

Leader in Training

Lesson 01 in the series, "Strong and Courageous"

I. God commanded Joshua to be strong and courageous when he took Moses' place.

After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said, "Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you... No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you... This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.'" Joshua 1:1-3, 5, 9 (NLT)

Life Application: God wants ME to be strong and courageous when I face new challenges/opportunities.

"God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)

Life Application: We don't need to be afraid of going where God leads us because He's going with us.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

II. God used Joshua's whole life to prepare him for the job.

"Be strong and courageous, for *you are the one* who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them." Joshua 1:6 (NLT)

- a. Through victory in battle, Joshua had learned to depend on the Lord's strength, NOT his own.

"While the people of Israel were still at Rephidim, the warriors of Amalek attacked them. Moses commanded Joshua, 'Choose some men to go out and fight the army of Amalek for us. Tomorrow, I will stand at the top of the hill, holding the staff of God in my hand.' So Joshua did what Moses had commanded and fought the army of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of a nearby hill. As long as Moses held up the staff in his hand, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he dropped his hand, the Amalekites gained the advantage. Moses' arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. So his hands held steady until sunset. As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle. After the victory, the LORD instructed Moses, 'Write this down on a scroll as a permanent reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven.' Moses built an altar there and named it Yahweh-nissi (which means 'the LORD is my banner')." Exodus 17:8-15 (NLT)

Life Application: We cannot live fruitful, victorious lives apart from God's power.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5 (NIV)

- b. Through a national revolt, Joshua had learned to obey God's instructions even if nobody else did.

"Then the whole community began weeping aloud, and they cried all night. Their voices rose in a great chorus of protest against Moses and Aaron. 'If only we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness! ... Two of the men who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, tore their clothing. They said to all the people of Israel, 'The land we traveled through and explored is a wonderful land! And if the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. Do not rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us! Don't be afraid of them!' But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb."

Numbers 14:1-2, 6-10 (NLT)

Life Application: We cannot live fruitful, victorious lives apart from God's Word.

"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do.

Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.” Joshua 1:7-8 (NLT)

Life Application: God will reward us if we courageously obey Him, even if nobody else does.

“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven.” Matthew 5:11-12 (NLT)

- c. Through 40 years of wandering, Joshua had learned to wait on God to fulfill his promises.

“Then the LORD was very angry with them, and he vowed, ‘Of all those I rescued from Egypt, no one who is twenty years old or older will ever see the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for they have not obeyed me wholeheartedly. The only exceptions are Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they have wholeheartedly followed the LORD.’ The LORD was angry with Israel and made them wander in the wilderness for forty years until the entire generation that sinned in the LORD’s sight had died.” Numbers 32:10-13 (NLT)

Life Application: Waiting on God to fulfill His promises takes strength and courage.

“I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; Be strong, and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD.” Psalm 27:13-14 (NASB)

Life Application: God is using all of the events in my life (good and bad) to equip me.

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

“Now may the God of peace— who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus... equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen.” Hebrews 13:20-21 (NLT)

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” Romans 8:28 (NLT)

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“I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. I say to myself, ‘The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!’ The LORD is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him. So it is good to wait quietly for salvation from the LORD.”
- The Old Testament prophet, Jeremiah in Lamentations 3:20-26 (NLT)

Connect Group Questions:

1. Read Joshua 1:1-9. If your boss left unexpectedly tomorrow, and you had to take over his or her position, would you feel ready? Why or why not?
2. Describe a time in your life when you had to wait a long time for something that had been promised to you (a job, promotion, car, wedding ring, etc.). What was the most difficult part?
3. Read Lamentations 3:22-26. Why is it so difficult for most of us to wait on the Lord?
4. Read Ephesians 2:10 and Hebrews 13:20. What things has God equipped you to accomplish? How or when did you realize God was working in you?
5. Read Exodus 17:8-15. Why didn’t Joshua get credit for winning the battle? How often do you give credit to God for the victories in your life?
6. Read John 15:4-5. What do these verses mean to you? How does somebody “remain” in Jesus?
7. Spend some time as a group praying for Centerpoint Fellowship Church. Ask God to help us develop leaders, equip people for ministry, give people courage, and make believers strong.