

## **Joshua 1:1-9**

### **Faithful God, Courageous Followers**

**Sunday, June 20, 2021**

### **Father's Day**

We are going to the book of Joshua today, starting in chapter 1 verse 1. Our plan is to spend about 8 Sundays in this book. Which means this will be more of an overview of the book, looking at the key passages as we go.

### **Background**

Joshua 1:1 opens with the words, **“After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD...”**

So this book starts by setting it right after the death of Moses.

Moses had been specially selected by God to lead his people out of slavery in Egypt. He had been the great law-giver, the one that God called up on the mountain to give his ten commandments. Joshua, at the time, was Moses' young sidekick as they led the people toward the promised land of Canaan.

But that journey was not a direct route. They wandered in the wilderness for 40 years after leaving Egypt.

In fact, an incident that involved Joshua when he was much younger was a big reason they had to wander for 40 years. God had come to Moses in Numbers 13 and told him to send 12 spies in to check out the land God was giving them - they were to spy out the land, bring a report of its abundance, prepare for the battles they might face to go possess it.

The spies came back, and ten of them were terrified and said, “we can't do this, they are too many and too mighty for us there, the people there are huge. I know God promised

us the land, but we obviously can't win this war. No way we are going to conquer the land God promised."

And they got all of the Israelites fearful. They stirred up all of the people against their God-appointed leaders, got the people rebelling and saying let's get new leaders. They were getting ready to stone Moses to death, and they would have done so, had God's glory not come down to stop the whole thing.

So Moses prays to God for the people that God would forgive and wouldn't wipe them out. And God says this:

**Numbers 14:20-23 "Then the LORD said, "I have pardoned, according to your word. 21 But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD, 22 none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, 23 shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it."**

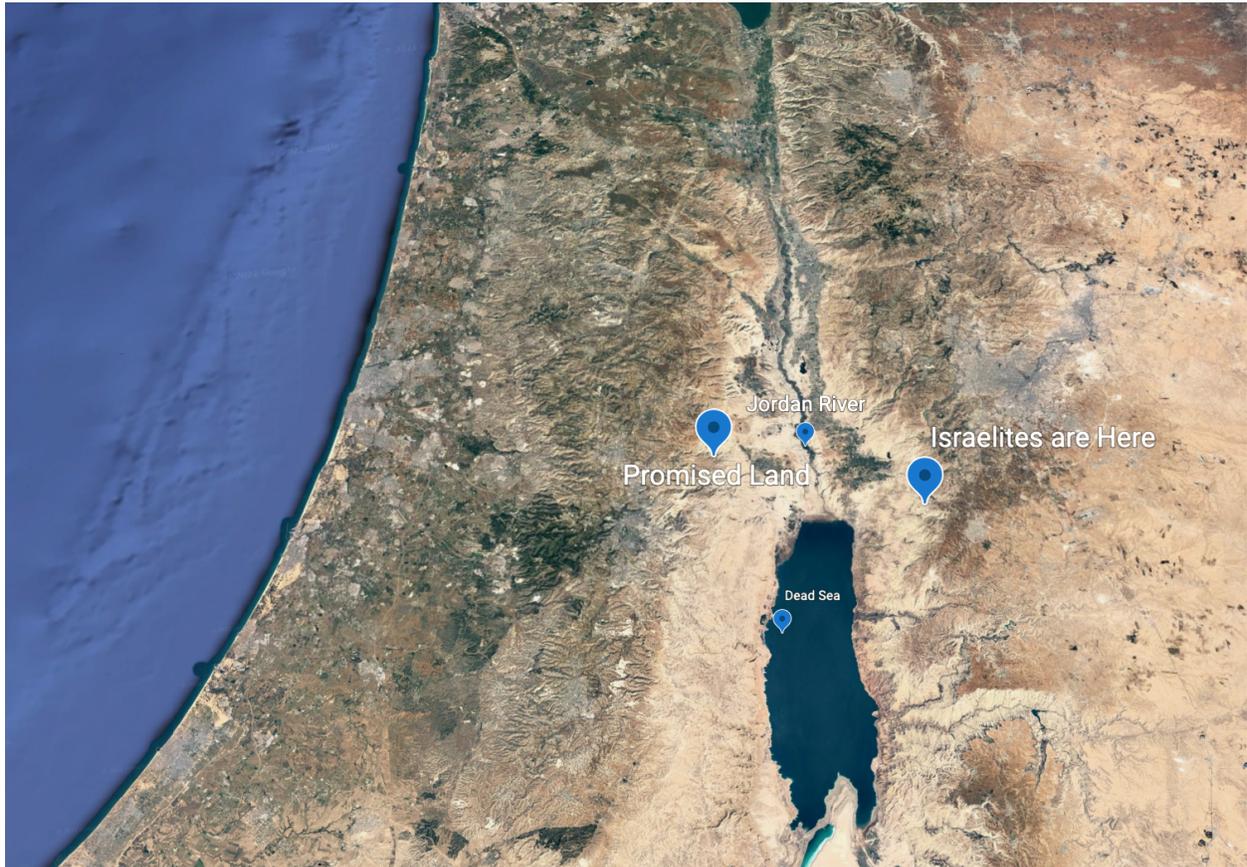
So God said that everyone 20 years and up that didn't trust God would die in the wilderness and never get to enter the promised land. So Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies, would be able to go in, but not anybody else over 20. A whole generation was going to miss out on the promise. The people who were so excited as they left Egypt and walked through the sea would never know anything better than the wilderness wanderings. Because they didn't trust in God's promises - they trusted in God to rescue them, but not to finish what He started.

