



2 | JOSHUA 1:10-18

MOVING FORWARD!

Predestined to be Conformed to Christ

Outline

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Call to Worship

Psalm 96, Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth! ¹⁰ Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns! ... ¹¹ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; ¹² let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy ¹³ before the Lord...

Let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!

Songs

O Praise the Name
Christ Our Hope in Life and Death
Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus
What a Powerful Name
Yet Not I But Christ in Me

Announcements:

WELCOME: Welcome visitors – Flages, Millers, other visitors.

PASTOR MICHAEL: Please pray for Pastor Michael this morning – he is preaching at Christian Fellowship Church of Itasca while their pastor is on a sabbatical.

GIVING: You can still give over Zelle through your bank with no fees. We also have a collection box on the Welcome Center.

POSTPONING ANNUAL MEETING: We are responding to the incredible generosity of the congregation, and we as elders would like to propose a revised budget to the congregation. We are planning on having a meeting to explain what God has done after the service next week.

Introduction

We continue in a series in the book of Joshua called “Footsteps of Faith.” We’ve entitled the message: “Moving Forward.” What kind of person does God use in his plan of world redemption? Moses is dead, and so God calls up Joshua. The people move forward as they obey Joshua.

Today we are going to see how Joshua is a type of Christ. The Christian moves forward in holiness through total and complete obedience to Jesus Christ. Today’s message is about devotion and love to Christ, and how our devotion is seen through our total surrender and obedience to him.

All of us face impossible situations in life. Daily we ask ourselves about numbers of situations, what should I do? Or, I think I know what God wants me to do, but I don’t know how to do it, or I don’t have the strength to do it. Joshua was facing an impossible situation – entering into the Promised Land with a very inferior army.

It seems there is a sense of fear in taking responsibility and moving forward into the Christian life. God tells Joshua to “be strong and courageous” **three times** in chapter 1 (vs 6, 7, 9), then adds, “Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed” (vs 9). At the end of the chapter, the people tell Joshua the same thing: “Only be strong and courageous!” (vs 18).¹

This is the second generation from the wilderness wandering, and they had **limited fighting experience**. In spite of this feeling of inadequacy, Joshua does take charge, and prepares them to trust God and to walk in victorious faith. How does Joshua build up victorious faith to move forward into the Promised Land? And how do we move forward into our life in Christ, in all the power and fullness God has for us?

1. TO MOVE FORWARD YOU NEED PREPARATION (1:10-11)

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *Joshua* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 19.

Preparation! A soldier cannot go to battle without great preparation. An athlete who goes to the Olympics must first prepare. How do we as Christians prepare ourselves for greatest growth in faith and Christlikeness?

The nation is about to be on the move! Forty years in the wilderness, and finally they are on the cusp of their first battle in the Promised Land – Jericho. The people need to get ready. They need to prepare. They had never fought a battle before. Once they passed over into the land, they were going to fight. God promised to be with them.

Joshua 1:10-11 | And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, ¹¹“Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.’”

THE MIND

Finally, Time after 40 Years. They were no longer to have their mind on wandering in the wilderness. Life means something now. There is a goal, a gift from God: an inheritance from God. Get ready to occupy the Promised Land! The officers were to go throughout the camp of two million people and have them get ready to leave within three days. The people have to change their mindset. **No more wandering!** After all the time wandering in the wilderness, it was **finally time to enter in and conquer the land.** God had promised this land to Abraham (1:3-4; cf Gen 15:18-21). It was a gift, but they are called to conquer it through violent warfare, trusting God all along the way.²

Christian, have you changed your mindset? No more wandering. No more living in sin. You are done with the old life. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Be done with foul thoughts and foul words. Be done with worldly living and foolishness. Be done with anger and put on God’s peace.

THE PREPARATIONS

Prepare Food, but Not Boats. They prepared food, and certainly packed weapons like swords, bows, and clubs (24:12). Now understand they are told to “pass over this Jordan” (1:11) at flood stage (3:15). Few of us have seen the Jordan River, but it is normally very narrow at the crossing by the Dead Sea. But at flood stage, it is like the raging rapids that would not be safe for anyone to cross. They are going to need a miracle.

You would have expected Joshua to say, “**Prepare boats** so we can cross the Jordan River.” Joshua didn’t try to second-guess God and work things out for himself. He knew that the God who opened the Red Sea could also open the Jordan River. He and Caleb had been present when God delivered the nation from Egypt, and they had confidence that God would work on their behalf again.³

² Robert B. Hughes and J. Carl Laney, *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*, The Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 86.

³ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Strong*, “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 29.

