

Accept God's Call to Courage

Main idea: God calls His people to a deeper level of courage and commitment so they can move beyond survival, step into His promises, and become who He created them to be.

Joshua begins at a critical turning point. Moses has died, and Joshua—who had served Moses for forty years—is called to lead the people into the land God promised. The command is not vague or sentimental. God says, “Get ready.” The people must move from wilderness survival into the life of promise.

Three Promises God Gives Joshua

1. **God will give the territory they step into.** His promises are not merely to be admired; they are to be entered by faith and obedience.
2. **No enemy will ultimately defeat them.** God promises that no one will be able to stand against them all the days of Joshua's life.
3. **God will never leave or forsake them.** Joshua may face moments when God seems absent, but the promise remains: God will not abandon His people or let them sink.

Principle 1: Acknowledge God's Purpose for Your Life

Joshua's life began in slavery in Egypt, but God had a purpose for him long before Joshua could see it. The same truth applies to every believer: life is not an accident of human destiny, but part of God's design. Courage begins when we acknowledge that God has something in mind for our lives.

Principle 2: Accept God's Call to Courage

God repeatedly tells Joshua to be strong and courageous. Courage is not simply confidence or emotional intensity. It is the strength to remain true to what God has placed in the heart. It means standing with stability and obedience when fear, pressure, or uncertainty would make it easier to retreat.

Spiritual courage comes from the Lord through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It is not a matter of psyching ourselves up; it is recognizing that God is with us and that His strength is greater than the enemies, obstacles, and fears we face.

Three Obstacles to Courage:

1. The Mental Obstacle: “I Don't Know Enough”

The world says the answer is more knowledge, more education, and more confidence in our own abilities. God's Word says the deeper need is wisdom, dependence, and trust. Obedience begins when we depend on the Lord and act on what He has already shown us.

- **The world says:** Gain more knowledge and confidence in yourself.
- **God's Word says:** Seek God's wisdom and recognize your dependence on Him.
- **The practical question:** Am I waiting for more information when God is asking me to obey what I already know?

2. The Moral and Spiritual Obstacle: Turning from God's Word

Joshua is told to obey God's law without turning to the right or to the left. This is the central issue: our natural tendency is to question, soften, or rationalize our way around what God has said. From Genesis onward, humanity's temptation has been to decide for itself what is good rather than submit to God's Word.

- **The world says:** Decide what you want and be assertive.
- **God's Word says:** Discern what God wants and be submissive.
- **The promise:** True success comes from obedience to God's Word.

3. The Emotional Obstacle: Fear and Discouragement

God warns Joshua not to be terrified or discouraged. Fear can produce panic when circumstances appear overwhelming, and discouragement often grows out of past conditioning or painful experiences. Yet the believer's future is not determined by personal history alone; it is grounded in God's story and His presence.

Christian courage does not deny emotion. Instead, it refuses to be governed by emotion. Fear may be present, but God's presence is stronger. Courage means allowing the promise “the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” to govern decisions, not fear or discouragement.

Application Project:

1. Where in my life have I been saying, “I don't know what to do”?
2. Where in my life do I tend to turn to my own way, rather than recognize God's way?
3. What am I afraid of when I look to the future?

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