So as they've wandered, that generation has died out.

And Moses, who was by all accounts a faithful man, still wasn't faithful enough. And even he couldn't enter the promised land because of some other failings. So the book of Deuteronomy ended with Moses going up on Mt. Nebo, looking at the land, and dying without entering it. So the people weep and mourn for Moses for 30 days in the plains of Moab.

And that's the moment in time where the story of Joshua picks up.

The people are HERE (SHOW MAP) just east of the Jordan river, right across from the land God promised.



Imagine this moment - on the one hand, their great leader is dead. They've mourned for a month. So they're broken and devastated and fearful and worn out. Moses is the only leader they've had since becoming a people again in Egypt. How could we ever go on without Moses?

But on the other hand they're probably brimming with excitement - the promise is within reach. They can look across the river and see the land that God has graciously promised to them as an inheritance.

So the big question this book answers is: Will God keep his promise?

And in light of God's faithfulness to his promise, how should his people respond?

And if the people of God aren't going to be shaped and led by Moses anymore, where will they find their guidance? Their hope? Their direction? And their confidence for the future?

And as we walk through this book, we'll be careful not to take promises and events out of context and apply them where they don't apply to us. God isn't telling us to do everything He was yelling Joshua to do, like raise up a militia to conquer a land or to wipe out our enemies.

But God's faithfulness to keep all of his promises is the basis for Christian courage in life, especially life in a broken and angry world. And it's God's faithfulness that we need to continue to depend on in this pivotal moment for our church.

We are here at a moment when maybe we're near the end of the pandemic. Today is the first day that we don't have any regulations like masks or registration, we are at the end of what has been a very difficult fifteen months.

It was a year of tremendous blessing as God has sustained us, and also a year of tremendous hardship as, across society, "who people really are" has come to the surface.

COVID accelerated everything - social and cultural change, and also accelerated what was growing in hearts. Generosity and care for neighbor that was growing in hearts was accelerated and taken to a whole new level.

Anger that was already growing in hearts got angrier, pride that was already growing in hearts got more puffed up, political idolatry that was already there got bigger, rejection of biblical commands that was already there grew, marriages that had sin festering within them became worse and fractured. COVID was an accelerant.

The pandemic didn't create any of these things, it just caused what was already there to grow.

It was like COVID watered everybody's heart and what was already growing grew faster and bigger. Which created kindness and care and graciousness like we've never seen, but also relational losses, tensions, and difficulties, and in many ways wore us out. Yet here we are sustained and purified by God, on the precipice of a move to a new location, renewed ministries, renewed focus on evangelism and discipleship and prayer, and huge opportunities to plant and multiply and see many come to Christ.

But many of us are also feeling worn out, feeling attacked from within and without, tired. But also amazed that God has sustained and it's looking like we're on the very edge of what could be something very good for our church.

Scripture says that we as Christians are "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" and that's certainly how it feels coming out of COVID.

And while we don't conquer the same way Joshua did, not every promise that applied to them applies to us in the same way, we are at the end of a hard time, on the cusp of something new, and we need to anchor our hearts in the same place that Joshua did. And we are called to, like Joshua, courageously face the future as a result.

