



What Will You Do Next?!

Joshua #2 • January 11, 2026

Opening

“Be strong and courageous!”

Those were the words from God to Joshua in the opening of Joshua 1, as God strengthens and sends Joshua to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. As we kicked off this new sermon series in the book of Joshua, we saw God providing encouragement through His **promises**, His **word**, and His **presence**. It wasn't encouragement for the sake of feeling good, though. Joshua was being strengthened for the task at hand!



“Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead

these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am

giving them.” (Joshua 1:2, NLT)

When you have been strengthened, what you do next is of utmost importance!

One option is to wait. You can use the procrastinator's motto, “Never put off until tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow.”

Another option is to overthink. You can start asking questions and questions and questions, trying to make things perfect.

Or you can simply go do it.



*I think about the paratroopers in the morning hours before D-Day, getting ready to jump into Normandy to kick off the invasion. They had been **strengthened and encouraged!** They had been given instructions and training – they knew how to jump and how to fight. They had been given detailed plans – they knew where and when they were to secure objectives. They had been given supplies – their bags were packed with the tools they would need.*

And as the lights came on in the plane, signaling their approach to the jump zone, they hooked their chute cords to the overhead cable, stood up, and patted the next soldier to say they were ready.

They had been strengthened! But what they did next was of utmost importance!!!

When the green light turned on, what would they do?

They couldn't wait. They couldn't overthink. They had to simply do it.

And the rest is history.

You and I may not be jumping out of airplanes into a warzone (praise God!). But you are being prepped for action.



Your time at church, whether you've attended for weeks or years, has been a time of strengthening. You have been encouraged through God's **promises**, His **word**, and His **presence**. *That's what we try to do every week!* But it isn't encouragement for the sake of feeling good. You are being strengthened for the task at hand!

When you have been strengthened, what you do next is of utmost importance!

Today we're going to take a look at Joshua's reaction to God's strengthening. (What does he do? How does he respond?). And as we observe his response, I hope we'll gain some perspective on what we should be doing.

What does he do next? There are three conversations that I want you to notice.



Prepare the People (Joshua 1:10-11)

“Joshua then commanded the officers of Israel, “Go through the camp and tell the people to get their provisions ready. In three days you will cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you.”” (Joshua 1:10–11, NLT)

What Joshua does next... is prepare the people.

I want you to understand what a big deal this is!



*How many of you have been camping before? I have...and I don't like it! There are the general objections I have to **activities** that go along with camping. I don't like to fish. I don't like s'mores. There are also the general objections I have... to nature. Camping is a little too “outdoorsy” for me – too many bugs and plants, too much sun.*

But one of the big problems I have with camping is the amount of work packing up everything you'll need. You need a tent, you need food, you need stuff to cook food, you need stuff to eat food on, you need stuff to clean up afterwards, you need stuff to do, you need...you need...you need.

You know where all that stuff is? At home! I don't like getting everything picked up and packed up. And that's just for a little family trip to the lake. It's even more complicated when you camp with other families, as you try to coordinate with them!



Joshua had an even bigger group to arrange. The “camp” wasn’t a small family gathering. It was a city!

- At the center was the **Tabernacle** – their portable place of worship. It had to be assembled and disassembled in a very precise way by the priests, taking care to honor the place where God made His presence available!
- Outside were the **Levites** – the tribe dedicated to serving God
- Outside them were the **12 tribes, camped in sections** – three tribes each to the north, south, east, and west, in a manner prescribed by God.

“When the Israelites set up camp, each tribe will be assigned its own area. The tribal divisions will camp beneath their family banners on all four sides of the Tabernacle, but at some distance from it.” (Numbers 2:2, NLT)

And there were a lot of them!

“In summary, the registered troops of all Israel numbered 601,730.” (Numbers 26:51, NLT)

That's just the men...and then you have the families and their livestock.

The point is this: moving was not an easy task! Especially to a place they had never been! But Joshua had been commanded by God to lead.