THE PROVISIONS

Manna Still Falling. Though he trusted God for a miracle, Joshua still had to prepare for the everyday necessities of life. In modern armies the Quartermaster Corps sees to it that the soldiers have food and other necessities of life; but Israel didn't have a Quartermaster Corps. Each family and clan had to provide its own food. The manna was still falling each morning (Exo 16) and wouldn't stop until Israel was in their land (5:11–12). But it was important that the people stayed strong because they were about to begin a series of battles for possession of their Promised Land.⁴

THE KINGDOM

Take Possession. There was no question of the victory. The people are told to “go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess” (1:11). The battle was not for the victory, **for victory was guaranteed**. The battle was for them to learn to trust God.

What were they to take possession of? Yes, the land of Promise, but more than that. They were possessing the Kingdom of God. They were growing in faith and in experiencing the presence of God. They were walking by faith, taking hold of the Kingdom of God. In other words, as they took possession of the land, **they were also experiencing God taking hold** of them, leading them, shepherding them. We have this in common with the believers of Joshua's day.

THE BATTLE

Focus on Christ, Not on the Battle. So often we want God to remove the battles in our lives. The battles are there to mature us and make us stronger and closer to the Lord. You are going to have plenty of battles. We need to be focused on Christ, not on the battle ahead.

2. TO MOVE FORWARD YOU NEED A PLAN (1:12-15)

Joshua 1:12-13 | And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, ¹³“Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, ‘The Lord your God is providing you a **place of rest** and will give you this land.’”

MEDITATE ON GOD'S PROMISES

The children of Israel were to remember God's promise that he would give them a “place of rest”. He promised to give them this land. They believed his promises.

Remember, they are inheriting the land of Israel. This is God's promise to Abraham many years before.

The New Testament has so much about the Christian's inheritance. Our inheritance is Jesus Christ.

⁴ Ibid., 29–30.

Hebrews 4 talks about this very passage in Joshua.

Hebrews 4:7-16, Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰ for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

¹¹ Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³ And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. ¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Do you see? So many in Israel failed to enter into God's rest in the Promised Land 40 years earlier.

How are you going to **move forward** in your growth in Christ? You've got to experience Christ through his Word! He's your great high priest. How do you get to know him? His Word! Remember Joshua's secret to true spiritual success?

Joshua 1:8 | This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall **meditate** on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

God's Word should constantly be on your tongue. It should never stop from being on your mouth. You should meditate: repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat.

Biblical meditation is not:

- Sitting with an empty mind
- Mindlessly repeating a single word or phrase to gain some sort of altered state

Biblical meditation is:

- **Engaging** your mind and letting it focus our hearts on God and his glory.
- **Exposing** ungodly or worldly thinking by the enlightenment of God's Word.
- Getting **encouragement** and hope from God's very voice.

- Be **educated** and led by the Spirit of God through the Word to live life for God's glory.

Application: Some of you are here today and you want to change, but you don't know how. It's right here. Meditate on God's Word till it works on you. It will cut deep to the marrow of your soul.

You want to be strong? Eat the strong meat of God's Word. Stop only taking in baby food and milk. Get into the Word, and let it get inside you so that you feel the presence of God the Holy Spirit in you. Set yourself apart with God or you will fall apart!

DEPEND ON GOD'S PEOPLE

Now we come to a second way to find protection in God. You have to always be sure to surround yourself with the people of God. Depend on God's people. That's what Israel did. Then had to enter and fight together. Do you hear: together. We live life together as God's people, like Israel.

Joshua 1:14-15 | Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, ¹⁵ until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."

The tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh settled on west side of the Jordan River. It's called the half-tribe, because the other half of Manasseh settled on the east side of the Jordan River. Each of the tribes had covenanted with the Lord while Moses was alive that **they would help each other inherit the land**. Joshua reminded them of Moses' words of instruction and warning (21:21-35; Deut 3:12-20) and urged them to keep the promise they had made.

In the nation of Israel it was the able men twenty years and older who went out to war (Num 1:3); and the record shows that the two and a half tribes had 136,930 men available (26:7, 18, 34). But only 40,000 men actually crossed the Jordan and fought in the Promised Land (4:13). The rest of the recruits stayed to protect the women and children in the cities the tribes had taken (32:1-5, 16-19). When the soldiers returned home, they shared the spoils of war with their brothers (22:6-8).⁵

The point is: Israel is called to inherit together. Once one tribe has conquered their land, they are to help the remaining tribes until all the tribes are settled. There is one Israel, though there are twelve tribes. They are all to settle the land together.

⁵ Warren, 31.

No Lone Ranger Christians

Application: There are no lone ranger Christians. The church is the embodiment of Jesus. Christ is our exalted head! To say you love Jesus while showing indifference toward his local church actually offends and grieves Jesus. Every local church is imperfect, and we all have our battle-scars. But we are vitally connected with Christ. You cannot be connected with Christ and NOT be connected to his Body. Are you connected? Or is church just an hour on Sunday? You will not grow until your life is enmeshed with the Body.

Ephesians 4:15-16, “we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

Great Risk for Sheep!

