

SESSION 3

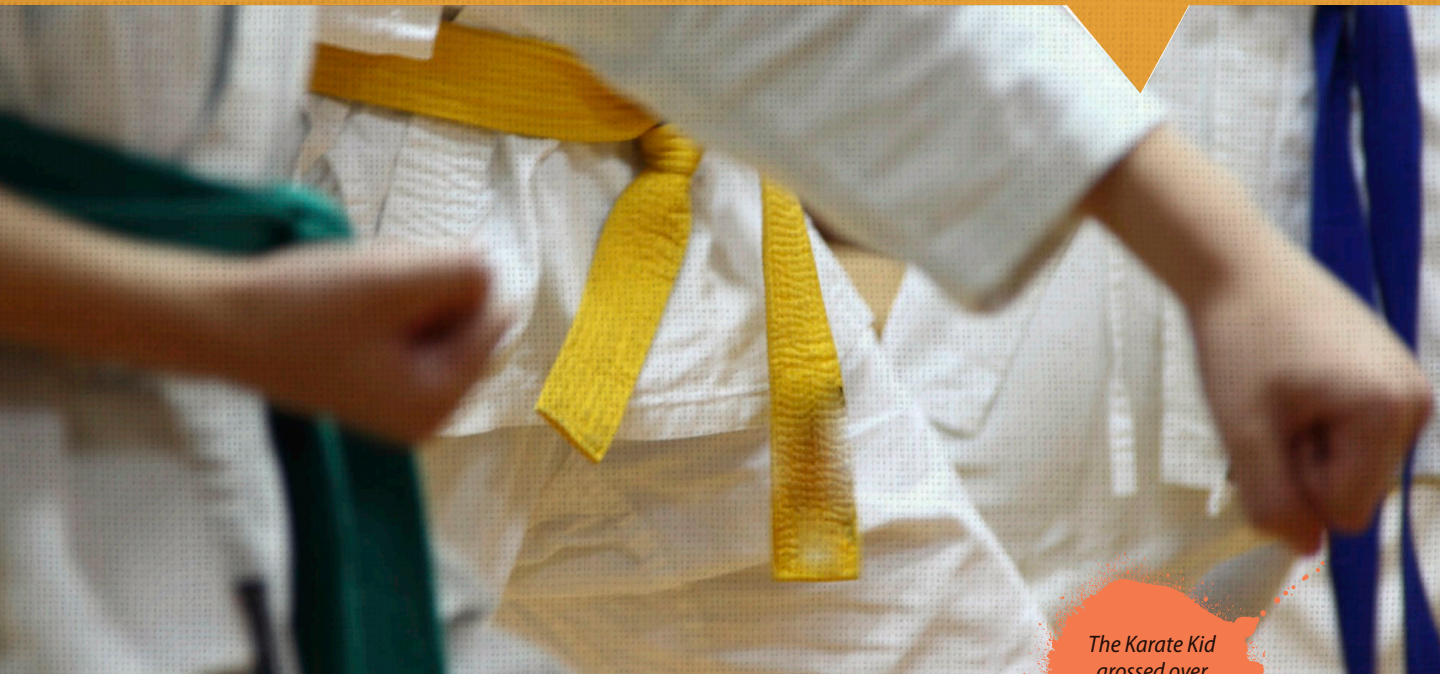
STICK TO GOD'S PLAN



When have you seen
determination pay off?

THE POINT

Leaders keep doing what God tells them to do.



The Karate Kid grossed over \$55 million on opening weekend in 2010.¹

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

The 2010 remake of *The Karate Kid* (Sony Pictures) is about a boy named Dre who travels with his mom to China as she begins a new job. Life gets complicated fast. Dre was popular back home in Detroit, but not in China. Through a series of unfortunate events, Dre finds himself the target of the class bully, Cheng. After Dre meets the maintenance man for his apartment building who also happens to be a master of kung fu, he becomes enthusiastic about learning how to fight his way toward respect. But Dre soon learns that kung fu is not about fighting. It's about patience, maturity, and consistency.

God calls us to a life of trust and obedience. And just as Dre learned about patience, maturity, and consistency in an unusual way, sometimes God teaches us about obedience in unusual ways. Joshua showed persistent obedience in his leadership, and we can benefit from the truth we see lived out in his life.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Joshua 6:1-5,12-16,20

¹ Now Jericho was strongly fortified because of the Israelites—no one leaving or entering. ² The LORD said to Joshua, “Look, I have handed Jericho, its king, and its fighting men over to you. ³ March around the city with all the men of war, circling the city one time. Do this for six days. ⁴ Have seven priests carry seven ram’s-horn trumpets in front of the ark. But on the seventh day, march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the trumpets. ⁵ When there is a prolonged blast of the horn and you hear its sound, have all the people give a mighty shout. Then the city wall will collapse, and the people will advance, each man straight ahead.”