What did he do next? Joshua didn’t waste any time. **He prepared the people.** He delegated to his leaders to communicate the plan. He got them moving, thinking about hitting the road. He gave a clear deadline and a plan: *Pack your bags – we roll out in three days!*



Challenge

When you have been strengthened by God, what you do next is of utmost importance!

Church, you and I don't have to pack up tents, but we do need to be ready to roll out.

“Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:18–19, NLT)

You've probably heard that "great commission" many times. So...how many disciples have you made? Or did you just head nod and never jump out of the plane?

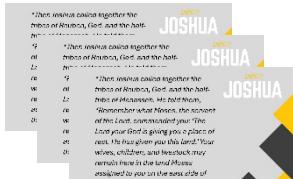
The commission's main thrust is "making disciples," but it includes a "going" element.

- Do you know **where you're going** to make these disciples? (At work, at home, on your basketball team)
 - o **You need to have a destination!**
- Do you **what you're going** to need? (A book you want to read, a Bible study to do, a conversation to have)
 - o **You need to know what supplies to bring!**
- Do you know **who you're going** to invite? (A friend who's curious about Jesus, a newcomer to church, a person who needs to knock the barnacles off from sitting too long in the pew)
 - o **You need to identify some people!**
 - Ex: I've got a group of guys I've been meeting with this past year, trying to meet and study together... what about you?
- **MAKE A PLAN. THEN DO IT!**
 - o Can you do something in the next 3 days? Can you make a phone call and say, "I want to get serious about growing in the most important aspect of my life?"

When you pack up a camp, there's always another item you could have. There's always a better sleeping bag or lantern or bug spray that you didn't

have last time. But you can't sit around and wait until you have everything "perfect" or else you'll never act.

It's the same with GOING to make disciples. **You have been commissioned by Jesus...and what you do next is of utmost importance.**



"Then Joshua called together the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. He told them, "Remember what Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you: 'The Lord your God is giving you a place of rest. He has given you this land.' Your wives, children, and livestock may remain here in the land Moses assigned to you on the east side of the Jordan River. But your strong warriors, fully armed, must lead the other tribes across the Jordan to help them conquer their territory. Stay with them until the Lord gives them rest, as he has given you rest, and until they, too, possess the land the Lord your God is giving them. Only then may you return and settle here on the east side of the Jordan River in the land that Moses, the servant of the Lord, assigned to you.'" (Joshua 1:12-15, NLT)



If you read the book of Numbers, this passage makes more sense. Numbers 32 explains what was going on with these specific tribes.

- The land God promised to give to Israel was on the WEST side of the Jordan river.
- But after defeating some enemies on the EAST side of the Jordan, three tribes (Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh) really liked the land they already had.

"The Lord has conquered this whole area for the community of Israel, and it is ideally suited for all our livestock. If we have found favor with you, please let us have this land as our property instead of giving us land across the Jordan River." (Numbers 32:4-5, NLT)

It's kind of like a kid asking for their birthday present at the store a few months early. *"I really like this. Can I have it now instead of waiting?"*

- The three tribes were allowed to have this property across the Jordan... on one condition: that they help the rest of the Israelites conquer the ACTUAL Promised Land.

What Joshua does next... is rally the reluctant.

Joshua's conversation is a reminder to these tribes. There was a general call to the whole nation of Israel...but now there was a specific call to these tribes: REMEMBER YOUR COMMITMENT.

Sometimes you have to **rally the reluctant!** Sometimes, you must remind people of the commitments they have made. These tribes had every practical reason not to be on board. They had land, with homes to establish and herds to raise. Their part of the conquest was complete! They didn't need to do anything more to be safe and secure!

But Joshua held them to their promise for the sake of the other tribes.



Challenge

When you have been strengthened by God, what you do next is of utmost importance!

Church, you and I don't land on the other side of a river, but we do have past promises that we need to keep. We could go a number of directions with that statement, but let me point out one.