So let's look at Joshua 1:1-9 today, let's start with verses 1 through 4:

**Joshua 1:1-5 "After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, 2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory.**

So Moses has died. The lawgiver's obedience to the law couldn't get him to the promised land.

But Joshua is left alive. Joshua's name in Hebrew is Yeshua, which means "Yahweh is my salvation." In Greek it is Iesus, which is translated Jesus. So Jesus and Joshua had the same name.

So there's a little foreshadowing of the New Testament message here: The law couldn't get them to the promised land because they couldn't obey it<sup>1</sup>, so they need a guy named

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 7:7-12:

What then shall we say? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed, I would not have been mindful of sin if not for the law. For I would not have been aware of coveting if the law had not said, "Do not covet." But sin, seizing its opportunity through the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from the law, sin is dead. Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. So I discovered that the very commandment that was meant to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing its opportunity through the

Jesus to rescue them and lead them in. So Joshua foreshadows Jesus, who, when we failed to obey his commands, came as the true and better Joshua to save his people from their sin. Jesus gave us the rescue that the law of God and commandments of God could not provide.

And now that Moses is dead, the Lord speaks to Joshua. Their leader has died, the era has ended, but God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And God has not been surprised by their losses, he is not at all set back by Moses' failure or Moses death, and in chapter 1 verse 1, the Lord is speaking to Joshua.

And in verse 2, God tells him, "Moses has died, but now it's time to take the land."

God provided rescue from Egypt through Moses, and now God continues to lavish His goodness on them by giving them the land He had promised.

Again and again throughout this book we'll see that God is faithful, God keeps His promises, God does everything He said He would do. God is merciful in rescuing them, but now lavish and overflowing in generosity in giving them the land.

And this is the same God we know and worship and serve today - there has been no change in His nature.

As much as the world around us has changed, as much as craziness has accelerated, as much as we can log on to social media every day and confirm that an awful lot of people have lost their minds, as uncertain as the future seems, as frightening as the false doctrines in our culture embraces are proliferating, as much as angry people got angrier and the rage machine taken over so many minds - God is absolutely the same as He has always been. A God who pursues His people with mercy and grace.

Listen to this little portion of Psalm 86:

**Psalm 86:12-15 "12 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever. 13 For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. 14 O God, insolent men have risen up against me; a band of ruthless men seeks my life, and they do not set you before**

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commandment, deceived me and through the commandment put me to death. So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.

**them. 15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.**

And the word for steadfast love here in verse 13 is “hesed” - a word that sometimes is translated “lovingkindness.” It’s covenant love - the kind of love God pledged to his people.

It’s a combination of love and loyalty, where you pledge yourself to the object of your love.

God, who has not changed, has pledged himself to His people. And whether it’s at the end of a month of mourning Moses and a generation dying in the wilderness, or at the end of a pandemic that has put us all on edge, whatever the loss or circumstance, God has pledged Himself to His people.

So He comes to Joshua and tells him to lead the people into the land, and that everywhere his foot steps will be given to him.

Now there are people who will take this verse and apply it wherever they want in a name-it-and-claim-it kind of way. I was part of a church in another state that wanted to own an adjoining field, and there was a prayer night where we walked around the field and this verse was cited “every place that the sole of your foot will tread I have given to you.” We thought God was going to give us the land because we did this, and the owner of that land disagreed, and never gave us the land, he wouldn’t sell us the land, and if this was a promise from God, it was a promise God didn’t keep.

We can’t take this out of context - this isn’t giving us a universal formula for claiming real estate. There’s nothing wrong with praying for a piece of property for an endeavor, but we don’t get to use this verse to say God has promised us that it will be ours, and then get mad at God if he doesn’t fulfill his promise.

The fact that God is faithful to His promises doesn’t mean that we can make God promise whatever we want. It doesn’t mean we can take verses out of context and apply them to us. When God writes a check to someone, that check always clears. But we can’t steal that check and put our name on it, and then get mad when there’s a stop payment on it.

God hasn’t promised us specific land, that was a unique promise to Israel.

This was a specific promise that God had made to Israel specifically, and now in Joshua God was telling them to cash that check He had written them in the past:

**Deuteronomy 11:22-25 “22 For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, 23 then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves. 24 Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. 25 No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.**

God had promised this specific people this specific land, He promised it at a time when God’s kingdom had geographic boundaries, the land of Israel was the kingdom of God in its era, and Joshua would be able to claim this promise of God because God had promised it to this people.

