is it, 17:35. Nephi's understanding of it as he was working through says, "Behold, the Lord, esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God.
- Dr. George Pierce: 15:46 But behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity. And the fullness of the wrath of God was upon them. And the Lord did curse the land against them, and bless it unto our fathers. Yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and He did bless it under our fathers unto their obtaining power over it."
- Dr. George Pierce: 16:01 Then, Nephi starts to talk about the sovereignty of God and how God rules over everything and the earth is his footstool. So, this is how Nephi understands it. They had been given their chances, they were going to reject it, they were full of iniquity, and the Lord is sovereign. That's where I ended with my students is, if we don't understand it, it's not a problem with God. It's a problem with our understanding of God and our understanding of the circumstances.

Dr. George Pierce: 16:25 And we, unfortunately, have to live with that tension that's there, but have faith that our God does love His children, and if in this life or the next He's going to give them the opportunity to respond to His call to be able to live with Him again.

Hank Smith: 16:45 Two thoughts. One, last week we talked with Dr. Satterfield about God playing a very long game here. He doesn't see it in the terms we do, in the average human lifespan, that He is seeing this from creation to millennium, "I'm gonna get my end result," which is exalted children. This is my work and my glory to bring to pass immortality, eternal life of man, not necessarily the comfort of man while they're on earth.

Hank Smith: 17:11 So, we can see this maybe playing into His larger plan. My friend, Andrew Smith, wrote in the Religious Educator in 2018 about a Christian theologian by the name of Terence Fretheim, and he quotes him saying, "In pursuing divine purposes, God does not act alone, but works with what is available with human beings as they are with all their foibles and flaws as well as their wisdom. God does not perfect people before working in and through them. God can work even through human evil toward the divine purposes."

Hank Smith: 17:42 And he goes on, he says a bit about what you said about some Christian theologians have the spectrum. Theologian Denny Weaver states, "The rule of the devil attempts to rule by violence, whereas the rule of God conquers by nonviolence." On the other side, another theologian, Miroslav Volf, concludes, "There are things only God may do. One of them is to use violence."

Hank Smith: 18:06 Then, Andrew Smith says this, "To be sure, both positions are well thought out and based on valid intellectual interpretations of scripture." I like what you're doing here is you're leaving it a matter of faith in God. Maybe it is hyperbole, maybe it's not, but let's trust that God loves his children.

Dr. George Pierce: 18:25 There're all kinds of positions that you could actually be a faithful member of the church and adopt, there's what we call "radical discontinuity", and that is, God in the Old Testament is vengeful and judgmental, and Jesus is about love, peace, and grace. There's "moderate discontinuity" in which we say, God doesn't work that way anymore. It's a different dispensation. He does not work and command us to go out to slay people.

Dr. George Pierce: 18:49 There's "eschatological continuity" in which The Conquest is meant to be a type of things that will come in the end times. That's how the New Testament writers are going to interpret

The Conquest and say, "This is how we're going to frame end times things through the lens of this." And this is what I adhere to as a spiritual continuity in that, in the Old Testament, God physically fought the enemies of Israel, and we see that in Joshua.

Dr. George Pierce: 19:17 But there are times then that God actually fights Israel itself because it needs to be called to repentance. God is going to come in the future as the divine warrior, and we see that in Joshua 11, in Revelation 19, that Jesus will return, and He's going to be the one doing the fighting. But as we see in the New Testament, Jesus is the one who fights spiritual powers and authorities. So, The Conquest is just part of, like you said, it's part of this long game of spiritual continuity.

Dr. George Pierce: 19:44 There're certain rules and rituals that need to be followed. It's not up to us to do this. In fact, the prime moment is when Jesus is in Gethsemane and the soldiers come to take him, after his prayer, to the Father, and Peter starts swinging the sword, and he ends up cutting off the high priest's servant's ear. And it's in that moment then that Jesus informs him that the Kingdom of Heaven is not going to be brought about by violence in a physical sense. It's about Him to bring it in.

Dr. George Pierce: 20:09 In that same way He's working through this Old Testament, through the history of Israel to bring about His purposes, things that we are not commanded to do, things that we are not going to take upon ourselves or shouldn't take upon ourselves to engage in. And again, it goes back to, we may not understand all the purposes in the book of Joshua and those commandments in Deuteronomy 7 and Deuteronomy 12.

