



A MODEL OF OBEDIENCE • COURAGEOUS OBEDIENCE •

JOSHUA 1:1-9 • 02/04/2018

MAIN POINT

God call us to a life of courageous obedience.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Every year we celebrate Memorial Day. Why is the courage of the men and women in the armed services so awe inspiring?

Do you have any service members in your family? How have they inspired you with their courage to serve?

On Memorial Day, we set aside time to honor those men and women who have served our country with honor and distinction. We thank brave people who have given their lives so that we can continue to enjoy the freedoms we have as Americans. Fighting for

our freedom takes courage the same way that obeying God in all that He calls us to takes courage. God has called each of us to serve Him in different ways. However to serve Him well, we need the courage that can only come from Him.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOSHUA 1:1-9.

What is about to happen in this section of Scripture? How long had Joshua and the people of Israel waited for this moment?

What happened before Joshua took charge of Israel? How nervous and afraid do you think Joshua was in that moment? What reason did he have to take courage?

In this passage, the people of Israel are about to take hold of the land that God has given into their hands. Moses had led them for more than 40 years, and now it was Joshua's turn. Can you imagine the courage Joshua would need to lead at this unique time in the history of God's people? While Joshua had many reasons to be nervous and afraid, he had far greater reasons to take courage. The God who gave the promise of the land would be with Israel wherever they went

God calls each of us to follow these commands in a specific way. How has God called you to love God, love others, and share His name with the world?

Though the call upon our lives may be different than Joshua's or another person's, why will we always need the courage God supplies to do all God asks us to do?

Many people ask the question, “What is God’s will for my life?” However, we often over-complicate the answer. God has called each one of us to do the same three things—love Him, love others, and tell others about Him. Yet, the way each of us fulfills this call will vary depending on where God has placed us. Regardless of how this calling takes shape, we will need the courage of God that is freely given to us in Jesus Christ who has overcome the world for us.

God identified three sources of courage for Joshua (and us). Read Joshua 1:6 again. What is the first source of courage God identified for Joshua? How does this source of courage apply to us in our struggles with obedience?

Re-read verse 8. The second source of courage is God’s Word. When is a time God’s Word has given you the comfort and courage to obey Him?

Read verse 9 again. What was the last source of courage God gave Joshua? Why is this the source of courage that many of us need most today?

What must we believe to be true about God if we are going to obey Him with boldness and courage?

God gave Joshua three reasons to be of courage as he took the land—the guarantee that the battle had already been won, the dependability of God’s Word, and the promise to always be with them. Though our circumstances are drastically different than Joshua’s were those thousands of years ago, we still have these same promises. As we grow in our love for God and our depth of knowledge and love for His Word, we will follow Him with deeper and deeper levels of courage. God is good and gracious to us, and He will never leave us. When we enter the places He has called us to, we can obey Him with courage knowing that He is right there with us.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Is there something God is asking you to do right now that you lack the courage to follow through on? How do we rely on His courage instead of our own? Why is this often easier said than done?

What fears do you have about your calling? How can we point one another back to God and courageously pursue His call in our lives together?

What are the consequences of not following Jesus with courageous obedience?

PRAY

Pray that God would make us a people who are marked by courageous obedience to all that God has called them. Ask that we would feel the presence of God with us as we seek to make Him known by loving Him, loving others, and sharing the gospel with the world.

COMMENTARY

JOSHUA 1:1-9

1:1. The death of Moses created a leadership vacuum. Joshua son of Nun, who had served Moses, identifies Joshua as the one who had been with Moses since Exodus 17. That he “served Moses” (cp. Ex 24:13) uses a different term than “Lord’s servant.”

1:2. God commanded Joshua to prepare the people to cross over the Jordan. The fact that all the people were involved emphasizes the importance of unity among the people

of God. God emphasized that the land was something He was giving the Israelites; it was God's grace, not the efforts of the Israelites, that provided the land.

1:3. Repeating the emphasis on the land as God's gift, it now included every place where the sole of your foot treads. Although the "promised land" is normally understood as something that God promised Abram, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:1-3), here God attached the promise to Moses.

1:5. The reference to as long as you live looks to the end of Joshua's life, concluding this "Table of Contents" in verses 2-5. The promise I will not leave you anticipates the plea of Gibeon in 10:6, "Don't abandon your servants," using the same expression. Likewise the verb forsake occurs again in Joshua, in Israel's promise of loyalty to God ("abandon" in 24:16,20). This verse forms a hinge, concluding the previous sections of promises and introducing the next section of responsibilities. God's promise of His presence occurs again in 1:9 and thus provides an "envelope" to 1:6-9. All the responsibilities of these verses depend on God's presence that guarantees the mission's success, just as Christ's presence enables His disciples to achieve their mission (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,20; Acts 1:8).

1:6. God's command, Be strong and courageous, already spoken by Moses to Israel, appears three times here. The expression is used before great undertakings, like David's charge to Solomon to build the temple, King Hezekiah's encouragement to his subjects to withstand the enemy's siege (2 Chron. 32:7), and Joshua's own charge to Israel to fight (Josh. 10:25).

1:7. The word success (Hb sakal; cp. "succeed" in v. 8) is found frequently in the Wisdom literature to describe one's mastery of the world and insight into its challenges ("wise" in Prov. 1:3). The whole instruction (Hb torah) describes God's revelation in the form of the previous books of the law of Moses.

1:8-9. Two more references to the instruction affirm the key importance of God's revelation. Study and learning of it are to form so much a part of one's life that the words are fully obeyed as in Deuteronomy 6:6-9. The "frame" of God's promised presence in Joshua 1:5,9 indicates that Joshua's success will come because God is with him, enabling him to read and observe God's word (Eph. 2:8-10).

READING ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

Joshua 2:1-15