Each year, our church has a baby dedication where parents bring forward their kids and ask for help in raising them to love Jesus. As part of that ceremony (which we will do again in February!), you guys have answered the following questions with an affirmative:

- *“Will you accept your God-given responsibility to help this family maintain a Christ-centered home?”*
- *“Will you walk beside them to help teach and train this child in the ways of the Lord?”*
- *“Will you set an example in your own life that this child might imitate and follow to grow closer to God?”*

You've probably answered those questions many times. So...how many kids have you invested in? How many parents did you encourage? Or did you just say "We will," and never jump out of the plane?

Guys, we need people to serve in kid's ministry. We need people to serve with the youth. There are small roles, and big roles. But they require YOU. I

want to challenge you to live out your promise to help these kids know Jesus!

“I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth.” (3 John 4, NLT)

But they'll only follow when it is taught...and modeled...and encouraged. You need to be there. You need to know their names. You need to know their families.

- Don't use the “*I've done my time*” excuse. There is no retirement from your promise. Our kids need spiritual grandparents. Love on them!
- Don't use the “*I'm tired from my own kids*” excuse. You've got insight into the ages you are raising. Some of us are out of the diaper phase, some of us don't know who Bluey is, or what a Labubu is. But you do. You can be relevant. Lead them!

MAKE A PLAN. THEN DO IT!

- On your connection card, I want to challenge you to volunteer. On the back, check the box for “Kid's Ministry” or “Youth Ministry” and Miss April or Jordan can talk to you and get you trained and plugged in.
- You don't have to be perfect; you don't have to think that deeply. Just be willing to invest in the next generation.

You have made a promise...and what you do next is of utmost importance.



Gather Intel for Action (Joshua 2:1)

“Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia Grove. He instructed them, “Scout out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho...” (Joshua 2:1, NLT)

Joshua 2:1 presents an interesting dilemma for us. We learn that Joshua quietly sends spies into the land of Canaan. But why? The question of Joshua's motivation is worth discussing.

If Joshua is trying to decide WHETHER to go into the land, this spy mission is a cowardly failure. The report could warn Joshua of things similar to what he found in his previous spy mission 40 years ago – that the land was good, but

the inhabitants would be difficult, if not impossible, to subdue. That scary report had made Israel hesitate last time. Would it do the same now?

But he isn't using the spies to decide WHETHER to invade; He is using them to decide HOW to invade.

What Joshua does next... is gather intel FOR ACTION.

This isn't a decision-making intelligence mission; it is a tactical planning mission.

This isn't gathering info, stalking someone on social media to see if they are worth dating. This is, "How am I going to make the first move?"

This isn't test driving to see if you want to buy the car. This is, "How am I going to get the best deal out of the salesman?"

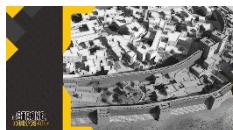
Joshua is going to be obedient to God! So, this mission is targeted.

- Joshua's current mission is **small**. Two instead of twelve.
- Joshua's current mission is **secret**. Looking for unknown info, reporting to Joshua directly instead of sharing with the nation.
- Joshua's current mission is **focused**. Target is not the land in general...it is the city of Jericho.

Joshua has been in the land before. He has firsthand knowledge of the land and who occupies it. There is no need for him to hear a report of what the land is like in general – he knows it is a land “flowing with milk and honey.” Joshua just wants to know about Jericho, the big city and first obstacle they will encounter. It was situated immediately opposite the plains of Moab and just six miles northwest of the Dead Sea. The city controlled the important trade route running the length of the Jordan Valley as well as access into the hill country of Canaan from the east. It was heavily fortified, and it was their first target.

Joshua does not send spies to determine IF he should attack or enter the Promised Land; he sent them to help determine HOW he should attack.

God will grant success. But what will success look like? (More on what that means for Joshua next week...)





Challenge

When you have been strengthened by God, what you do next is of utmost importance!

Church, you and I don't need attack plans for a fortified city, but we do need intelligence.

