

Courage

Joshua 1:1-10

- Today we are going to approach a few verses of scripture about courage
- They command Joshua to have courage
- Courage for service
- Courage to do God's will
- Courage to carry out God's commands
- And courage to take action
- This is the kind of courage Joshua needed at this point in life
- And it is the kind of courage we need today

- It's a one-word theme today
- "Courage" from Joshua 1:1-10

- We don't often think of ourselves as "in need of courage"
- But challenges come quickly
- And they catch us unaware
- They don't give us time to prepare
- So whether we have a desperate need for courage today
- Or will have a desperate need for it tomorrow
- It would be wise for us to beg God for it today

- If we know Joshua's back story
- And understand the challenges he faces at the beginning of the book of Joshua
- It's easy to see why he may need courage
- His circumstances are, no doubt, quite different from our own
- But I think we can learn much about why we may need the same kind of courage
- As we take a really close look at the text

- Let's see how God described it to Joshua...

Joshua 1:1-2

1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

- Joshua's time has come
- The more famous leader of Israel, Moses, is dead
- Now Joshua has a job to do
- And his job may seem more important or more prominent or more difficult than yours or mine
- But he needed courage
- And we need courage

- He needed courage just to arise, to prepare himself for God's will
- He didn't know everything that meant yet
- We also lack the ability to see the future
- One thing was for sure, he was responsible for these people - God's people
- To carry them with him into the land of promise, to lead them
- This was his big moment
- But this was the nation's big moment
- To finally come into the country that was their possession, because God had promised it
- And while their fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers had rejected his advice 40 years earlier
- When he was one of the spies that went into the land and returned with the report "we are well able" to overcome them
- This new generation would need to trust God
- And trust God's leader, Joshua, to enter in this time
- And here's what God said...

Joshua 1:3-4

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

- God provided certainty for Joshua
- This is a re-affirmation of God's previous promises to Israel
- But it does get very specific for Joshua
- God provides him personal reassurance
- God's will for Him was settled
- And whatever he is going to face, the land will be secured
- Thankfully, we have a roughly similar position
- God has provided us with His word
- And so many personal reassurances in it
- He speaks to His children today with a "more sure word of prophecy"
- We can be certain of His instructions
- His promises
- And that our future is secure
- If we trust His son
- But there is more for Joshua...

Joshua 1:5-6

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

- There is precedent
- In the life of a man Joshua served, Moses, God was faithful
- He provided strength, and protection, and guidance, and reassurance, and wisdom
- He empowered His servant to do His work
- Joshua had been an eyewitness

- Based on this experience
- What he knew from it
- And the testimony he could give about God in the life of Moses
- He was to have courage
- Because he had promises too
- From the same faithful God

- What does this mean, to have courage?
- Well, courage means proceeding, even when it's difficult
- Even when you're scared
- Even when you lack confidence
- Even when you have no strength within yourself
- No doubt, Joshua would face challenges
- But He served a great God
- As do we
- One that made promises and had shown Himself capable of keeping them

- And so God goes on...

Joshua 1:7

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

- Why does Joshua need the courage?
- Did you notice it?
- To face battle?
- To defeat the many enemies that he would no doubt face?
- To deal with all the difficulty of leading God's people?
- Not exactly - although these would also take courage
- But instead - to observe all of God's commands

- Some of His commands would be: go into battle
- Face your enemies
- Lead my people well
- No doubt
- But this was not just courage in the face of difficulty
- It was courage to obey

- Courage to trust
- Courage to take action in faith

- God requires much of us
- God holds us to a high standard
- But He promises, He reassures, He helps, He empowers - He gives courage!
- And whatever commands may be coming our way
- He gives the ability to have courage because of who He is
- This was true for Joshua
- It is true for us

- If the courage is available, where do we go?
- Verse 8 really helps...

Joshua 1:8

8 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: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

- Joshua was not proceeding empty-handed
- He was carrying with Him the commands of God
- They were to be His meditation
- His day and night companion
- To be examined, re-examined, re-read, and re-applied
- They were to be his light in whatever dark places he encountered

- He would need them
- He would need to embrace and cling to them
- And if he did, success would be the result

- We can draw much confidence from this exhortation
- We have the word of God on our journey
- It can guide us just as well
- And it provides us with everything we need

- Now, it appears Joshua is ready to depart...

Joshua 1:9-10

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

- We can be encouraged and reassured a lot in life
- But the time always comes for action
- To arise and to do it
- And the time had come for Joshua

- So, he made His commandment
- Having been reassured in all the ways we read and more
- With God's promises and God's commands on His heart
- He was prepared
- His people were prepared
- He was equipped for courageous leadership

- I wonder if the time has come for us?
- Maybe this program has encouraged us?
- Reminded us?
- We must take action
- Will we do so, with courage?

*Christopher Harper, **Take Note** 2022*