

Joshua
The Right Stuff
Joshua 1

Society, today, languishes for credible Christian leaders.

What's *the right stuff* of godly leadership?

Every Christian is a leader. Every Christian is called to lead in some capacity as a friend, a spouse, a parent, a teacher, a mentor, an owner, a manager, a civil servant; every believer is a missionary, bearing witness of Christ at home or abroad. (**Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8**)

THE CREDENTIALS OF A GODLY LEADER

(1:1-5)

After the death of Moses the servant of Yahweh, Yahweh said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, "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. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses...your territory... 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.

The credentials of a godly leader are based on God's call.

When Paul's credentials as an apostle were brought into question at Thessalonica, his first line of defense was his calling from God. (**1 Thessalonians 2:3, 4**)

Though God's call may make a leader *invincible* in the mission (**Joshua 1:3, 5**), that doesn't make the leader *indispensable* to the mission.

The credentials of a godly leader are built on faithful service.

A novice must not be placed in formal church leadership (**1 Timothy 3:6**). Those entrusted with leadership in the church must demonstrate faithfulness over time (**2 Timothy 2:2**). Timothy had, although he was still young (**1 Timothy 4:12**).

Credibility in spiritual leadership requires real experience with God, life, and ministry.

THE CONFIDENCE OF A GODLY LEADER

(1:6-9)

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 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. 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. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for Yahweh your Elohim is with you wherever you go.

For God to repeat the phrase "*be strong and courageous*" three times gives it extraordinary significance.

The repetition of "*be*" 10 times shows that God was interested in more than Joshua's *doing*; he was concerned for his *being*.

The confidence of a godly leader is grounded in God's promise. (vv. 6)

Joshua's job was simply to lead the people into what God had already determined to give them.

The confidence of a Christian leader rests, not in their strategy or in their gallantry, but in their certainty of God's promise and purpose.

When Paul found himself feeling utterly defeated when he entered Corinth (**Acts 18:9-10**), it was God's sovereign purpose to save many in that city that gave Paul reason to remain strong and courageous in his work there.

"At the beginning of my missionary career I said that if predestination were true I could not be a missionary. Now after 20 years of struggling with the hardness of the human heart, I say I could never be a missionary unless I believed in the doctrine of predestination."

John Alexander
former president of Inter-Varsity

God's eternal purpose, grounded in his unbreakable promise that he will build his Church, gives hope to those who lead the Church toward its God-ordained destiny.

The confidence of a godly leader is gained through God's precepts. (vv. 7-8)

Obey them.

Speak them.

Absorb them.

“meditate” = muttering or groaning. It pictures someone so intently focused on something, they mutter under their breath.

Striking Paradox: Joshua’s victory is assured by God, but it requires Joshua’s disciplined effort as well. (cp. **Philippians 2:12-13**)

“success” in **vv. 7 & 8** = insight and understanding

“prosperous” in **v. 8** = the ability to reach a goal

The confidence of a godly leader is galvanized by God’s presence. (v. 9)

“leave” = to let drop;

forsake” = to leave behind. God would never dump Joshua and walk away.

“terrified” = to tremble or shake with fear;

“discouraged” = to be broken, shattered, utterly demoralized.

Isaiah 50:10 – *Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of Yahweh and rely on his God.* A good leader remembers in the dark what God taught him/her in the light.

THE COMMAND OF A GODLY LEADER (1:10-18)

And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess.’” And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, “Remember the word that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you, saying, ‘Yahweh your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.’ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, until Yahweh gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that Yahweh your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.” And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may Yahweh your God be with you, as he was with Moses! Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

Joshua’s command enjoyed street-cred for four reasons.

It was shared. (vv. 10-11)

Joshua’s first official move as Israel’s new commander-in-chief was to get the leadership network, created under Moses, back into operation (**v. 10**).

It was decisive. (v. 11)

A credible leader is willing to own the responsibility of making hard decisions, solving difficult problems head on, and taking the necessary steps to work them out.

It was proactive. (vv. 12-15)

Procrastination and over-processing kills a leader’s credibility

It was honored. (vv. 16-18)

“As a leader, if you want people to bleed, then you have to hemorrhage.” Pastor Joe Wall

“If you can’t stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen.”
President Harry S. Truman

LEGACY IS NO GUARANTEE OF CONSTANCY.