Dr. George Pierce: 20:34 But that's because I have a limited understanding, and I just have to live with that limited understanding and go forward in faith and obedience and say, "What he's commanding me to do in the 21st century is to go out and to minister and to love others and to serve others and to bring about the Kingdom in those ways, not by physical violence in any sort of sense."

Dr. George Pierce: 20:56 I was just reading this book this morning, Four Views on the Canaanite Genocide. And the very last chapter is a great one, because the theologian, Tremper Longman, he's, "Look, we're not commanded to go and be physically violent. That's Jesus's role in the future as he fights spiritual powers and authorities. It's not our role." Their big thing was people taking stuff in the 21st Century, like these chapters in Joshua, and justifying racist and sometimes terroristic actions, using the Bible.

Hank Smith: 21:24 George, this has been fantastic. Let me quote a Gospel topic essay entitled Peace and Violence Among 19th Century Latter-day Saints. Towards the end of the article it states, and this is published by the church, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints condemns violent words and actions, and affirms its commitment to furthering peace throughout the world. Throughout the church's history, church leaders have taught that the way of Christian discipleship is a path of peace."

Hank Smith: 21:53 Then, Elder Russell Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, connected the Latter-day Saints' faith in Jesus Christ to their active pursuit of love of neighbor and peace with all people.

Hank Smith: 22:00 "The hope of the world is the Prince of Peace. Now as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, what does the Lord expect of us? As a church, we must renounce war and proclaim peace. As individuals, we should follow after the things which make for peace. We should be personal peace makers." So I like what you've done here, George, as you've said, "Look, if there is going to be violence, that's the Lord's role, not ours, leave it to him. Our job is to do as he has commanded and to be peacemakers."

Dr. George Pierce: 22:35 Our charge as we look at the New Testament or Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants is to go forward and to usher in the kingdom through peaceful means. The Lord's role is to take care of those things in the end times. And so historically when these chapters of Joshua or other violent episodes in scripture are used to justify actions, whether that's the crusades or any sort of other holy war, or justification by dictators running evil governments, or even just by Westerners who see the Bible as the inherent word of God and use that for racist or violent means, we can see in scripture that Jesus himself condemns such things.

Dr. George Pierce: 23:22 We have to understand different dispensations, different times and different missions and what we're called to do. We're not carving out a place in the promised land. We are ministering to each other and serving each other.

Hank Smith: 23:37 And we can't answer everything. One thing we need to say probably before we move on is there is some ambiguity there, there's some tension there. That's hard and that's okay. It's okay for it to be hard. I want to return to this article from Andrew Smith, from the religious educator in 2018. He talks about Joshua and other chapters of scripture where there's quite a bit of violence. And he says, "The divine violence

exhibited by Jesus in these chapters contrast distinctly and somewhat paradoxically with the divine mercy he shows in other chapters. Without a proper contextualization," which George you're giving us today.

- Hank Smith: 24:16 "The differences and seeming contradictions can cause consternation. It has been shown that these scriptures in the events they portray are meant to be understood as challenging and somewhat discomfoting for us as well as God. However, they also show that we need not be scared of engaging with challenging and discomfoting sections of scripture." He goes on to say, "These chapters provide valuable doctrinal instruction about the relationality and the differences between God and his mortal children. As Latter-day Saints, we must constructively view and understand all of the scriptures that have been preserved for us, even those that are challenging so that we may derive a stronger knowledge of and a relationship with the Lord our Savior."
- Hank Smith: 24:57 "As teachers in Zion, it is also of utmost importance for our students, that we develop the capabilities to guide them in use of such methods, approaches, and tools and understanding, and properly applying the doctrines, principles and narratives found in the scriptures. In this way, discomfoting and unsettling sections of scripture can be turned into faith building way stops rather than doubt inducing stumbling stones in our paths of discipleship." I like what he said there, that we're not scared of these texts, we deal with them the best we can. We can't answer every question that we have about these. And we, again, turn to faith and the Savior.
- Dr. George Pierce: 25:32 And we don't understand, again, I go back to my statement of, if we have a problem in understanding, it's not that there's a problem with God, it's a problem with our understanding and our limitations. Sometimes we do have to live with attention and say, "I don't understand it all now, but in the eternities, I'll get it and it works for me."
- Hank Smith: 25:55 I'm going to quote my friend, John Bytheway, he frequently reminds me, if you lack information, you can ask Google. But this is the type of thing that needs wisdom, and you only get wisdom from one place, right, John?
- John Bytheway: 26:06 If any of you lack information, ask of Google, I tell my class, especially things like where's the nearest five guys, but if any of you lack wisdom, that's an entirely different matter, isn't it? I think with all scripture, we're going to get more, we don't have the whole story. The Book of Mormon many times, I'm telling

