

April 2009

From the Pastor



Three Commands That Take Strength & Courage

Joshua was about to enter into the Promised Land. God came to him and gave him three commands that would take strength and courage to follow.

God gives us the same commands and it takes strength and courage daily to follow these commands. Look at the commands listed in the book of Joshua.

*6 "Be strong and courageous, because **you will lead these people to inherit the land** I swore to their forefathers to give them.⁷ 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.⁸ 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.⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. **Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged**, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:6-9 NIV)*

First Joshua was commanded to be strong and courageous and do God's will. It was God's will that the children of Israel were to take the

Promised Land. The land was filled with people who were stronger and better equipped for battle, from a physical point of view. But God was on the side of the Israelites and Joshua was to be strong and courageous and lead the nation into the Promised Land. It takes strength and courage to do God's will. God's will is not easy. The



Christian life isn't easy. But God gives you the strength and the courage to live it.

Second, Joshua was also told to follow God's word without wavering. This too takes strength and courage, which comes from knowing God's word. The only way to follow the word is to know it well. Joshua was to keep the word of God on his mouth. He was also to meditate on the word of God. We are also to keep the word of God without wavering. But we also need to know the word well. Read God's word daily and talk with others about what you have read. Throughout the day think about what you have read. Consider memorizing the word as well. Know God's word well. You don't need to be a bible scholar to know the word; you just need to study to be a student of the word. Through knowing the word, God's strength and courage is released in your life.

Finally, Joshua was to be strong and courageous in terrifying and discouraging times. Joshua was to lead a great military campaign and I am sure that it was scary. Any leader needs encouragement when they face trials. There are times when all of us become afraid or even terrified in our lives. This life can be scary: Going to a new school, starting a new job, wondering whether you should have that operation. You can be strong and courageous because God is with you! Listen to these wise words.

*"Anxiety, inadequacy, fear and despair are overcome and replaced by courage and confidence in the realization of [God's] powerful presence."*¹

Don't be afraid. Stand up and boldly live the Christian life.

In Him and for His glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Art". The word "Pastor" is written in a cursive style, and "Art" is written in a more stylized, blocky cursive.

¹Robin Wakely, *hāzaq*, New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology, vol. 2, p. 63.