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¹² Joshua got up early the next morning. The priests took the ark of the LORD, ¹³ and the seven priests carrying seven trumpets marched in front of the ark of the LORD. While the trumpets were blowing, the armed troops went in front of them, and the rear guard went behind the ark of the LORD. ¹⁴ On the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days. ¹⁵ Early on the seventh day, they started at dawn and marched around the city seven times in the same way. That was the only day they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶ After the seventh time, the priests blew the trumpets, and Joshua said to the people, “Shout! For the LORD has given you the city.”

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²⁰ So the people shouted, and the trumpets sounded. When they heard the blast of the trumpet, the people gave a great shout, and the wall collapsed. The people advanced into the city, each man straight ahead, and they captured the city.



The Setting

The children of Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground and entered into the promised land. They made a permanent memorial of stones taken from the middle of the river to remind them of, and cause future generations to inquire about, the work God did to bring them into the land. After dedicating themselves to God through circumcising the men, the people faced their first challenge to possessing the promised land—the walled city of Jericho.



Why do you think
God asks us to
do things that are
uncommon or unfamiliar?

JOSHUA 6:1-5

See what God sees. Joshua was stationed near Jericho when he had a divine encounter with God Himself (see 5:13-15). God's steady hand of control was over the circumstances and obstacles in front of Joshua, and Joshua could trust the hand of God. God sees situations far differently than we see them. He has a full perspective—He sees the “big picture” of circumstances ahead of us. God works on our behalf, in our circumstances, at just the right time.

Trust what God says. God gave no great battle plans; He essentially told His people to strap on their sandals and walk! What's at the heart of God's strange strategy? His presence. As the soldiers marched, they were to lead a convoy of priests who carried trumpets and the ark. More soldiers would form the rear guard. Right in the middle of the marching was the physical symbol of God's presence.

In your own leadership journey, has God brought you to people and places you might consider obstacles? Look right in the middle of what you believe is a challenge and see God at work. He's doing something greater than just getting you through. He's calling you to trust Him and obey.

Share This

Every detail of the story
of Jericho has been
verified by findings in
archaeology.²

Can you be halfway obedient and still be called obedient? Explain

JOSHUA 6:12-16

Obey what God says. The Israelites responded in persistent obedience to God's unconventional commands. We may never know why God sometimes calls us to walk in unfamiliar ways of obedience, but there are benefits. Obeying God's unconventional commands:

- ▶ trains our hearts to see things differently. It helps us look away from the fear of any obstacles that stand in the way.
- ▶ shapes our hearts to trust God in the face of any inadequacy or doubt we might feel.
- ▶ releases us from relying on our own strength and encourages us to rely on God.

When viewed from this perspective, you no longer see God's commands as strange or a waste of time. God's commands are a means of shaping us into the leaders He wants us to be in our homes, schools, teams, and communities. Obeying God changes our hearts so that our hands can accomplish what He desires.

Jesus is the perfect model of humble obedience. He exercised perfect obedience to His Father, taking the position of a slave, even to the point of dying to save all people. Jesus' obedience was hinged on an attitude of trusting and wanting to please God so that His work would be done. We can do the same. Look at the task in front of you differently, know that the outcome is already in the hands of the Father, and know He plans to shape you into the likeness of Jesus in the process.

The Ultimate Example

Jesus was obedient to the point of death. Take a moment and read Philippians 2:5-11. In your own words, describe how Jesus' death represents the ultimate example of obedience.

What are the pros and cons of taking a step of faith?

Feelings of gratitude are associated with less frequent negative emotions and more frequent positive emotions such as feeling energized, alert, and enthusiastic.³

JOSHUA 6:20

Rejoice in what God does. As the Israelites began the seventh lap, the priests would give a mighty blast on the trumpets, and that would be their cue. At that moment all the people shouted, the walls crumbled, and the Israelites ran in and took the city for God.

God is pleased with our faith and rewards those who work diligently to follow His direction (see Heb. 11:6). As we obey—in normal and abnormal ways—God grows us and guides us as we continue to march on in our leadership journey.

In what area of your life would you like to see the walls come tumbling down?