And, while we can’t claim this promise to the land, here’s what we can claim: God is a God who is faithful to absolutely every promise He has ever made.

I’m sure they were wondering. God made that promise of this land to Abraham, then again to Moses, then they wander for 40 years and the promise hasn’t come true, then Moses dies, and the promise is still not fulfilled.

And even though Joshua was given wisdom and the people were following him, he wasn’t Moses.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, Joshua takes over and then Deuteronomy ends with these words:

**Deuteronomy 34:10-12 “10 And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, 11 none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, 12 and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.”**

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<sup>2</sup> Deut. 34:9 - "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses."

So Israel gets Joshua as a leader, and Deuteronomy ends by saying, “But he wasn’t Moses.”

I was in youth ministry in the early 2000s. And when I first got hired, I took over for a Youth Pastor that was larger than life. He had built the ministry from nothing to hundreds of kids, he was gregarious and outgoing, he was built like an olympic bodybuilder, he did outrageous stunts and pranks that all the parents hated but the kids loved. They thought he was awesome.

And then they hired me to replace him. And for years, I was always reminded that I just wasn’t Scott. The disappointment was palpable. It took a long time before anyone ever thought that ministry could thrive again. Which is a classic scenario - you don’t want to take over after a strong leader with a long tenure.

And here’s Joshua taking over for Moses. And he’s great and all, but his predecessor was Moses.

So they’ve lost Moses. They got the new guy, he’s alright. Everybody in the previous generation has died - people who are in their 30s have all lost their parents and grandparents in recent years. They’re grieving, weak, and tired.

But the major theme of the book of Joshua is that God is faithful to every promise He has made. And at the end of Joshua’s life, after God has kept all of his promises, Joshua says this:

**Joshua 23:14 “And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed”**

This book is bookended with reminders of God’s promises. He repeats his promise to Moses and says, “Claim it now” at the beginning of the book. God keeps His promise and gives them the land. And Joshua, on his death bed, looks back over the whole epic adventure and says, “God kept every promise.”

Their brokenness, their grief, their weakness, and their green leadership, did not keep God from keeping his promises.

In his commentary on Joshua, Dale Davis wrote, “[God’s] fidelity does not hinge on the achievements of men, however gifted they may be, nor does it evaporate in the face of funerals or rivers”<sup>3</sup>

God is faithful to his promises.

And this is a huge resource for our Christian lives. There are hundreds of promises of God that are made to us in scripture. And knowing that God keeps every one is incredibly sustaining, especially in times of grief and fear and with an uncertain future.

When Jesus came, he promised joy (Luke 2:10-11), so we don’t have to fear that we can never be joyful again.

Jesus promised that all who abide in Him bear fruit (John 15:5), so we don’t have to fear that we won’t do anything useful with our lives if we are resting in Him.

He promised Satan’s definite defeat (Romans 16:20), so we don’t have to fear that evil wins in the end.

He promised that the church will be victorious in the end and the gates of hell will not prevail against in (Matthew 16:18), so we don’t have to fear that the gospel will be extinguished by the winds of cultural change.

And God has shown again and again that, despite obstacles, despite it looking bleak and hope seeming to be lost, He keeps His promises. And there’s coming a day when we will look back and say, “not one word has failed of all the good things that the Lord promised.”

And for our Fathers on this Father’s Day - this is what we need to create a foundation of stability at home. In an anxious world, we need dads who are clinging to God’s promises and confident in God’s promises so we can anchor and steady our families.

So God is faithful to his promises, he is also faithful to be present with his people:

**Joshua 1:5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.**

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<sup>3</sup> Joshua, No Falling Words, Dale Ralph Davis, pp. 17-18

God will repeat this promise in verse 9. He wants His people to know that He is with them. The whole book of Joshua is loaded with harrowing battles and times when God had to come through for His people or they would be doomed, and again and again God shows that He is there with them.

And the New Testament applies this promise to us:

**Hebrews 13:5-6 “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” 6 So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”**

He says that the promise to Joshua that God will never leave is true for us. So true that we don't need to depend on money to keep us safe, we don't need to fear what people can do to us, because God is present.

And notice the promise is not that we will always feel God's presence, that we'll see Him, or that we will never feel far from God. We will.

But He never leaves - which means that when He feels far away, our feelings are wrong.

