

# Sermon Study

JOSHUA: Passing Over – Bear God's Mark  
Joshua 5:1-9

## vision

Eastview  
Christian  
Church is a  
fearless church  
of Christ  
followers whose  
ridiculous love  
and dangerous  
witness are  
irresistible.



**AUTHOR'S NOTE** (summary of key points for this study)  
*After God's miraculous water-stoppage and dry-ground crossing of the Jordan River, the nation of Israel likely felt reassured. God was with them! After 40 years, the time is finally here! You might expect they'd march that momentum immediately into battle for the Promised Land! Well...wait. Not so fast. This study will focus on two key points: 1) that the Enemy knows he's defeated, and 2) that for God to move mightily in our lives, we must bear God's mark.*

**Gather** (your group getting to know each other)

What physical marks do you have (tattoos, scars, birthmarks, piercings, etc.)? Are they connected to a memorable story that you could share?

**Go**  
(your group on mission)

As you consider sharing the gospel or speaking about your faith to nonbelievers this week, remember that because of what Jesus has done, you're fighting from victory. Your enemies are already defeated and demoralized, and you have been given a Spirit of power, love and self-control...not of fear.

**Grow** (your group growing as Christ-followers)

### Key Scripture

"Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you."  
(Joshua 5:9, ESV)

### Discussion

1. Have someone begin the discussion time by leading the group in prayer, then read Joshua 5:1. (just that first verse)

2. Unsurprisingly, news of what God did for the people of Israel quickly reached the nearby kingdoms, leaving them terrified and demoralized. Interestingly, at the time, Israel doesn't know this. For all they know, they're about to face energetic, determined foes. But in truth, the Israelites are about to battle enemies that God has already melted, demoralized, and defeated. As you think about the "enemies" and battles in your life, how do you approach them: with fear that they are formidable, or with faith that they have already fallen? Share some examples.

3. The truth is, big picture, we're facing an already defeated enemy. One that we can resist. One that will flee. Ones that shudder and beg. Read the following passages aloud and then discuss these questions: *how* can we resist? And how would your struggles, temptations, and battles be different once you realize that, in Christ Jesus, you're fighting *from* victory against foes (Satan, Sin, and Death) whose hearts are already melted and whose spirits are no longer in them? (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-10; James 2:19; Matthew 8:28-32; Luke 10:17-20; 2 Timothy 1:7)

4. Now let's move on and read the rest of our passage aloud:  
Joshua 5:2-9.

5. This might not seem like the best time for administering circumcision to the whole male population, right? The passage itself says that they needed time to heal (v.8), leaving them incredibly vulnerable (for about 3 days) to an attack by the warriors of Jericho. Of course, *God* knew Jericho was terrified and scrambling, not poised to attack, but do you think it was hard for *the people* to accept God's command here? Or do you think they trusted God's plan and timing at this point? What about you? Is it hard for you to accept God's commands to obedience and patience (even when, to you, they seem ill-timed), or do you trust Him at this point?

6. Are you surprised to read that circumcision had apparently been suspended, overlooked, or abandoned during the long period in the wilderness? Do you have experience in straying from the commands of Jesus during times of your "wilderness?" Why do you think this happens? How can we avoid it?

7. As we walk this into our own lives now, read Galatians 5:1-6, Colossians 2:11-12, and Acts 2:38-39. What are some ways we are now marked as the people of God?

8. What do you think God means about "removing the reproach of Egypt" in v.9? In what ways does faith in Christ, baptism, and receiving the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit accomplish this in you? Consider Colossians 2:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, and Galatians 6:15.

**Give**  
(your group serving each other)

Serve your group this week by finding time to go deeper in conversation about your 'marks.' Talk about baptism, about the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, about what it looks like for you to have a daily faith walking with Christ. Prayerfully, this will be a time of encouragement and celebration of the ways God has 'removed the reproach' from your lives.