you a hundredth part, I cannot include a hundredth part. The last verse in the Book of John, "If all the things Jesus did were written, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." I think we're getting a fragmentary account in the Old Testament too.

- John Bytheway: 26:37 So I love what you were saying, George, is what are the lessons, the doctrines I can learn? We're going to have an explanation, I believe one day for these other things that maybe don't make sense to us now.
- Hank Smith: 26:49 John, I expect in the spirit world and in the millennium and long past that, I'm going to be doing lots of, "Oh, oh, I get it now."
- John Bytheway: 26:57 Section 101, "In that day, I the Lord reveal all things, hidden things which no men knew." That part right there, "Hidden, oh. Things of the earth by which it was made the purpose and the end thereof, things that are above, things that are beneath." And he just gives us this list, like, "I'm going to tell you everything one day. So fear not even unto death. In this world, your joy is not full and neither is your wisdom," it sounds like, "But in me, your joy is full."
- Hank Smith: 27:25 Yeah. And please don't throw out the whole book because this piece causes you a little tension, live with the tension, live with the ambiguity. It's okay.
- Dr. George Pierce: 27:32 And as I tell my students, I reverse 1 Nephi 11:17, so I tell them, "I don't know the meaning of all things. Nevertheless, I know that he loveth his children." So I just flip that on Nephi, "I don't know, but I know he loves us and I know he loves them and it'll all work out in the end."
- Hank Smith: 27:50 It's interesting, George, the Come Follow Me manual does a big, fast forward to the end of Joshua.
- Dr. George Pierce: 27:55 I just want to draw one thing just because as an archeologist, I can't let it go. The Book of Joshua presents us this sort of conquest narrative and they go in and they fight this city and they fight that city. And archeologically, we can fill in a little bit more of the picture, John was talking about how we only get like a hundredth part or not all of the pieces together. Joshua tells us one thing. Archeology tells us that it wasn't just going in conquering cities, they also peacefully settled in some regions. The Book of Judges tells us that they had their villages and the Canaanites had theirs and they didn't engage in warfare. Sometimes Canaanites made covenants with Israel.

- Dr. George Pierce: 28:33 We see that in Joshua chapter nine, those of Gibeon want to make a covenant with Israel and come in that way. I want to draw our attention to just one thing and I thought I had this morning as I was studying this in preparation for our discussion, Joshua chapter 11. So there's a whole bunch of, they fought this and they defeated this king and this king, and we get down to Joshua 11 at the very end of it, verse 23, as we're wrapping up the conquest, because chapter 12 is a whole list of cities and Kings they conquer, but we get this, Joshua 11:23, "So Joshua took the whole land according to all that the Lord said into Moses and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel, according to their divisions, by their tribes. And the land rested from war."
- Dr. George Pierce: 29:24 That rest is not just the Israelis got to then hang out and go on vacation and not do anything. Rest in the Bible meant that they were able to start settling the promised land. They were able to start dividing things up. They were able to start building homes, planting crops, doing what they're supposed to do, fulfilling their roles. And so when we look at this concept of rest, and I think it's important when we think about it in terms of Genesis as well, so six days of creation, on the seventh day, God rested. It doesn't mean he didn't do anything, it means that then he was able to take up his rightful role in preserving creation and sustaining it as we see in the Book of Colossians, but also then ruling over creation.
- Dr. George Pierce: 30:09 So it's not like he just didn't do anything. What "rest" in, I think here, especially in Joshua and for us in terms of application means that we sometimes have conflicts in our lives, whether we've created that or we've stepped into it or been drawn into it, or it's a personal challenge or family matter, or employment, or calling, or anything, we need to have that rest to be able to concentrate on those things that matter and to fulfill our role. And Genesis is where this helps out with this. We need that day to be able to fulfill our role, to learn how to be more like the Savior, to be able to act in a way the Savior would act, to be able to eventually fulfill our role of being like him because isn't that the end goal?
- Dr. George Pierce: 30:56 We can put the conflicts aside, they may rear up again in some sort of way, take the time and take the opportunity to have that rest from war to be able to do what we're supposed to do and to be more like the Savior.
- Hank Smith: 31:06 All right, we come to the end of Joshua. We gave him a good run. As we close out Joshua's time as the leader of Israel, what do we have to say towards the end, the last chapters?