Whether we feel we can get away with a sin because He doesn't seem near, or we feel we've been abandoned because of our sin because it feels like He doesn't hear us, or whether we feel that all hope is lost and God doesn't seem to be at work in our lives or our church or our community - the feelings are deceiving us. He never leaves.

And so with a God who pursues us with covenant love, with a God who is faithful to every promise, and with God so near us all the time, how do we live? How do we live if these things are true? If God is faithful to his promises and if God is near? How do we practice these realities?

There are two main responses we can see in the rest of this passage:

**Joshua 1:6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success**

**wherever you go. 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. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”**

So you see two main responses to these realities about God:

- 1) Be strong and courageous.
- 2) Be devoted to the book.

The two things emphasized here are courage in response to God and devotion to the word of God.

## **Courage**

Courage, here and elsewhere in the Bible, is a command of God for his people.

Bravery is not just for the elite few in God’s kingdom, bravery is commanded for all of those who know Him. It’s the most repeated command in the Bible: do not be afraid, take courage, fear not - taken together in all of its forms, this is the thing God tells us to do the most - take courage.

And the reason it is commanded so much is that courage is necessary for almost all forms of Christian obedience.

John Piper defines courage as “the willingness to say and do the right thing regardless of the earthly cost, because God promises to help you and save you on account of Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Chesterton goes further in Orthodoxy: “Chesterton on courage:

“Take the case of courage. No quality has ever so much addled the brains and tangled the definitions of merely rational sages. Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of a readiness to die. 'He that will lose his life, the same shall save it,' is not a piece of mysticism for saints and heroes. It is a piece of everyday advice for sailors or mountaineers. It might be printed in an Alpine guide or a drill book. This paradox is the whole principle of courage; even of quite earthly or brutal courage. A man cut off by the sea may save his life if we will risk it on the precipice.

He can only get away from death by continually stepping within an inch of it. A soldier surrounded by enemies, if he is to cut his way out, needs to combine a strong desire for living with a strange carelessness about dying. He must not merely cling to life, for then he will be a coward, and will not escape. He must not merely wait for death, for then he will be a suicide, and will not escape. He must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he must desire life like water and yet drink death like

To do the right thing requires courage - the right thing at work, the right thing among your friends, the right thing in helping the weak and powerless, the right thing in standing up to evil, the right thing in clinging to and proclaiming truth in a world that hates it - courage is necessary for all forms of obedience.

C.S. Lewis wrote in Screwtape Letters that *“Courage is not simply one of the virtues but the form of every virtue at the testing point, which means at the point of highest reality. A chastity or honesty, or mercy, which yields to danger will be chaste or honest or merciful only on conditions.”*

There’s day-to-day obedience to God which requires faith and effort. But then there’s the testing point: when telling a lie would be more helpful to us, when an opportunity to fall into immorality presents itself, when the culture all turns against a biblical truth - it’s then that courage is required.

And those who are cowardly as a characteristic are giving evidence that they don’t believe at all. In fact, in the book of Revelation, when God is describing the characteristics of people who are under God’s judgment in the lake of fire, people who don’t get to heaven, who were not saved by Jesus, he lists these characteristics:

**Revelation 21:8 “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”**

He puts being cowardly at the top of the list of those who don’t know the Lord at the judgment. Persistent cowardliness reveals a lack of faith in Jesus.

Which means that the Christian faith must give us the resources we need for courage.

When we look at the cross, we have all of the resources we need to stare down losses and huge costs of obedience, rejection by the community, mockery on twitter, the loss of opportunities in the career, and even worse.

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wine. No philosopher, I fancy, has ever expressed this romantic riddle with adequate lucidity, and I certainly have not done so. But Christianity has done more: it has marked the limits of it in the awful graves of the suicide and the hero, showing the distance between him who dies for the sake of living and him who dies for the sake of dying.”

Because at the cross, God displays how far He goes to be present with us, to forgive us, to provide for us, to give us a future.

At the cross, Jesus Christ died for the sins of everyone who would trust in Him and become a Christian. And if God didn't spare his son, he won't spare anything else we need.

If he will provide to the point of giving His Son, he will provide what we need for the future.

If he will give his life to pay for our sins so they could be forgiven and he could be present with us, then nothing will take His presence away.

If he went to that length to pay for our sins, to make us His, then He'll keep us through anything else.

Who God is and what God has done for us in Christ encourages us, it imparts courage.

