

Be Strong

Joshua 1:1-9

This Week's Focus

Few things have more influence on our actions than our fears. The fear of failure can keep you from taking worthwhile risks or making important choices. On the other hand, the fear of missing out can cause us to take unnecessary risks or make reckless decisions. If left unchecked, our deepest fears will begin to control us.

Jesus understood this as He constantly told His disciples "Do not fear" (Mark 4:40; 5:36; 6:50). The Book of Joshua is a continuation of the story of God's rescue of His people out of slavery in Egypt. It begins with God challenging Joshua, the new leader of His people, to refuse to let fear control him.

Joshua 1:1-9

Begin by reading the passage through two times.

1 After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, who had served Moses: **2** "Moses My servant is dead. Now you and all the people prepare to cross over the Jordan to the land I am giving the Israelites. **3** I have given you every place where the sole of your foot treads, just as I promised Moses. **4** Your territory will be from the wilderness and Lebanon to the great Euphrates River—all the land of the Hittites—and west to the Mediterranean Sea. **5** No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. I will be with you, just as I was with Moses. I will not leave you or forsake you. **6** "Be strong and courageous, for you will distribute the land I swore to their fathers to give them as an inheritance. **7** Above all, be strong and very courageous to carefully observe the whole instruction My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or the left, so that you will have success wherever you go. **8** This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to recite it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do. **9** Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."



If you were to ask your friends and peers to share their deepest fears, what kinds of answers do you think you would get?

How do our fears influence our attitudes and actions?

The Character of God Empowers Mission

Three times in Joshua 1:6-9, God tells the young leader to "be strong and courageous." This is a fitting command given the difficult task of entering the promised land that lay before Joshua. How would he do this? Joshua would accomplish the mission God had given him, not through superior strategy or personal strength, but by leaning on God's perfect character and sure promises.

Joshua 1:1-2

What did God command Joshua to do? Put yourself in Joshua's shoes. How would you respond to this command?

What would obedience to God's command require of Joshua? What might obedience to God require of you?

Joshua 1:3-5

Why did God promise to give land to Joshua and the people of Israel among pagan nations (v. 3)? What was required of the people of Israel if they hoped to receive this promise?

What else did God promise to Joshua and the people of Israel in these verses? What do these promises tell us about God?

Why did God choose Joshua to lead this initiative? Why did God choose Israel to be His special people in His chosen land (see Deut. 7:6-11)?

Joshua 1:6-9

Three times in these verses, God commands Joshua to be strong and courageous. Why did Joshua need this charge?

What else did God command Joshua to do in these verses?
What did God promise to Joshua and the people of Israel if they kept these commands?

What promises are connected to these commands (vv. 6,9)? How might remembering the promises of God empower us to live on mission for Him (see Matt. 28:18-20)?

Central Truth

When we Lean into the promises of God,
we will find the courage necessary to
Live on mission for Him.

Now What?

In what specific areas of your Life do you need to Lean on God for strength and courage?

Why are strength and courage necessary to fulfilling the mission God has given us?

What keeps you from Leaning on God for strength and courage?

Devise a plan of action. How will you Lean more heavily on God's strength and presence this week?

Personal Challenge

Dwell: Read Psalm 16. Take special note of the psalmist's awareness of God's presence and how that influenced his attitudes, actions, and perspective. Journal a prayer to God asking Him to help you grow in your awareness of His ever-presence in your life. Pray that knowing this would help you live confidently for His glory.

Memorize: Joshua 1:5

Pray: Ask God to give you the courage you need to live on mission for Him in your school, your neighborhood, and in your activities. Pray that He would help you to remember and lean on His promises, knowing that in and of yourself you are not strong enough to fulfill the mission God has given you. Thank Him for promising to see you through and to be with you every step of the way.

Keep on Digging

Read the following verses. List them in a journal or jot some notes here about what each tells you about our source of strength in living on mission for God.

- Psalm 22:19; 46:1; 119:28
- Isaiah 40:29-31
- Mark 12:30
- Ephesians 6:10
- Philippians 4:13
- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10