Something else. We are at massive risk when we are alone! The Bible describes Christians as sheep (Psalm 95:7; John 10:1-18). Sheep are prey, because, frankly, they’re not the sharpest tools in the shed. Jesus has blessed the church with under-shepherds—elders of local churches (Acts 20:28-32; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 5:1-4)—to protect the sheep from wolves, and to protect the sheep from their own foolish curiosities and bad appetites that would lure them to wander off cliffs. Independence is no virtue in sheep, and overconfidence is no virtue in Christians. The Bible also describes Christians as members of Christ’s body. Your arm will rot if it remains detached from your shoulder. Similarly, your spirit will wither if it’s not connected to a visible body of Christ in a local church.

Without sound preaching applied in the context of a local church, lone rangers remain **malnourished**. You need faithful shepherds not only to feed the sheep at church, but in their daily lives.

Lone ranger Christians set a **bad example** for others. Their behavior leads others to wrongly believe that the Christian life can safely be lived in isolation from other Christians. Nothing could be further from the truth. Don’t be a lone ranger Christian.

GET CONNECTED

We can only grow if we grow together. We have some weak among us and some strong. We are to come along side each other and enter into our inheritance (the presence of God) together. We must leave no one behind.

Weak Christians and strong Christians are equal inheritors of the Kingdom of Christ. We are called to live under the headship of Jesus, building up his body in love.

3. TO MOVE FORWARD YOU NEED LEADERSHIP (1:16-18)

Joshua receives the loyalty and obedience of the people. God united the people under Joshua's leadership.

Joshua 1:16-18 | And they answered Joshua, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you, as he was with Moses! ¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous."

When God's people unite around the core duty of obedience, they can rest assured that God will bless them in wonderful ways.⁶ Why was Joshua such an effective leader?

A FAITHFUL PAST

Joshua appears twenty-seven times in Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, each time painting a picture of exemplary faithfulness. He is a type of Christ. The name Jesus in the New Testament (Yeshua) is a form of the Old Testament name "Joshua", which means "Jehovah saves".

The First Battle: Holding Moses Arms Up

Just as it was with Moses, so it needed to be with Joshua. Do you remember **the very first appearance** of Joshua in the Bible? It is in **Exodus 17:8-16**, which tells of the very first battle the tribes of Israel had after they had been led out of Egypt by Moses and crossed the desert to Rephidim. The battle was against the Amalekites, a semi-Semitic tribe that occupied the wide desert region between the southern borders of Palestine and Mount Sinai. Moses gave Joshua command of the Jewish troops in this battle.

We are told that while Joshua was leading the armies of the Lord against the **Amalekites**, **Moses went up on a hill** overlooking the battlefield and **raised his hands as a sign of God's blessing**. As long as his hands were up, the Israelites were winning. But when he grew tired and lowered his hands, the Amalekites would begin to defeat Israel. This became clear to Aaron and Hur, who were with Moses, so they had Moses sit on a large rock while they stood on either side of him and supported his arms. They did this until sunset, by which time the armies of the Amalekites were overcome.⁷

The importance of this victory was not Moses' arms, but two facts: (1) **victory comes from the Lord**, and (2) God gives victory to **those who support faithful leadership**.

Joshua knew that the only way forward was to support Moses. He experienced Moses' God. I want to know if you are a leader, who are you leaning on? You can't do it alone! You need help!

⁶ Roger Ellsworth, *Opening up Joshua*, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2008), 36.

⁷ Boice, 20.

So many faithful men have fallen because they thought they could do it alone. You have to have people you are accountable to, people who encourage you. Who is encouraging you? Who is holding up your hands?

Mount Sinai

The second time we see Joshua is at Mount Sinai, to which Moses was called by God to receive the law. When Moses went up the mountain, Joshua went with him, stopping partway. He stayed at his post on the mountain during the entire forty days that Moses was meeting with God.⁸ Joshua saw God on Mount Sinai.

Exodus 24:11-12, Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; **they beheld God, and ate and drank.**

As a leader, Joshua saw glories that would be impossible to describe. That's what you need if you want to lead God's people. And we are called to grow and lead in some way, because we are all called to "go into all the world and make disciples" (Mt 28:18-20). Are you experiencing the glories of God? You need to get there. We are all called to get there. It's all yours right now.

A FAITHFUL SAVIOR

Joshua 1:16, 18 | And they answered Joshua, 'All that you have commanded us we will do...Only be strong and courageous''.

Did the people fully obey Moses? No. Would they fully obey Joshua? Of course not. It is here we see Joshua as a type of Christ. He is leading the body of God's people into the Promised Land.

Jesus is our Joshua. The Christian is to follow Christ in all things. He is our exalted head.

Matthew 16:24, Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (KJV).

Conclusion

This this is the same God we seek through Jesus that is faithful to all his promises. That's why we seek him in prayer.

⁸ Boice, 21.