

SESSION 3 — THE DIVINE FLOW

KEY POINTS

- When we walk together in the divine order of oneness, in God's presence and in submission, we can expect spiritual victory.
- We must approach issues and criticisms in the right way - eliminate gossip, adopt a Godly attitude and approach towards disagreements with leaders Biblically.
- Cell groups and ministries must align with the church and minister to the individuals as well as to the church as a whole.
- Plan your schedule around the church's ministry seasons (eg. high evangelism focus in Easter and Christmas).
- Cells groups discuss the sermon during cell meetings to align with and to foster unity within the church.

SESSION SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- God saved us and placed us in a family.
- We need to learn how to walk together as one (taking up our positions) and operate in the divine flow.
- The story of the fall of Jericho gives us principles on how to walk together as a church in the divine flow.

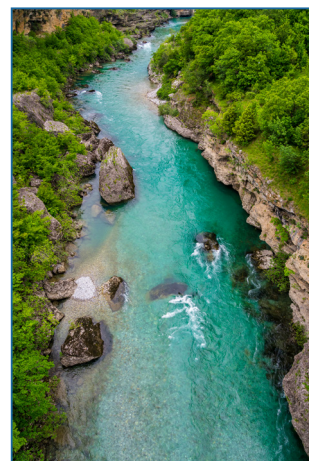
HOW TO WALK TOGETHER IN THE DIVINE FLOW (JOSHUA 6)

1. Victory Through Being in Divine Order (Joshua 6:1-21)

The spiritual world is a world of divine order. There is a system of divine order to follow. Divine order is God's plan for our deliverance from the enemy's plan by the restoration of divine authority and individual liberty subjected to this authority (as illustrated by the battle of Jericho).

a. Walking in the divine order of oneness (vs. 1-5)

God's instructions to bring down Jericho's walls involved not only the army,



but the priests as well. All of them worked together as one under God. On the seventh day, everyone shouted in unison and brought down the walls.

Spiritual Warfare Application (SWA)

- Anointing flows down from the head of the Church to each member (Psa. 133:3). We operate in spiritual authority when we together are aligned in proper relationship with one another – just like how God is in Jesus and how Jesus is in God operating as one (John 17:21).
- When members walk in oneness, we tear down the spiritual strongholds. This is the rule of divine order and submission. If we are living in obedience to God's will, then we will have spiritual authority over all our spheres.

b. Walking in the divine order of God's Presence (vs. 6-16)

The people of God overcame the seemingly insurmountable opposition (Jericho's mighty walls) by total reliance on God. The focus is God's presence, as represented by the ark, who was with His people as they acted upon His instructions.

Spiritual Warfare Application (SWA)

- God is a God of order. As we seek His presence to know Him, we will see His hand directing, arranging and ordering our lives (Exo. 25:21-22).
- God is revealing the order of the Kingdom and bringing it for His glory.

c. Walking in the divine order of submission (vs. 15-21)

Operating in oneness and obedience as thousands marched defenceless and silently around the city of Jericho. They obeyed their leader, Joshua, and never questioned God's methods – which was an unusual battle strategy.

Spiritual Warfare Application (SWA)

- Christ places men and women into positions of authority. A leaders' authority is in the spirit and their natural function is to serve and to help others grow into maturity (Heb. 13:17).
- We must respect our leaders in their anointing before we can receive (Acts 3:6). In submitting to God and the Holy Spirit, we carry a greater weight in the spiritual realm as the Spirit flows within us. We'll have authority over everything within our God-given sphere.
- The opposite of the spirit of submission is the spirit of rebellion. The Bible calls it the sin of witchcraft. We need to honour the office of a leader, even if the leader is flawed. Respecting the office frees us from preference and that freedom allows us to do the right things.



2. Cell Group Structure

- Jesus sets an example of the biblical role of the servant leader by washing His disciples' feet (John 13:14).

- There are 5 layers in the structure of the church:
 - In-Most Core: Elders Board & Senior Leaders
 - Second Circle: Congregational & Zone Pastors
 - Third Circle: Area Overseers
 - Fourth Circle: Cell Leaders
 - Fifth Circle: Cell Groups
- Orderly Flow: Criticisms and issues are settled inward, while praise and encouragement are to be expressed outwardly, and in everything, we point upward towards God.

