

Remnant Life Church
March 3, 2021
Joshua: A Man of Courage
Pt 2
Joshua 1:1-9

What was Joshua hearing in those words?

- Joshua was hearing the same thing we should also hear when fear is pressing in
 1. God is the source of courage
 - a. **Joshua 1:5** – *No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.*
 - b. Courage comes from an awareness of God's presence
 - i. Common movie themes of the little, scrawny guy getting beat up by the bullies
 - ii. That is until the big brother shows up, and then everything changes
 - c. But unlike the movies, we are never waiting on God to arrive, He is always with us
 - d. One of the reasons fear can so often take control is because we spend too much time focused on what has come against us, rather than who is with us
 - i. When that happens, your perspective becomes skewed
 - ii. Suddenly those things that seemed manageable are now much bigger, scarier, and intimidating
 - iii. And they would not be, if you focused on who was with you
 - e. Because that reality of God's presence will change your perspective
 - i. Let's say I coached the Remnant Life Church men's basketball team
 - ii. We don't have one but maybe someday
 - iii. And one Sunday, I see a guy walk into the back of the church who I had never seen worship with us before
 1. I notice that he is pretty tall – looks to be about 6'6" or so maybe an inch more
 2. He moves with the grace and assurance of an athlete
 3. Then I see he's wearing a jacket from a nearby Division 2 school
 4. You still have to be a player to play at a D-II level
 5. So now I'm thinking, hey, this guy could really help us if I can get him to place
 6. we should have a winning record for sure this season
 - iv. But let's say on that Sunday I looked up and noticed a guy I had never seen before come in, and I had all those same thoughts
 1. But as I got closer I could see – it's Michael Jordan!
 2. My perception of reality just changed, didn't it?
 3. Now I'm not just thinking we're going to have a winning record this season
 4. I'm thinking we aren't going to lose a game, and they can just start etching Remnant Life Church on the championship trophy right now!

- v. You see, my reality and expectations changed for that season when I knew who was on my side – the world’s greatest player
 - f. That is what the source of our courage is in God
 - 1. There is nothing I am going to face that is greater than God
 - 2. There is nothing that will come against me that will succeed (the Bible uses the word prosper)
 - 3. There is nothing that is going to cause you to fear that God will not prepare you to deal with and overcome through and in Him
 - g. Left to itself, fear becomes a magnifying glass
 - i. The situation is worse
 - ii. The problems are greater
 - iii. The risk is overwhelming
 - h. Until your perspective is made right by knowing that the God of the universe has made a promise to never leave you or forsake you, fear will be allowed to rise up
 - i. He made it first to Joshua, but it is for you and for me as well
 - ii. Hear it again, knowing it is an irrevocable promise of God
 - iii. *(Josh 1:5) No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.*
 - iv. God is the source of our courage
2. Courage is not the absence of fear
- a. It is the proper allocation of fear
 - b. To allocate something is to set it apart for a specific purpose
 - c. Because here is something that may come as a bit of a surprise to you - courage does not replace fear
 - i. It harnesses it and uses it in a right way to accomplish the task rather than back away from or avoid it
 - ii. That is what the power of God does in your life
 - iii. As Joseph said after being reunited with his brothers, *You intended to harm me; but intended it for good (Gen 50:20)*
 - iv. He does the same thing with courage that overwhelms fear
 - d. The Bible talks a great deal about fear
 - i. The most frequently given command in the Bible is Fear the Lord (132 NIV)
 - ii. The second is Fear Not (82)
 - iii. And when you combine that with Do Not Be Afraid – the total is 163 times
 - e. We have spoken many times about what it means to fear the Lord
 - i. Again, it is not being afraid that God is going to harm you
 - ii. It is the reverential awe of who He is and who we are not
 - f. When you live in the right fear of the Lord, His majesty and power
 - i. You then realize more fully that it is that awesome wonder of who God is that is the source of your courage

- ii. And you then can understand how the apostle Paul, facing the imminent reality of his death, can write from prison in **Phil 1:21**, *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*
 - iii. That knowledge should bring comfort in every situation as Paul's words in **Romans 8:41** confirm – *What then shall we say in response to these things; if God is for us, who can be against us?*
 - g. Courage also comes from being afraid of the right things
 - i. And, we read in **Prov 9:10** – *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*
 - ii. Our fear of the Lord will not only keep things in a proper perspective but allocate our fears so that they work for the good in the situations that otherwise might bring fear

- 3. Courage means stepping back into the reality of God's identity for you
 - a. Fear will turn you into something that you are not
 - b. Fear supercharges your emotions and rarely in a positive way
 - c. It also leaves with you a "residue" that must be removed
 - i. We see this in what God had the Israelites do as they prepare to cross the Jordan
 - ii. After 40 years in the desert, God had them repeat important events as a way to bring them back to the reality of who they were
 - 1. In chapter 2, spies were sent into Jericho to check things out
 - a. Just as they had done 40 years
 - b. Notice at that time they sent out 12 spies
 - c. This time they sent out only 2, which was the same number who brought back the positive report the first time
 - d. It was if God was saying, "there is only one report you will be bringing back"
 - 2. In chapter 3, God parted the waters of the Jordan through Joshua for the people to cross just as He had done through Moses at the Red Sea 4 decades earlier
 - 3. In chapter 5, God instructs all the men born in the wilderness to be circumcised and for the people to celebrate Passover
 - a. They did this following their departure from the bondage of slavery
 - b. They were doing it again following their departure from the desert of sin and unbelief
 - iii. The people who crossed the Jordan were not the same ones who had turned away from it 40 years earlier
 - iv. One other thing that needed to change for the Israelites
 - 1. For 40 years, the people had been sustained on the manna God sent 6 days a week
 - 2. As soon as they completed the Passover, where they had eaten produce grown on the land, unleavened bread, and roasted grain, the manna immediately stopped (**Josh 5:12**)

- a. Manna was the food of the wanderers who had allowed fear to overwhelm their faith
 - b. The produce of the ground was the food of those who had faith and trusted God to meet their needs
 3. The things that God sends and uses to sustain you in your times of fear, you most often will not see again when the task has been completed
4. But what is required of me to see the power and presence of God bring about courage?
 - a. It is actually quite simple and not very complicated at all
 - b. **Josh 1:7-8** – *Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*
 - c. When we read the word “law,” we think of rules, regulations, and a long list of do’s and don’ts
 - i. But in the original Hebrew, the word for law is tore-RAH
 - ii. The meaning of the word is direction or guidance
 - iii. The law of God (His Word) is the guide and blueprint for our life
 - iv. It is in knowing Him that His presence is with us always
 - d. To experience the power of God’s presence begins with a heart that is submitted to Him in obedience
 - i. God had given Moses and the people the law very soon after they left Egypt
 - ii. They had 40 years to learn it, understand it, embrace it, and live it.
 - iii. But it was going to have to become a part of them then, just as it must be of us today

Joshua was a man who was called by God to fulfill a seemingly impossible task

- It was not to finally take the Israelites into Canaan
- It was not to get in excess of over 2.5 million people through a raging river at flood stage
- It was not to conquer one of the most heavily fortified and impenetrable cities known to that time
- It was to replace a living legend who was held in awe and wonder by all the people – Moses

Joshua could have allowed his fear of the situation and the fear of failure to paralyze him so that he could not complete the task God set before him

- But God knew what Joshua needed to hear
- And He told it to him 3 times
- Be strong and courageous

Courage is given by God; He is the source

Courage is not the absence of fear but the proper allocation or directing it to another purpose

Courage meanings stepping back into the reality of who you are in God because of His presence

Obedying His Word – living it in our lives daily