If we want to follow where God leads, we need to be informed about what's out there. Jesus said:

“Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves.” (Matthew 10:16, NLT)

Some of you have become **so insulated in Christian culture** that you don't know how to engage the world. You need to bolster the “shrewd as snakes” part. If your cultural world revolves around K-LOVE music and The Chosen or Angel Studios...that's great...but you need touch points with the culture.

You don't have to cross a moral line and start watching R-rated films and listening to X-rated music, but consider ways to be familiar with what is happening in society. Look for ways to see beauty in the ashes around you. Show curiosity and ask people what they love right now and what holds their attention. Figure out how to be “shrewd” for the sake of the Gospel.

Others of you have become **so comfortable in the world** that you don't show that you are a Christian. You need to bolster the “harmless as doves” part. If your cultural world revolves around K-Pop and Squid Games and One Piece... or classic rock and Game of Thrones and Family Guy... or Buffet and Musk and Bezos... that's relevant...but you need to elevate the light!

“.... Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.”
(Philippians 2:15, NLT)

If you were to list how many murders you've seen on screen, how many spicy scenes you've watched, or how many curse words have assaulted your ears, would you feel any shame? Show sensitivity to sin and don't celebrate it.

God's people have always struggled with living with purity as they follow Him (*Even in Joshua 2, where did the spies first go in Jericho? To a prostitute!!*). But make sure your time in the world is helping you gain intelligence FOR

ACTION, not gaining knowledge alone but gaining knowledge you can use to PUT OBEDIENCE INTO PRACTICE.

Pair this knowledge with some of the other challenges this morning.

- What cultural touchpoints could **help you relate** to the kids you need to invest in?
- How can you **better connect** to the people you want to make as disciples?

You need intel to act...and what you do next is of utmost importance!

Closing



When you have been strengthened, what you do next is of utmost importance!

I love the example that we see in Joshua as he takes action. He takes what God has given...and then he says, “Let’s go!”

This year, in 2026, I want that to be the attitude of our church: God will give us what we need, and we can put it into action. It’s that simple!

Author George MacDonald, in his novel, *The Marquis of Lossie*, says **“I find the doing of the will of God leaves me no time for disputing about His plans.”**

When Joshua was strengthened, he prepped the people, he rallied the reluctant, he gathered intel for action.

You, too, have been strengthened with God’s promises, His word, and His presence. He has a great commission to live out, new disciples to make, and a next generation to raise up.

What will you do next?!



Prayer

Invitation

I want to invite you to take action this week. Don’t wait for the perfect moment in your faith.

Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins. He has a world out there that needs the Good News. How will you act? What will you do next?!

If you need prayer, guidance, encouragement, or direction, we invite you to come forward during our invitation song so we can pray with you and get things moving.

Are you ready? Let's go!

Sermon Notes

Prepare the People (Joshua 1:10-11)

(Numbers 2:2; Numbers 26:51; Matthew 28:18-19)

Rally the Reluctant (Joshua 1:12-18)

(Numbers 32:4-5; 3 John 4)

Gather Intel for Action (Joshua 2:1)

(Matthew 10:16; Philippians 2:15)

What will you do next?!

Sermon Discussion Questions

- Are you a procrastinator? Why is it important to do things in the moment instead of waiting?
- What timeline does Joshua give the people for packing (Joshua 1:10-11)? How ready do you think they were to roll out?
- Do you have a plan to mobilize the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) in your life? Where are you making disciples? Who are they? If you don't have a plan, make one and start it this week!
- How does Joshua persuade the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh to fight for Israel (Joshua 1:12-15)?
- How well have you kept church-wide promises, such as investing in families who dedicated their children at TCC? How are you currently involved with the next generation at church? Can you name 5 kids? Consider volunteering!
- Joshua sends spies into the Promised Land (Joshua 2:1). How is this different than the sending of spies in Numbers 13? What is Joshua's motivation?
- How are you gathering intel to help you engage the current generation? Read Matthew 10:16. Do you need to be more shrewd or more harmless? Explain.
- What will you do next?! List some spiritual goals you need to start pursuing...then act!