And if you're outside the faith, and your perception is that Christianity is just a bunch of commands we try to keep - living the Christian life does involve striving to keep a ton of commands. But they're commands given by a God who first gave his Son for our failures.

And we become Christians, not by whipping up enough religious effort, but by receiving the incredible grace and goodness of God as He gave us His son on the cross. By repenting and turning from control of our lives, by believing in Him in trust and confidence. And thus, by faith, receiving eternal life from a lavishly generous and merciful God. And Christ is offered to you if you'll turn and believe today.

And while the life He has ahead of you does include commands, they are commands given by a God who was good enough to give us his Son.

And if He is good enough to give us His Son, then we can certainly have the confidence that every command is for our good. Everything we are called to give, all of the service we are called to render, all of the temptations we are called to avoid, all of the desires we don't indulge, those things aren't commanded because God is a withholding God who wants to rob us of joy. They're commanded by God for our good and for our deepest possible joy.

And when we know His goodness, it changes how we live. People who know the faithfulness of God become courageous.

And the second thing Joshua is commanded to do in response to God's faithfulness to his promises is to be devoted to the book of God.

### **Devotion to the Book**

**Joshua 1:7-8 again "7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 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**

Intermixed with these calls to courage are calls to devotion to the book of the law of God.

This was referring specifically to the first five books of the Bible (which was all that they had). Joshua knew the law of God, he was up on the mountain with Moses when God gave him the commandments in Exodus 24. But even he wasn't considered to be such an expert in it that he didn't need it anymore.

He was still called to

### **Meditate on it - or think about it.**

To devote his mental energy to thought about God's word. To memorize portions of it. To allow it to fill his thoughts day and night. Because learning what God loves and what God hates shapes us. Because learning how God says the world works changes how we think about everything.

The Bible isn't just a collection of stories that teach us moral lessons, but they tell us who God is, and how his world works. That's why God promises prosperity if they obey them, not because there's a magical guarantee that faithfulness will mean God magically fulfills your greedy desires. But because the wisdom of the word of God makes the best sense of the world, and when you interact with the world knowing the wisdom of its creator, it works better.

So we are called to fill our thoughts with God's word.

And since He keeps every promise, and His promises give us strength, we want to know what those promises are. So we think about His word.

**So that (in verse 8)** he might be careful to **Do what it says**.

God has called us to obedience.

Now I know we are allergic to legalism, and we should be. But legalism isn't saying, "We want to obey God's commands." Legalism is saying "God will accept us if we obey his commands," or "I can make myself acceptable to God or others by keeping his commands," or "If I add something to those commands it makes me better than others," or "People must follow my rules to be accepted." That's all legalism, and that's all bad.

But people who experience the goodness of God in the Gospel also want to experience the goodness of God that comes through obedience. Our obedience doesn't save us or make God love us or put God in our debt. But it does honor the God we love, and it is a response to the commands of a God who loves us enough to die for us.

Jesus said in **John 14:15** **"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."**

So in response to God's faithfulness, we read and study and think about and strive to obey His word. And also, we:

**Proclaim it** - he says in verse 8 that it shouldn't depart from his mouth. It's something we learn enough of to speak about, to speak it like it's authoritative, to allow it to guide us in every situation.

Perfect faith in God's faithfulness to His promises and His enduring presence creates courage and devotion to His word. And God has called us all to what He has called Joshua to here: be brave, believe and obey the bible.

Which of course, we all failed at. Who can say that we didn't fail in our courage in moments when we should have spoken, should have obeyed, should have taken the risk, should have served someone even when they posed a risk to us.

Who can say that we have been careful to obey all of the word of God?

There is one. The bigger and better Joshua, Jesus came and was always perfectly obedient to His Father's word. He knew he was headed to death, but in perfect courage set his face to go to Jerusalem where He would die for our sins.

And the offer of the Gospel is that we can turn to Him and receive his perfection in our behalf. His perfect courage and obedience is made ours if we repent and believe.

### **Questions for Discussion in Small Groups:**

1. What sort of things have you noticed "accelerating" in your life or in the way you've responded spiritually throughout this season?
2. What has served to remind you of God's character and anchor You to remembrance of His attributes?
3. What have you understood courage to be and do you think you are growing in courage?
4. Name some of God's promises that apply to us today.
5. Throughout Scripture, both God the Father and Jesus point those who seek Him toward scripture, and here God encourages Joshua to a know the Law. What does this mean for us as we approach our study of scripture?