- Dr. George Pierce: 31:16 So in Joshua chapters 23 and 24, we see the division of the land between all the various tribes has been done. And sometimes it's not very exciting reading, but it's there for a purpose, to mark out the territories. And Joshua then calls Israel together, and he knows his time has come, he gives them some encouragement. It says that in Joshua chapter 23, "It came to pass a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies roundabout that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age." And he calls for Israel and all the elders to come together. And he gives them sort of his last testimony, if you will, about what the Lord has done for them.
- Dr. George Pierce: 32:02 He tells them that he's divided the land and the Lord God has expelled out these people from before them. And he reminds them as he goes to chapters 23 and 24, that it's the Lord who's done all this. Verse 14 of Joshua chapter 23, "And behold, this day, I'm going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts and all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you, all are come to pass unto you and not one thing hath failed thereof." And I think that's just a good reminder for them, "All those promises the Lord made, he made good on them. He brought you up out of Egypt, he brought you across the river, he chased out the Canaanites before you, he fought your battles for you. Everything that he promised, he came through."
- Dr. George Pierce: 32:53 And I think that's a great lesson for us too, because everything that he's promised us, he's going to come through.
- Dr. George Pierce: 33:00 We can go into the title pages of the Book of Mormon with Moroni writing this. Part of the purpose is to remind us that the Lord keeps his covenants. He says, basically gives them the blessings.
- Dr. George Pierce: 33:11 Verse 15 of Joshua 23, "Therefore it shall come to pass that as all good things are come upon you which the Lord your God promised you, so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things until he has destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you."
- Dr. George Pierce: 33:24 It gives them the flip side as well. Listen, he promised you good things, he delivered, but if you're disobedient then you're going to face the judgment that's coming. What we get in Joshua chapter 23 and 24 essentially is a covenantal renewal.
- Dr. George Pierce: 33:40 Joshua 24 talks to them going back from the time of Abraham. He gives them this historical lesson from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and Moses.

Hank Smith: 33:48 It's like a curtain call here, because you have Abraham.

Dr. George Pierce: 33:51 It's a big long history lesson. Talks about Balaam and Balak. We get to verse 11, "And ye went over the Jordan and came into Jericho." Now he's talking about recent history that they should all remember, and how the Lord sent out the hornet before them, which is kind of interesting. The Lord using natural things like a hornet to discomfort people and make them leave.

Dr. George Pierce: 34:10 It says here, "I've given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them. And of the vineyards and olive yards which ye planted not do ye eat." It's a reminder of the Lord's goodness to them.

Dr. George Pierce: 34:23 You got into this land. I did all the fighting. You're dwelling in cities and in houses you guys didn't even build. You're eating of stuff that you didn't even plant. Joshua 24 verse 14, "Fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and truth."

Dr. George Pierce: 34:37 He gives this call in verse 15, Joshua 24, verse 15, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve. Whether the Gods which your father served that were on the other side of the flood, or the Gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Dr. George Pierce: 34:58 It's a great reminder, and I think in terms for us it's a challenge. Choose you this day whom you're going to serve. Each day brings a promise or the hope that we're going to serve the Lord, but it's a conscious choice we make.

