Sermon Outline 1

These Days Are Glory Days

I. Introduction: Living in the *Glory Days*

A. Max Lucado shares the startling results of the REVEAL Research Project, in which Christians worldwide were asked about their experience as believers in Jesus Christ. The results revealed that only 11% of those surveyed believed they were living a victorious Christian life*—*living the *Glory Days.*

B. That means only 1 out of 10 Christians rated themselves as living to their potential as Christ-followers. Of the 2.2 billion Christians on this planet, 2 billion admitted living sub-Christian lives.

C. Max asks, “Can you imagine the dramatic good that would sweep our planet if all 2.2 billion Christians lived into power and potential that the great salvation of God gave them?”

D. What exactly does it mean to live in the *Glory Days*? To answer this question, we must explore a unique seven-year period in the history of God’s people.

II. Teaching: Three Stops on Israel’s Iconic Historical Journey

A. Stop 1: Egypt—slaves to Pharaoh (Exodus 3:7–9).

1. This is Israel’s pre-redemption life. Slaves . . . in bondage . . . oppressed.

2. Before salvation, were too were slaves to sin. “But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousnes” (Romans 6:17-18 niv).

B. Stop 2: The Wilderness—slaves to fear (Numbers 13:33; 14:9).

1. God’s people were out of Egypt, but Egypt was not out of them. They yearned for the old days, they complained, and they suffered judgment (wandering for 40 years). See Numbers 14:29-35.

2. We, too, can be saved but still live in unbelief in the goodness of God and the promises he has made to us. “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:37–39).

C. Stop 3: Canaan—living as people of the Promised Land (Joshua 21:43–45).

1. Remember Max’s *Glory Days Declaration*: “These days are Glory Days. My past is past, my future is bright, God’s promises are true and his Word is sure. With God as my helper, I will be all he wants me to be, do all he wants me to do, and receive all he wants me to receive. These days are Glory Days.”

2. God’s people entered into promises that he had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob centuries before. Between entering the Promised Land to the time of the dark days of the judges were the seven years in Israel’s history we can call the *Glory Days.*

3. God’s promises to us are not geographical, but spiritual.

a. “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3).

b. “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16).

III. Application: At What Stop Are You Living?

A. You must do an honest assessment of your life. Are you saved? Are you still in bondage to sin? Jesus, as a new Moses, has led the way out of sin’s bondage. Are you in Egypt? Trust in him now.

B. Are you living below your Christian potential? Are you one of the 2 billion Christians not living in the “land” God has promised you? Are living in the land of unanswered prayer, wasted time, and little change in your life? Are you in the wilderness? Stay with this series and start marching into the Promised Land today.

C. Are you in the 11% of Christians who feel they are experiencing the *Glory Days*? How does God want to use you to help this wrecked and weary world? Seek ways to glorify your good and powerful God.

Sermon Outline 2

Inherit Your Inheritance

I. Introduction: Max Lucado’s First Car

A. Max tells the story about his first car—something he wanted from before birth. He says that in his sonogram picture, he’s holding up a sign in the womb that reads “Car, Please.” He said the word “Mustang” when most babies were learning “Mama”!

B. When Max was sixteen and having dinner with his family, his dad pitched some keys on the table. “What are those for?” Max asked. “They are the keys to a Plymouth Belvedere,” his dad said. “It’s yours, Max.” Max recalls thinking, *I had a new car because my dad declared it*.

C. In the same way, God made a declaration to Joshua and the people of Israel. “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon I have given you—as I said to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.” (Joshua 1:1-4 NKJV).

D. God said, “Every place . . . I have given you.” From God’s viewpoint, inheriting the Promised Land was a done deal. God said, “It’s yours, my people. Take it.”

II. Teaching: Waging War on the Pestilence of “I Can’t”

A. We must get rid of the wilderness “I can’t” mentality.

1. Joshua had reasonable excuses to turn God down: “Moses is dead, and I’m no Moses,” or, “These people are inexperienced tenderfoots,” or, “The Canaanites are fierce warriors . . . we’re doomed.” But God’s promises defeat our excuses.

2. The people, too, had to give up wilderness thinking such as, “I will always be weak,” or, “I am a victim,” or, “I’ll never make it through tough days.” God’s people needed a new vision of themselves.

3. Unbelief is the primary reason God’s people fail. “See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today,’ so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end. As has just been said: ‘Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion” (Hebrews 3:12–15).

B. We must believe God and believe who we are with God.

1. We believe God: God declared that he already had given his people the Land (Joshua 1:1–4).

a. God didn’t say land he *might give* the land, or say they had *to deserve* the land, or they had to *conquer* the land, or they had to *purchase, earn, or confiscate* the land. No, God said, “It’s your land because I declare it so.”

b. To enter into our victory in Christ, we do not fight *for* victory but *from* victory. We must inherit our inheritance.

