

5. How does what God says in verses 7-8 put conditions on the promises?

SERIES: The Promised Land (Joshua & Judges)

SERMON 1: "Be Strong and Courageous"

TEXT: Joshua 1:1-11

DATE: October 3/4, 2015

Exodus 17:8-13; 24:12-18; Numbers 13:1-14:12; 27:12-23

6. Read the passages below and reflect on the relationship between God's promises to his people and their obedience.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children,. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:1-2)

7. What are your specific goals and aspirations when it comes to God's frequent commands to meditate on his Word day and night and to never let his Word depart from your mouth?

8. Looking back over this week's sermon, DailyLife, and this study, what one thing is most important for you to remember and apply?

Be Strong and Courageous

Joshua's fears are our fears.

- "Will I measure up. The expectations are so high."
- "Can I meet this challenge that seems impossible right now: to raise my kids, to find a job, to fight temptation, to get that degree, to face physical pain, to keep going even though I'm depressed, to help my ailing parents, to face a bully."
- And then there's that fear that can keep even the most courageous awake at night: the fear that sets in when they realize a situation they really care about is beyond their control.

What God says to Joshua, to help him overcome his fear, he says to us as well. Joshua has nothing on us expect a bigger challenge.

- **You can count on God's promises.** God makes some big promises to Joshua. His promises to you and me, to anyone who is his child through faith in Christ, are eternal. If God's priorities (his kingdom) are your priorities, you really can't lose.
- **You can count on the promises of God, but you can't presume on the promises of God.** Joshua had to grab hold of what God promised. There is what theologians call "the indicative and imperative" of the Christian life. It's a common pattern you see in the New Testament. You are a child of God (indicative), therefore live like a child of God (imperative). You are made righteous in Christ (indicative), therefore live righteously (imperative). You are saved by faith alone (indicative), therefore work out your salvation (imperative).
- **God promises his presence to his people:** "I will be with you." He promised it to Moses (Exodus 3:12), to Joshua (Joshua 1:5), and to you (Hebrews 13:5-6; Matthew 28:20).
- **If God speaks and guides through his Word, we need to be serious students of his Word.** Scripture reveals God's character and his plans so we can know what is truly important. It tells us who we are and what we need to do. It explains life. God tells us to meditate on it. To speak it. To be a student of his Word so we can know God and his promises, and so what we can experience his presence as we face the challenges of our lives.

We have something Joshua lacked when facing our fears. We have Jesus, the one who did what we cannot do. God's Word never departed from his mouth and he was careful to do everything written in it, without fail. We have Jesus, the one who lived in perfect obedience to God the Father but went to the cross for our disobedience. We have Jesus, the one in whom we live and have our being.

- ☀ Our DailyLife devotional will take you on a guided journey through Joshua and Judges over the next 8 weeks. To receive DailyLife in your inbox, write "please send DailyLife" on your Communication Card. Make sure we have your current email address. If you do not receive it within the next week, check your email spam or promotions box.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Joshua 1:1-10

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. How are the fears you experience as an adult similar to the fears you experienced as a child?
3. Read Joshua 1:1-10. Joshua was facing an overwhelming challenge. Moses, his mentor, was dead, and he was the new leader. The Promised Land was vast, it's inhabitants were fierce, and he was tasked with conquering that land with an untrained army. And the Israelites were, after all, the sons and daughters of the same people who, after God's miraculous deliverance from Egypt, failed to trust God and forfeited the right to enter the land. Three times God says, "Be strong and courageous." Joshua had reason to fear. What does God say and do to calm Joshua's fear in verses 1-6?
4. How does the promise of God's presence give you greater courage?