

## Being Strong and Courageous

Joshua 1: 6-9

Our text today deals with a critical juncture in the history of Israel. Moses had led the people out of Egypt's bondage and guided them through the Wilderness Wanderings. However, Moses wasn't allowed to lead the people into Canaan. Moses is now dead and Joshua has been called of God to lead the people into the Promised Land.

Simply attempting to follow Moses in leading the people would've been a daunting task within itself, but Joshua faced other obstacles as well. They were promised Canaan of the Lord, but the land was inhabited by many nations well equipped for battle. The task Joshua was called to fulfill would be anything but easy.

Today we stand on the brink of a New Year. Our world has encountered many changes in the past twelve months that have a direct impact on our Christian lives. The coming year will no doubt present even greater challenges! Nowhere in the Bible are we promised a life of ease as we follow the Lord. Our society continues to deteriorate and it will get progressively worse. However, we can overcome in the Lord. There is no need for anxiety or fear. I want to consider the [challenges](#) our text reveals as we think on: [Being Strong and Courageous](#).

**I. A Challenge for Confidence** (6) – [Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them](#). They had to be confident in:

**A. God's Power** – [Be strong and of a good courage](#). The task ahead was enormous. They would never accomplish it alone, but through God they could. Joshua and the people needed confidence in the power of God. Joshua had spied out the land with Caleb forty years prior. He knew the inhabitants of the land were many and they were well equipped for battle. It would be impossible to defeat them with their meager resources, but God would provide for them. They simply needed to trust in His mighty power.

- There are fewer of us than there were twenty years ago. The church is decreasing in number, while the attacks of the enemy increase in frequency and ferocity. We are no match for the enemy within ourselves, but God is more than able to provide the strength we need to stand for Him and advance the Gospel.

**B. God's Provision** – [for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land](#). Joshua and the people had been led of the Lord through the wilderness for forty years. During that time He

had met every need they had. Daily He provided manna for them to eat. There was always a fresh source of water to drink. Miraculously, their clothes didn't wear out or become too small. Now they stood on the brink of the Promised Land. God had not brought them this far to abandon them or allow them to perish in Canaan. He had provided the land as an inheritance for them and the generations to come!

- We too face difficulties that often seem insurmountable. We wonder at times if we will make it, but we too have the promises and provision of God. The saved are placed within the body of Christ. We are secure in His mighty hand. We have not been asked to battle the enemy alone or journey through life without direction. We have the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit. God will see to it that we have all we need to accomplish His will and prosper spiritually. There will be battles to fight and mountains to climb, but the Lord will be there to sustain us!

**C. God's Preservation** (6b) – [for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.](#) The people were not standing on the banks of the Jordan River viewing the Promised Land by mere chance. God had brought them there, fulfilling a promise He made to Abraham hundreds of years before. There had been struggles along the way. Some had died in the wilderness due to rebellion and unbelief, but God had kept His word. He had been faithful to His promise. There wasn't a power anywhere that could prevent the people from possessing the land promised of the Lord.

- It may appear that the church is in danger of ceasing to exist, but nothing is further from the truth. God did not provide His Son as the acceptable sacrifice for sin to allow us to perish in the journey. The church isn't going down; she is going up! Through faith in Christ, we are promised eternal life. Through our relationship with Him, we have a Friend that is closer than any brother, One who will never leave nor forsake us! Regardless of the troubles we face, we can rest confidently that we will prevail in Christ. [2 Tim.1:12 – For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.](#)

**II. A Challenge for Courage** (6a, 9) – Joshua and the people were also challenged to be courageous in the Lord. Their courage was to be:

**A. Deliberate Courage** (6a) – [Be strong and of a good courage.](#) As they made their way into Canaan, there would be battles to fight. The enemy would present himself and they would be forced to confront them and overcome. In those moments of adversity, the people would have to reach deep within and lay hold of their faith and be courageous.

- We too will face many difficult challenges ahead. The enemy is on the loose and he is seeking whom he may devour. The struggles ahead are not for the faint of heart. There will be times when it appears that defeat is certain, but even then we must determine to stand in the strength of the Lord. We can't overcome alone, but through Him we can!