Hank Smith: 35:15 It's just a powerhouse verse. It's one of those verses you want your kids to memorize. Choose, choose, who are you going to serve? Isn't Elijah going to sing that same thing later on?

John Bytheway: 35:24 How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord is God, then serve him. I love that, because it sounds like that. You got to get off the fence here and decide.

Dr. George Pierce: 35:34 I think literally in Hebrew it's like, "How long are you going to jump between two branches?" If you have that image in your head, how long are you going to jump between two branches, and when is that other branch going to break?

Dr. George Pierce: 35:43 When I was growing up we actually had this on the wall of my home. My dad had this plaque, "Choose you this day whom you will serve. As for our house, we're going to serve the Lord." We

try and make that happen. When it doesn't, that's the great part about covenantal renewal.

- Dr. George Pierce: 35:59 That's what Israel's doing here. They're renewing their covenant before Joshua dies. We have covenantal renewal every week available to us.
- Hank Smith: 36:06 George, Doctor Pierce, this has been a great day. I love the Book of Joshua much more than I did before. I think our listeners would be interested in your personal journey of faith and your biblical scholarship, how those two have intertwined together, and your conversion to the church, which some might be surprised to hear was not all that long ago.
- Dr. George Pierce: 36:27 It was not. I was raised in a Baptist household. My father previously was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and left that, and became Baptist for his own reasons. We were raised with the same principles of the gospel, and devotion to family, and to the Savior that we would consider to be standard nowadays in our church.
- Dr. George Pierce: 36:53 That language was always familiar to me. I've always grown up and going to Christian schools. From the time when I was four years old up through my first master's degree, I attended Christian schools and colleges and universities. Bible study was always part of my life.
- Dr. George Pierce: 37:14 Reading these chapters, especially in the Old Testament, the historical narrative like Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, that was what I did when I was bored in other classes.
- Dr. George Pierce: 37:23 Reading the narratives over and over and over, and understanding the stories, and trying to wrestle with these things, happened at a very early age. Questions and concerns, which just then led to further study and knowledge. I graduated with a degree in history, but there was always a call to biblical studies.
- Dr. George Pierce: 37:43 I found myself happiest when I was studying the Bible and studying scripture. I'd had a class in biblical archeology. That led me down the path of archeology, because not only do we have then the text of the Bible, but then there's now material culture, so realia.
- Dr. George Pierce: 37:58 I think that's helped, in some way, to strengthen my faith, but also to give me some perspective. Having stood at some of these places, or having visited or pondered over these things,

and thought about how it works, and feeling the spirit testify to me at these places, not of maybe the reality of the place, but of the reality of the doctrine that's taught within those narratives.

- Dr. George Pierce: 38:19 Thinking about those things and going forward, I studied Biblical archeology on a graduate level, and archeology in general, which led me after a time living in Israel to UCLA for my doctoral work. It was while I was at UCLA as a Presbyterian that I encountered another graduate student, Krystal Lords, who was transferred in from Berkeley.
- Dr. George Pierce: 38:43 As graduate students we all hung out together. We obviously noted that she was different from the rest of us. There may have been some consumptions of things that were not compliant with the word of wisdom at the time, but not her.
- Dr. George Pierce: 38:59 She lived a life that was devoted to the gospel already. It was through her witness just living the gospel, there was no putting the Book of Mormon in our face, no discussions from Preach My Gospel, nothing else like that. She just lived the gospel, and it made a difference. It was very noticeable.
- Dr. George Pierce: 39:22 We'll skip the story and go straight to we started dating. My agreement with Krystal while we were dating was that I would not try to give her any anti-church material or lead her away from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She would not present me with the Book of Mormon or proselytize to me in any sort of way.
- Dr. George Pierce: 39:40 That worked out for a while. Then I started getting more interested in the church, and she went away on excavation to Egypt and gave me a lot of time to read. I read through most of the Encyclopedia of Mormonism to understand the church.
- Hank Smith: 39:52 That's where a doctorate student goes to ...
- Dr. George Pierce: 39:54 Yeah. Right. I read through most of the Book of Mormon, through at least Helaman 12. I didn't even get to the good part yet. Up through Helaman 12. She came back and I started going to church with her.
- Dr. George Pierce: 40:07 What really made sense in my mind and where it all clicked is we came up here to visit her parents in Utah. They took me to Temple Square. We went to the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, and I watched Prophet of the Restoration. Everyone chuckles at that, but it's there that it made sense in my mind, watching that and piecing everything together.