2. We believe who we are with God: God has made us co-inheritors with Christ!

a. “The Spirit Himself bears witness that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:16-17 NKJV). The word for “joint heirs” is *synkleronomos* and means “same inheritance.” We receive the same inheritance as Jesus.

b. Ephesians 1:18 speaks of the “inheritance of the saints.” We *already have* every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). We have received an inheritance that will never pass away. “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:3–4).

III. Application: Inherit Your Inheritance

A. Now that we know we have an inheritance from God, will we inherit it?

B. Max points out that many Christians don’t believe all that they have received from God. At our conversion we received so much from God. God doesn’t just send old clunkers like us through a car wash—no, he creates us as brand new Ferraris.

C. All we need for life and godliness has been given to us already (2 Peter 1:3). Living in the wilderness only produces complaints like “I can’t” or even “I won’t.” Marching into Canaan means shouting “I can!” because God is good and all his promises are *yes.* “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God” (2 Corinthians 1:20).

Sermon Outline 3

Walk Circles Around Jericho

I. Introduction: No, Never Alone

A. Max tells the story of Tammy Trent, who was celebrating her eleventh wedding anniversary with her husband, Trent Lenderink, in Jamaica. Tragically, Trent drown while free diving in the Blue Lagoon.

B. To face this horrible crisis Tammy needed support, so her parents agreed to fly out the next day. That day was September 11, 2001. Because of the terrorists’ attack, all flights were cancelled. Tammy cried to the Lord, *“God, if you are up there anywhere, please send somebody to help me, somebody to hold me and let me know that you care and that you see me.”*

C. Max writes, “A few minutes later there was a knock at her hotel door. It was the housekeeper. She was an older Jamaican woman. ‘I don’t mean to bother you,’ she said, ‘but I couldn’t help but hear you crying, and I was trying to get to you. Could I just come in and hold you and pray for you?’ Tammy broke down and told the woman what had happened. That kind Jamaican put her arms around Tammy and held her close. Jesus used a Jamaican housekeeper to comfort his American daughter.”

D. Tammy was not alone as she faced her personal Jericho. Our “Jericho” is our fear, our insecurity, our anxiety, our prejudice, our anger. God’s people faced the fortress walls of Jericho, behind which lived a fierce barbarian people, and they were never alone.

II. Teaching: God Is with Us in Our Jerichos

A. The Angel of the Lord is Jesus, Our Immanuel—“God with us” (Joshua 5:13–16; Joshua 6:1–5).

1. The presence of the Angel in Joshua 5:13–15 made the place holy ground, and Joshua worshiped.

a. Only God’s presence makes holy ground (Exodus 3:5).

b. The Angel received the worship, and only God receives worship (Revelation 19:10).

c. Jesus is the Commander of the heavenly armies (Revelation 19:11–16).

d. Joshua met Jesus, who is Immanuel, “God with us” (Matthew 1:23 niv).

2. The Angel’s promise was that Jericho would fall to God’s people.

B. Jericho, the mighty pagan city, miraculously collapsed before God’s people (Joshua 6:6–20).

1. The battle plan put God and his power on display (Joshua 6:16).

2. The battle plan demonstrates God’s promises are true (Joshua 6:2, 16).

C. We, too, are more than conquerors in Christ (Romans 8:31–39).

1. God is for us (Romans 8:31).

2. Jesus prays for us (Romans 8:34).

3. No weapon against us will prevail (Romans 8:39).

4. We are equipped to win the battle (Ephesians 6:11–18; 2 Corinthians 10:4–5).

III. Application: Until Christ Comes, Keep Marching

A. Someday Jesus, the Commander of the heavenly armies, will come back and reclaim every inch of the universe as his own. Our enemy and his ugly minions will be openly and eternally smashed.

B. Until then, we must face our “Jerichos” and march in faith, guided by God’s Word and confident in God’s power, knowing we are never alone. “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?’” (Hebrews 13:5–6 niv).

Sermon Outline 4

Pray Audacious Prayers

I. Introduction: What Is a “BHAP”?

A. Some years ago it was popular in business and church organizations to talk about “BHAGS” (pronounced “bee-hags”). A BHAG is a “Big Hairy Audacious Goal.” Leaders were urged to think big and plan big.

B. Joshua and the leaders of Israel teach us about something else: a BHAP. What is a BHAP? It is a Big Hairy Audacious Prayer.

C. Shortly after entering into the Promised Land, Joshua and the leaders of the Israelites learned valuable lessons about prayer. One lesson was learned from a prayer failure; another through an amazing prayer success, a true BHAP.

