

Small Group Discussion Guide — April 19, 2020

- Series: Character Studies
 - Sermon: Depth of Courage
 - Scripture: Joshua 1: 1-9
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK:

If you took communion in your home during the Good Friday service, share how that experience affected you.

CONNECT:

1. What are the events, circumstances or people who have had the greatest impact on developing and shaping your character?
2. Have the big character shaping moments in your life come mostly from positive or negative experiences?

ENGAGE:

Read Joshua 1: 1-9.

1. After the death of Moses, God commands Joshua to take up the mantle of leadership. How do you think Joshua felt about this idea, since he had seen with his own eyes how difficult it was for Moses to lead the unruly Israelites? What evidence does the scripture offer to show that God understood his trepidation?
2. Although God promises that he will give him the land of the Hittites, he doesn't promise they will take the land without a fight. How important is it for Joshua to understand the nature of the task he is facing?
3. What is the condition that God lays down for Joshua's success and the success and prospering of the Israelites in verse 8? Does God still require obedience from us as a prerequisite for our success and prospering?

APPLY:

1. Discuss this quote: "Character is the ability to meet the demands of your own reality." Do you agree? What have you discovered about your character in this new reality we've been living in?
2. What difference does it make to know that God never "tempts" us, but only "tests" us in order to make us better? (James 1: 13-14)
3. How does having courage rooted in our own abilities look different than courage that comes from God? 2 Tim 1:7

PRAY:

Lord, as we face our uncertain future because of the Coronavirus, may we strive to hide your word in our hearts, that we, like Joshua, will be strong and courageous no matter what we face. Help us to trust in your power and your promises. Fill us with the courage that only comes by trusting in your grace and mercy. Amen.

GOING DEEPER

Courage can be thought of as a commodity - some people have it in abundance, others have a lifelong deficiency. But, as with any other commodity, it can be exchanged... in other words, you can "borrow" courage from others. Motivational speakers are essentially courage lenders. Half-time speeches from football coaches are a perfect example of courage lending. Even the word "courage" is at the root of... enCOURAGEment. So, in this time of great discouragement, how can we be either a) searching for positive encouraging people who we can borrow some from, or b) looking around for people who are afraid and loaning them some of ours?

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Numbers 14: 6-8, 10

2 Tim 1:7

John 3:3

QUOTES:

"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma - which is living with the results of other people's thinking."
Steve Jobs

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

Helen Keller

"How few there are who have courage enough to own their faults, or resolution enough to mend them."

Benjamin Franklin