- Dr. George Pierce: 40:25 What really made sense, and, Hank you'll appreciate this because we were there together, was when Joseph was hauled out of the John Johnson farm and tarred and feathered, and Sidney Rigdon as well, and, yet, the next day was out preaching and more.
- Dr. George Pierce: 40:39 In my mind, I said to myself, and this was months ahead of Elder Holland's testimony, I said to myself, "If it was not true, why? Why would you ever go through all that if it isn't true?" That's when as an academic it made sense in my head and it made sense in my heart that there's a truthfulness to this.
- Dr. George Pierce: 41:04 Because I know, I for one, would not want to be tarred and feathered and then go out and continue to preach the gospel. I would have been like, "Guys it's been a good run, but I'm going to go back and dig wells."
- Dr. George Pierce: 41:11 Eventually we had a ward conference that was focused on missions. I looked at Krystal and we both said, "Maybe we should call the missionaries." Those two missionaries had a golden convert, because I was already decided. I just wanted to see what they were up to.
- Dr. George Pierce: 41:23 Elders Brown and Rourke came and gave me the lessons. It went from the two of them talking to me in Krystal's living room, to eventually adding on the ward mission leaders, the Elders Quorum presidency, most of the Elders Quorum in the Santa Monica Third Ward, till eventually I was like, "Let's just get baptized and go forward."
- Dr. George Pierce: 41:43 In June of 2009, I was baptized a member of the church. A year and change later, Krystal and I were endowed at the Oquirrh Mountain Temple. At the end of July of 2010, we were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple. Then June of 2013, I started teaching at BYU, which was a daunting experience, teaching Book of Mormon to returned missionaries.
- Dr. George Pierce: 42:05 I'll be honest, when I got baptized I still had only read up through Helaman 12. I have read the rest of the Book of Mormon between now and then, so I know the ending. That's my story.
- Dr. George Pierce: 42:15 Being an archeologist in Israel's allowed me the privilege and opportunity to be able to be hands on in the dirt where some of these things happened, and to be able to understand the life of ancient Israel and the Philistines and the Canaanites. And to be able to bring that to my students and say, "These are real

people with real problems, and the real solution was obedience to the gospel, or to the law of God," as we see in the Old Testament. Being able to share that with the students is priceless.

Hank Smith:	42:46	I love it.
John Bytheway:	42:47	Your story itself is a testimony. That's so cool. Thank you. I'm so glad to meet you. Thank you, George. That was beautiful.
Hank Smith:	42:57	I was very excited to share George with you, John, and I'm sure Krystal was as well, and as well with the rest of our listeners. We hope you loved George and Doctor Pierce Prime.
Dr. George Pierce:	43:06	Doctor Pierce Prime.
Hank Smith:	43:07	George and Doctor Pierce ...
Dr. George Pierce:	43:07	That's her.
Hank Smith:	43:08	... Prime, ...
Dr. George Pierce:	43:08	That's her name.
Hank Smith:	43:08	... as she's called. We want to thank all of you for listening today. Thank you for staying with us. We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. We hope all of you will join us next week when we come back with another episode of FollowHIM.