'Resolution One: I will live for God.
Resolution Two: If no one
else does, I still will.'¹⁴

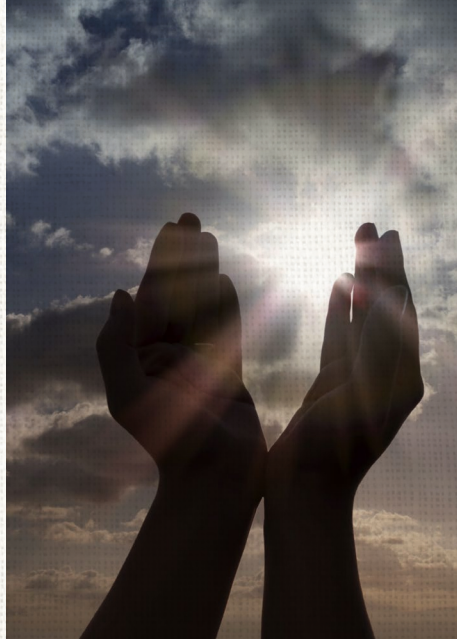
—JONATHAN EDWARDS

APPLY IT

What steps will you take to walk in persistent obedience?

- ▶ **Break your routine.** Practice doing simple things in an "unusual" way. Take a different route to school or skip your favorite show. That may not sound spiritual, but it can help you be on the lookout for the unusual ways God chooses to teach us things sometimes.
- ▶ **Evaluate and pray.** Select an area in your neighborhood or school and spend time praying for the people there. Ask yourself: *Am I just going through my normal routine or am I engaging with God to see what He sees and says about what's in front of me?*
- ▶ **Talk about your walls.** Identify any obstacles blocking your ability to lead well. Ask someone you trust for advice on how to remove the things that are affecting your ability to lead.

Joyfully accept what God hands you, walk in obedience, and anticipate what God is going to do through you.



Faithful

Years before, God had made a promise to Caleb. Now it was time for that promise to be fulfilled, and Caleb was certain his faithful God would fulfill it.



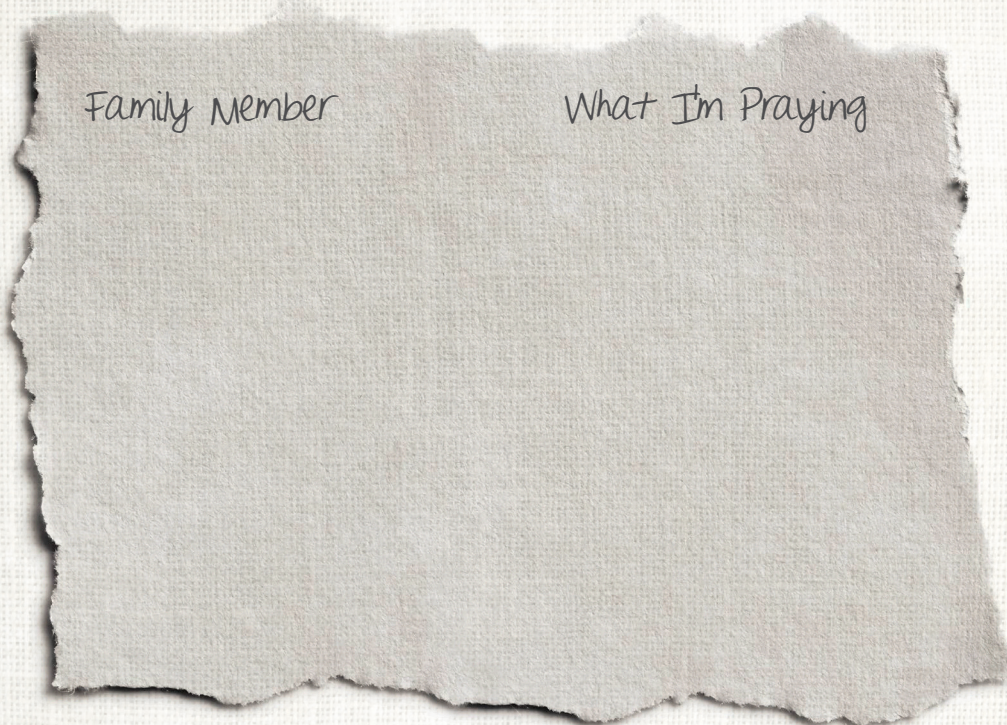
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LEAD ON YOUR KNEES

James 1:5

You are a leader in your family. Take some time this week to walk through your home and pray for each member of your family individually and specifically. Ask God to give you wisdom and insight into your leadership role in your home. Use the space below to record specific prayer requests for each family member as well as what you feel the Lord is showing you about your role as a leader in your family.



Family Member


What I'm Praying

What I am learning about my role as a leader in my family:

EVERYDAY LESSONS

Job 33:14

God has called us to obey Him regardless of where we are or what we're doing. And sometimes He teaches us important lessons in unusual ways. This week pay close attention to your everyday schedule. Be on the lookout for God's guidance and instruction as you go through your normal routine like school, church, sports, homework, and chores. As you notice God showing you something, record it. The greatest way to remember an unusual lesson learned is to write it down and make a memory of it.



What God is showing me:

A tip:

- ▶ **Grab a picture of the lesson you're learning and share it on Instagram.**

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