

BGCC Community Group Guide



Take Heart

October 4th

I Am With You

Joshua 1:1-9; 1 Samuel 30:1-6; 1 Chronicles 28:20; 2 Corinthians 4:18

Take Heart — Press On Because Jesus Is With You

Introduction

Following Jesus does not mean life will always be easy. We can faithfully worship, pray, serve, and live in community and still face sickness, fear, loss, uncertainty, strained relationships, or circumstances completely outside our control. Jesus never promised that following Him would put us in a protective bubble. He promised something better: **He would be with us.**

Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly reminds His people to be strong and courageous not because they can handle everything on their own, but because He is with them. Jesus gives us the same encouragement in John 16:33: “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

To “take heart” is not to dig deeper into ourselves and find enough strength to keep going. It is to turn toward the Father, remember who He is, and trust that His presence is greater than whatever we are facing. Because Jesus is with us, we can press on.

1. Take Heart Because Jesus Is With You

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." — John 16:33

Summary:

Jesus does not promise His followers a trouble-free life. In fact, He directly tells us that trouble will come. The promise is that we can have peace in Him because He has already overcome the world.

Matthew's story of sitting alone in a hospital parking garage illustrates this truth. Nothing about the circumstances immediately changed. The problems did not disappear, but the perspective did. Instead of searching everywhere else for peace, the realization came that Jesus Himself was present. Our circumstances may change, but Christ's presence does not. We do not take heart because life is easy. We take heart because Jesus is with us.

Group Question: What are some of the things people commonly look to for peace or security when life becomes difficult?

Personal Relevance:

It is easy to believe that if we can just find the right answer, doctor, job, plan, relationship, or solution, then we will finally have peace. But those things can never provide what only Christ can give.

Flow Question: When you are afraid or overwhelmed, what is your natural first response?

Reflection Question: What would it look like for you to turn toward Jesus before turning toward your own solutions?

2. Remember Who Is With You

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." — Joshua 1:9

Summary:

Joshua had every reason to be afraid. Moses had died, Joshua was now responsible for leading Israel, and the Promised Land was filled with enemies and obstacles. Yet God repeatedly told Joshua to be strong and courageous. The reason was not that Joshua was strong enough. The reason was that God would be with him.

God reminded Joshua that He had been with Moses—and now He would be with Joshua. Joshua could look backward at God's faithfulness and allow that remembrance to strengthen his faith for what was ahead. The same God who was with Moses, Joshua, David, and His people throughout Scripture is with us. Romans 8:11 reminds us that the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in us.

Group Question: Why do you think God repeatedly connects courage with the reminder of His past presence?

Personal Relevance:

Fear often grows when we focus exclusively on what is in front of us. Remembering who is beside us and has been beside us changes what we see. We may still have difficult circumstances, but we no longer face them alone.

Flow Question: What helps you remember God's faithfulness when you are facing something uncertain? (feel free to listen to "Goodness of God" now haha)

Reflection Question: Is there a situation in your life right now where you need to stop focusing only on what is ahead and remember who is with you?

3. Run to God Before You Try to Fix Everything

"But David found strength in the Lord his God." — 1 Samuel 30:6

Summary:

David returned to Ziklag and discovered that his city had been destroyed and his family had been taken captive. His men were devastated and even began talking about killing David. David was facing an overwhelming situation with no obvious solution. His first response was not to figure everything out himself. He strengthened himself in the Lord and sought God's direction. Later, David repeatedly practiced the same pattern—even when circumstances were relatively peaceful. He made seeking God a habit.

This is important because we cannot wait until the middle of a crisis to learn how to run to God. Spiritual dependence must become a practice before we desperately need it. As Levi Lusko describes it, the worst time to train for a marathon is when you're running one.

Group Question: Why is it difficult to turn to God first when something goes wrong?

Personal Relevance:

Our instinct is often to control, solve, research, worry, or fix. But God invites us to come to Him first. Prayer is not simply something we do when we have exhausted every other option. It is how we acknowledge that we need Him every day. In bad times and good.

Flow Question: What does your normal response to a crisis reveal about where you look for strength?

Reflection Question: What is one practical way you could make seeking God a more natural habit when life is going well?

4. Press On Because You Are Not Alone

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” — 2 Corinthians 4:18

Summary:

Pressing on is not something we do instead of looking up, leaning in, and stepping out. It is what enables us to continue doing those things when life becomes difficult. Paul tells believers not to lose heart because God is renewing them day by day. The troubles we can see are temporary, while what God is doing eternally is far greater. We are called to “zoom out” and remember what we cannot always see: God is present, His Spirit lives within us, and Jesus has already overcome the world.

This is why pressing on is not self-help. We do not simply dig deeper and find enough courage within ourselves. Our strength comes from Christ. Because He is with us, we can take another step.

Group Question: How is Christian perseverance different from simply “digging deep” and finding strength within yourself?

Personal Relevance:

Whether the struggle is a lost job, financial pressure, sickness, a difficult marriage, fear about the future, or something we never saw coming, Jesus remains with us. We can take heart because our hope does not depend on our circumstances. It’s not about our ability to dig deeper (because that’s not always enough) but rather our ability to run to Christ which comes with its own need for perseverance.

Flow Question: How does knowing that Jesus is with you change the way you approach suffering or uncertainty?

Reflection Question: Where do you need to press on right now—not because you have everything figured out, but because you know Jesus is with you?

Conclusion

God has been telling His people the same thing throughout Scripture: **I am with you.** He told Joshua. He strengthened David. He reminded Solomon. He encouraged His disciples. And in Jesus, God came near in the most tangible way possible.

Jesus does not promise that we will never experience trouble. He promises that we will never face it alone. That is why we can take heart. That is why we can press on.

We do not have to manufacture courage within ourselves. We look up to the One who has overcome the world. We lean in to the people God has placed around us. We step out in faith to love and serve others. And when life becomes difficult, we press on because Christ is with us.

Take heart and press on.