HOW DO I KEEP FROM GETTING DISCOURAGED?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, everyone. Welcome to FollowHIM Favorites. This year, John and I are going through the Old Testament, looking at a specific question from each week's lesson.
- Hank Smith: 00:16 So, John, this week we are in the book of Joshua and we hear over and over in this book the Lord saying to Joshua, "Be of good courage," meaning don't get discouraged, don't get discouraged. But as life continues, I've noticed that's easier said than done sometimes to not get discouraged. So, John, our FollowHIM question this week is how do you keep from getting discouraged? How do you do what the Lord has asked and be of a good courage?
- Hank Smith: 00:45 John, you're a pretty positive guy. I've known you for a long time, and you're positive, and you don't seem discouraged all that often. How do you do it?
- John Bytheway: 00:53 Good acting. Let me think. Well, during the time when Gordon B. Hinckley was the president of the church, Sheri Dew said something once. Like if you're ever around President Hinckley a lot, and she was because she wrote his biography, you will hear him say, "Things will work out."
- John Bytheway: 01:09 Then I found a statement in the church news where President Hinckley said, "Things will work out." He said, "I say that to myself every morning." And I started to think about what it might feel like the weight on your shoulders to be the president of the church, that what is it the president of the church says to himself every morning. He says, "Things will work out."
- John Bytheway: 01:30 That kind of long-term, first principle faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ, things will work out, that helps me. Because sometimes instead of saying, "Oh, no things won't work out," it's more like, "This is tough right now. What can I learn? What is the Lord trying to teach me? Who can I help?" That helps me and just remember President Hinckley that I just loved so much. Things will work out. Things will work out so keep going. I don't know if that helps or not, but it did help me for sure.

Hank Smith: 01:58 We've heard of the gospel is optimistic. We hear the Savior over and over in the New Testament. "Be of good cheer. Be of good cheer." Almost as if it's a commandment to choose to be of good cheer.

John Bytheway: 02:10 Even the fact that Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," wasn't that the very night that His suffering would begin that whole week, and for him to say, "Don't be troubled, don't be afraid, I've overcome the world?" We really do have to take a long view and when we do, things will work out.

Hank Smith: 02:30 Yeah. I wrote a book on happiness. It sold dozens of copies, mostly to my mom, but I learned quite a bit about happiness. Didn't you write a book called How to be Totally Miserable? We should sell those as a package deal.

John Bytheway: 02:43 Yeah. That's so funny. We're always telling teens, "Do this, do that." I thought, "Why don't we just say, 'Well, okay, don't. Be miserable.'" And that was where I got that idea. It sold, I think, four copies. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 02:53 I bought two of those, John. They were really helpful.

Hank Smith: 02:56 The idea is what you choose to focus on is actually what your brain will start to see. When I was looking at a specific car to buy, I started seeing that car everywhere. When I decided, "Mm, I'm not going to buy that car," it went away. Like I don't see that car as often.

Hank Smith: 03:12 So we may be thinking, "Nothing good is happening around me. Nothing positive is happening around me." But you can actually train your brain to start to highlight those and you'll see them more and more and more. You can do what's called like a gratitude journal where you try to keep track of things that you're grateful for, things that made your day better and, all of a sudden, you'll start to highlight those.

Hank Smith: 03:32 I remember a General Conference talk that had an impact on my life was Elder Bednar's, The Tender Mercies of the Lord. He said to start to look for those, and those have really impacted my ability to not get discouraged because we know who's on our side. Didn't Elder Stevenson say, "You have the Savior of the world on your side. He loves you. No matter what you've done, He loves you. How can you fail?"

Hank Smith: 03:57 So I like what you said there, John, about President Hinckley. He focuses on who's in charge, faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ. And if we really believe that He is mighty to save and that our world is in very loving, sure hands, then I think we can. I think we can follow this commandment to be of good courage where it's going to work out. It's going to be okay.

John Bytheway: 04:18 He'll help us find a message in our misfortunes, too. We'll go through something hard and we'll say, "You know, I'm glad I went through that because I learned this, this, this." And almost always, when you hear people give a talk, it was something hard that they went through and how much they grew or learned from it. That is such a common theme in all these scriptures we've been studying, too. Here's a hardship, but here's what we learned from it.

Hank Smith: 04:41 Yeah. And that doesn't mean we don't have the right to feel. I don't want anyone thinking, "Oh, that means I've got to put a permanent smile on my face." It doesn't. You can have bad days. You can have bad months or bad weeks. But there should be what Elder Scott said, "Those bad times are against a backdrop of a happy life." So they're not the scenes themselves. They're not the focus of everything that happens to me. I can have bad times, but the backdrop itself is a overall happy time.

John Bytheway: 05:12 Yeah, I like that.

Hank Smith: 05:13 We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called FollowHIM. We're going to talk more about this, how to not get discouraged and what Joshua does throughout his life. So we hope you'll join us there and, of course, join us next week for another FollowHIM Favorites.