D. Let’s take a closer at these two: the troubling failure in prayer and the astounding success in prayer.

II. Teaching: Two Lessons in Prayer

A. The failure lesson: consult God in everything (Joshua 9:1–5; Philippians 4:6–7).

1. Joshua and the leaders did not consult God in everything (Joshua 6:14).

a. As a result, the Gibeonites deceived God’s people (Joshua 9:9–13, 22).

b. Joshua and the leaders made a treaty with people whom God, through Moses, had told them to destroy (Joshua 9:24).

2. Satan, our enemy, and his evil demons use deceit against us (2 Corinthians 11:14–15).

a. Satan, the devil, is a liar (John 8:44; Genesis 3:4–5).

b. We must be alert to the devil’s schemes (2 Corinthians 2:10–11).

3. We must go boldly to God in prayer (Hebrews 4:16).

a. We are not sufficient in ourselves to discern the right way (Proverbs 3:5–6).

b. God will guide and protect us (Psalm 32:8).

B. The success lesson: call on God for great things

1. Five Amorite kings attacked the Gibeonites (Joshua 10:1–5).

2. Joshua and his army, by treaty, defended the Gibeonites (Joshua 10:6–8).

3. Joshua prayed a BHAP—a Big Hairy Audacious Prayer (Joshua 10:12–13).

a. The sun stopped in the sky. This stupendous event was recorded in the Book of Jashar.

b. “God took orders from a human voice” (Joshua 10:14 msg).

4. God invites us to ask him anything (Matthew 7:7–8; 21:22).

a. Max writes about Greg Pruett, whose ministry was facing a freefall toward insolvency. Greg called on his teammates worldwide to pray bold and specific requests before God’s throne. Greg writes, “When I saw the end-of-the-year report, I knew God had heard our prayers. . . . I began to learn not to pray about my strategies but to make prayer the strategy.

b. God is jealous for our trust. When we pray, we trust.

IV. Application: Pray Some BHAPS

A. Max tells about preaching on the southern steps that lead to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. As he spoke from John 3:16 of Jesus being God’s “one and only,” a mocking voice echoed what he said.

B. Max discerned an encounter of spiritual warfare and began *praying* his words, not just addressing the people. He prayed, “Jesus is the supreme authority of this place, any place, and every place. Which, by the way, includes any demons, servants of hell, and Satan himself. You are not welcome in this gathering!*”*

C. Max continues, *“*I repeated this declaration several times until the crowd began to applaud and shout, ‘Amen!’” The spiritual interference stopped.

D. Take a moment and review your heart and life. What great things do you need to ask God? What is keeping you from it? God is jealous for *your* trust. Consult God in everything. Call on God for great things!

Sermon Outline 5

No Falling Words

I. Introduction: Faith Is a Choice

A. Max tells the story of a man he met on a plane who had heard him speak one time. During the flight, the man gave Max a napkin with this note on it:

*Max, six summers ago Lynne and I buried our twenty-four-year-old daughter. This came about following a lake accident and two weeks on life support. We didn’t see this coming. How do you go on a summer vacation with four and come back home with three? Friends, some of whom had buried precious children, rallied around our family. A country lawyer with his encouraging message that “God means you good, not harm” was one of those encouraging voices.*

*Various copies of your books were given to Lynne and me. . . . We prayed for a miracle. I wanted her made new, her smile and brilliance restored. To unplug our daughter from life support was very, very hard. Although the decision was painful, we were confident that we were doing the right thing in laying her in the arms of a mighty God. He knew our pain. His best work may not have been restoring Erin to this life, but his assistance for Lynne and me to let him have her. He made our daughter better than new. He restored my Erin to his eternal presence. That is his best work! This was not a lightweight hope. This was an assurance: “Let me have your Erin. I’ve got her now.” God’s children reflecting the very nature of God became his presence around us. Our faith is getting us through this. Faith is a choice.*

B. All us will stand at times on the crossroads between belief and unbelief.

C. In our study, we come to a part of Israel’s story when Joshua is about to die. Looking back, Joshua can declare to the people that not one of God’s words had fallen.

D. God utters “no falling words”—no broken promises, empty vows, or assurances ignored.

II. Teaching: God’s Promises and Integrity

A. God does what he says he will do (Joshua 21:43–45).

1. These verses are “the theological heart” of the book of Joshua.

a. Three times Joshua emphasizes that God keeps his word.

b. Promises made to Abraham are fulfilled in Joshua’s time—600 years after God made them.

i) “To your offspring I will give this land” (Genesis 12:7 niv).

ii) “The LORD gave Israel all the land” (Joshua 21:43).

2. God is a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God (Genesis 9:11; 15:17–21).

B. God’s integrity deeply matters to those who face life’s struggles.

1. What does God promise?

a. To the bereaved, God promises joy (Psalm 30:5).

b. To the besieged, God promises deliverance (Psalm 34:19).

c. To the sick, God promises healing (Psalm 41:3).

d. To the lonely, God promises companionship (Isaiah 43:2).

e. To the dying, God promises an eternal home (John 14:1–2).

f. To the sinner, God promises grace (2 Corinthians 19:9).