3. Process for Resolution of Issues



a. Principles to Resolve: Issues & Criticisms

- Address criticisms and issues internally (inwards) within the cell first
 - from cell members, to cell leaders, to area overseers, then to zone leaders. Issues are resolved in progressive layers.
- Most criticisms are against a system or a person(s). For criticisms directed primarily against a system, deal with the issue internally (inwards). For criticisms directed towards a person, the person who is the subject of the criticism must be involved as the issue is dealt internally (inwards).
- Under no circumstances should gossip be tolerated. Gossip is criticism spread among others without involving the person who is the subject of the criticism. It is sinful, unbiblical, and destroys unity in the body. When gossip is detected, it should be addressed immediately by any individual within the cell.

b. Exercise Encouragement and Positive Evaluation Outwards

- Make it a habit to encourage one another outwardly (Eph. 4:29). In doing so, it creates a culture of encouragement thus fulfilling the law of Jesus to love one another as He has loved us.

c. In Everything Point Upwards

- No issue may be addressed or resolved unless we align ourselves with God through prayer, relying on His direction through His Word, and asking for wisdom through His Spirit.

d. What To Do When We Find Ourselves in Disagreement With Our Leader

- Make sure what you are disagreeing with is something that person actually said, and not expressing a personal displeasure towards that person. Check it against Scripture (the ultimate test).
- Refrain from rebuking a leader (whenever and wherever you feel like it) if you disagree with him/her (Matt.18:15-16).
- We all have our personal style of doing things or preferences of how things should be done. By saying, "I don't like that", it is self-focused and not about the mission of the

church. It slows the flow of good ideas and shuts down constructive criticism. It also makes the disagreement feel more confrontational than necessary. When we banish “I don’t like that” from our vocabulary, it forces us to look for deeper and better reasons for the disagreement.

- Instead, we can ask the following:
 - ⇒ How does this fit our mission?
 - ⇒ Is there something I’m not seeing here?
 - ⇒ How can we do this better?
 - ⇒ What parts of this can be turned into something great?

4. How a Cell Group Relates with the Larger Church Community



- a. How does a cell relate with other cells?
 - A cell group must orient the members to the vision, focuses and ministries of RiverLife.
 - A cell group must take care to be as gracious as we can towards each other so that there is no competition between cells or the encouragement of members to migrate from their cell.
 - A cell group should not encourage “group hopping”.
 - A cell group must have connection with other cell groups.
- b. How should a cell group relate to the ministries of the church?
 - The focus of cells is to build community, whereas the focus of a ministry is to serve and edify the church as a whole (collectively).
 - Be part of the church. No cell group is isolated on its own. Be involved in all church activities.
 - Be active in service outside the cell group.
 - Be aware of the greater needs of the church.
- c. How should the ministries of the church relate to the cells?
 - Involvement rather than just recruitment. Develop your members; not just deploy them.
 - Involve whole groups (eg. families, a whole cell, etc) rather than just individuals.
 - Creating presence and real connections rather than just transactional appearances. Communicate constantly with the cells.

5. Two Cell Ministry Applications

- a. High Seasons for Evangelism
 - The high seasons for evangelism in our ministry year are often Easter, Christmas and other Holy days. Cell groups should not miss these high seasons. Do your best to plan holidays around high ministry seasons.

b. Sermon-based Cell Groups

- Discussing the sermon during cell meetings unifies church teachings and sharpens the focus of the church.
- It protects against heresy as there could be many potential erroneous points made by individual viewpoints/interpretations of the sermon.
- It encourages cell members to be part of the worship gathering and not isolate themselves to just attending the cell meetings.

RESPONSE/CONCLUSION

1. We cannot walk in the spirit of division, speak against leadership and then expect to see unity in the church. We cannot operate in the spirit of the enemy and then expect to see the power of God.
2. God's move is to bring forth a plurality of leadership to serve the world, through whom Christ will govern the world.
3. Leaders are servant leaders with delegated authority. We must fight against the spirit of independence and stand in the divine order of oneness and submission with God so that we flow with His Spirit.