**B. Resilient Courage** (9a) – *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage.* The people had no idea what they would encounter as they made their way through the land. Joshua knew there was a formidable enemy to fight. There would be times when their hearts were filled with fear and they would be tempted to abandon the fight and retreat. During those times they would have to maintain their courage and remain resilient in the fight.

- The battles ahead of us are going to be unlike any we've fought before. We have entered uncharted waters socially, and the attacks on the church are going to increase. Many will be tempted to abandon the fight or compromise the faith in an effort to appease others or co-exist. I fear the number of committed Christians will decrease in the days ahead. That's why it is imperative that we remain courageous in the fight and committed to the cause of Christ!

**C. Legitimate Courage** (9b) – *be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.* Although the enemy was real before them, likely outnumbering them, they had no reason to fear. The battle was not theirs to fight. God had promised to go with them wherever they went. He would fight the battles for them and give them absolute victory.

- The enemy would have us abandon our faith and flee from the fight, but we must remain steadfast. God has not asked us to defeat the enemy, but to follow Him as He leads. He will be there to provide for us through each struggle we encounter. There is no reason for the child of God to fear or be dismayed. We are more than conquerors through Christ our Lord. *Psalm 27:1 – The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Matt.10:28 – And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

**III. A Challenge for Commitment** (7-8) – Finally we discover their challenge to remain committed unto the Lord and His ways. This involves:

**A. Our Faithfulness** (7a) – *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee:* Their strength and courage in the

Lord would help them remain faithful to the Lord and His commands. If they were to be successful in overcoming the enemy and inhabiting the land, they must remain faithful.

- Faithfulness is essential in obtaining victory and enjoying God's best. We cannot expect Him to bless our efforts if we are unfaithful to His will for our lives!

**B. Our Fervency (7b)** – *turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.* There would be times when the people were tempted to abandon the ways of God and seek their own ways. They might grow impatient and refuse to wait upon the Lord or fail to prepare as God commanded. Straying from the path God had chosen would end in defeat and despair. If they were to possess the land, they must remain true to the Lord and seek Him with all their hearts.

- Few experience the power of God in our day because they are unwilling to remain committed to the Lord and His ways. If we are to overcome the struggles we face, we must maintain a close relationship with the Lord and seek Him with our whole heart. He will not bless our efforts if they are contrary to His will.

**C. Our Focus (8a)** – *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein:* The battles ahead would require great strength. There would be occasions when their faith was tested and doubt would creep in. During those times they would need the Word to sustain them. As long as they followed the Lord, they could rest in His power and strength.

- There is a great need in our day to study the Word of God and meditate upon it. Just as with Israel, we face challenges that we cannot overcome alone. We need the Word of God to guide and sustain us. All that we do must be in accordance with the Word. Regardless of what society embraces or promotes, the Bible must be our guide and authority. We are sure to fall if we abandon God's Word!

**D. Our Fulfillment (8b)** – *for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.* The task ahead was great. In fact, it was much more than the people could accomplish through their own abilities. They would need the Lord if they were to possess the land. God promised His blessing on those who followed His Word and trusted Him by faith. They would prosper in their efforts and enjoy good success.

- Many today do not prosper in their efforts because they are seeking to accomplish their goals through mortal means. The task we face is too great to handle alone. We need the Lord to guide our lives and prepare the way before us. If we will commit to follow Him, we too can enjoy good success. I want all that the Lord has for us. We can have His abundance if we will seek Him and determine to live according to His will.

**Conclusion:** Joshua faced an enormous challenge, but he had all he needed to be successful. As long as God was on his side, he could not fail. We too face enormous challenges. They are greater than we can handle alone, but we too have all we need. The Lord has given all we need to be successful in carrying out the work we've been given.

Are we going to trust the Lord and follow Him through these trying times, or will we abandon the effort because of the challenges? I want to press forward for His glory. Time is short and there is much to do. There are many who are yet unsaved. What will we do? Are we going to seek the Lord in order to be strong and courageous or abandon the fight?

Maybe you have never experienced salvation in Christ. You can't enjoy victory because you are not in the fight. In fact, you remain with the enemy. Why not seek the Lord in salvation before it's too late!