2. God’s promises are good and are for our good. “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires” (2 Peter 1:3–4).

3. We are beneficiaries of the New Covenant that is put into effect through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

a. “In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you’” (Luke 22:20).

b. “You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. . . . He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:3, 6).

III. Application: Faith Is a Choice

A. Max recounts a time when a turbulent storm caused a delay in his arrival to a Texas airport. While still in the air, Max began to make plans on how to handle to delay. He would have to call his wife, Denalyn, and make arrangements to spend the night at the airport hotel.

B. But then the pilot came on the intercom and said, “Folks, we knew this storm could disrupt your plans, but we have alerted your connecting flights, and they are waiting for you. Please proceed to your next flight. You will make your connections.”

C. The pilot’s words did not fall. His words were true and trustworthy. Max continued on his trip home.

D. God’s word never fails, and it never falls. No matter what trials you face or what storms come your way, you can declare, “Faith is a choice—*and I choose faith.*” What does God the Father want you to trust him for right now?

Sermon Outline 6

God Fights for You

I. Introduction: Nadin Khoury’s Story

A. Max tells the story of Nadin Khoury, who had recently moved with his mother from Minnesota to Philadelphia. In 2000, the two had come to the United States as refugees from war-torn Liberia. Nadin was thirteen years old, 5’ 2” and weighed about 100 pounds. He became the target of bullies in the rough Philadelphia neighborhood.

B. One time, seven young thugs beat up Nadin and posted their violence on YouTube. The neighborhood saw it—and so did the police. The thugs were arrested, and Nadin’s story was reported in the news. Sometime lader, Nadin was invited as a guest on the TV show *The View.* When Nadin saw the video, he said, “Next time it could be someone smaller than me.”

C. Just then, from backstage in walked three members of the Philadelphia Eagles: DeSean Jackson and two huge linemen. DeSean said to Nadin, “Anytime you need us, I got two linemen right here.” Then, on national TV, DeSean Jackson gave his personal cell number to Nadin Khoury. Talk about bodyguards!

D. God’s people also had a bodyguard: the Lord himself! Joshua, in his final farewell to the people, said, “You yourselves have seen everything the Lord your God has done to all these nations for your sake; it was the Lord your God who fought for you” (Joshua 23:3 niv).

II. Teaching: God, Our Bodyguard

A. Israel’s bodyguard God in action.

1. God was the One giving the land to his people (Joshua 1:11).

2. God was the One doing “amazing things” for the people (Joshua 3:5).

3. God was the One who dried up the Jordan River (Joshua 4:23).

4. God was the One who caused Jericho to fall (Joshua 6:16).

5. God was the One “who fights for you” (Joshua 23:9–11).

B. Israel’s bodyguard is now our bodyguard.

1. God will never, ever leave us (Hebrew 13:5).

2. God is our helper. Max writes, “The Greek word for ‘helper in [Hebrews 13:6] is *boetheia*, from *boe* which means ‘shout’ and *theo* which means ‘run.’ When you need help, God runs with a shout, ‘I’m coming!’ He never leaves you. Ever! He never takes a break, takes a nap, or takes time off for vacation. He never leaves your side.”

3. God’s helping presence defeats all our fears.

a. Just as Joshua was “snookered” by the Gibeonites (Joshua 6), so people may try to deceive us. As Nadin Khoury was bullied, so may we feel opposition, and sometimes even hostile rejection. Yet we need not fear.

b. God shares his strength, imparts his love, infuses us with his hope. He never leaves us. He will fight for us. All wrongs will one day be made right by our bodyguard God.

IV. Application: Ponder This

A. *God fights for you.* Just think about that: *God. Fights. For. You.*

1. *God:* Your bodyguard is none other than the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. God is the all-powerful, all merciful Lord. He’s much more able to protect you than three Philadelphia Eagles!

2. *Fights:* God is a mighty warrior. Jesus, the Commander of the armies of heaven, wages battle for you. Nothing and no one can stand against God and win.

3. *For:* God is *on your side*. He is not against you; he is for you, for your family, for your future. God is so much for you that he gave Jesus, his Son, as the sacrifice for your sin. To get you, he gave Jesus.

4. *You:* Even on a planet with 2.2 billion Christians, God is fully aware of you. He knows you as if you were the only person on the planet. He knows how many hairs are on your head and knows your thoughts before you think them. He knows all that is sinful and wrecked in you and he chooses to love you with an eternal, unstoppable love.

B. If you have not trusted God for your salvation, now is the time to do so. Ask God to save you now.

C. If you are a believer still living in wilderness complaint, bitter at life or even bitter at God, why not surrender now and enter into your inheritance? God is full of love and quick to forgive. It’s time for all us to live in our *Glory Days.*