

Joshua Ch 1

(The making of a leader)

It's with a certain sadness of heart that we let go of Moses and yet with a certain gladness of heart and excitement that we begin a new chapter in the history of Israel under the new leadership of Joshua. It's been said that God buries His workers, but His work goes on, and that's what we see as we begin to look into Joshua, the book of Joshua is the book of new beginnings for the people of God. And we'll find much practical application for us in the study of this book as so many believers today are in need of a new beginning. After 40 yrs of wandering around in the desert, Israel will under the leadership of Joshua finally claim their inheritance and enjoy the blessings of the land that God had prepared for them. And that's the kind of life that God wants His people to enjoy today, a life of victory, a life of blessing and a life that's rich concerning the things of the kingdom as we walk in the Spirit. The bible says that we've been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ and yet too many believers live like spiritual beggars, never entering into the fullness of what has already given them if they'll just receive it and lay hold of it by faith. They walk around miserable and in defeat when they could be so rich in the Spirit if they'd just apply the promises of God to their lives. And so I'd remind you at this point that the Promised Land is not a type of heaven, when the song says "I looked over Jordan and what did I see, comin' for to carry me home, a band of angels comin' after me, comin' for to carry me home." It's alluding to the Jordan being a type of death and the Promised Land as being a type of heaven. But I have to disagree with that theology because you find many giants in the Promised Land, you find many battles in the Promised Land, and not all of them were even won. And so I have difficulty in seeing the Promised Land as a type of heaven, but rather it's speaking to us of the rich full life in the Spirit that we can enjoy here on this earth in Christ. And the Jordan represents death alright, but the death that it speaks of is that of the flesh and crossing over into a life led in the Spirit, even though I seek to be led by and dominated by the Spirit of God, there's still a warfare going on. There's still giants I have to face, and I haven't won every battle I've fought, but one thing I do, "*forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*" and The bible says, "*Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind.*" and So the life in the Promised Land represents a life of maturity for the Christian, a life that's governed *by* and walked *in* the Spirit enjoying the fullness of the blessings of God for my life. But those blessings are gained many times through much warfare, because there's enemies in the Promised Land that want to keep you from receiving all that God has given you. And so like it or not God's people are expected to be soldiers, Benjamin Franklin once wrote, "There was never a good war, or bad peace" and even though he's a respected patriot I'm afraid I have to disagree. There is a bad type of peace, an apathetic type of peace where every man does what is right in his own eyes and the land becomes corrupt.

We live in it in many ways today, and to say the war that is initiated by God to purge a wicked people and replace them with a righteous people is bad, is to stand in opposition against God, which is a position that I for one refuse to take. God calls His people to be soldiers; we see that all through out the scriptures.

Even reading in 2 Tim 2:3-4 “*You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.*” At the end of Paul’s life he told Timothy, “I have fought the good fight.” We’ll see as we go through Ephesians on Sunday Mornings that we’re to put on the whole armor of God, don’t be deceived, to be called into the family of God, is to be called into war. God called Joshua to fight the good fight, that he might enjoy the fullness of His blessing on his life and advance the kingdom. And God calls us to fight the good fight as well, now, if Joshua were on the shelf down at crown video, you’d no doubt find it in the “action” section. It’s got all the necessary ingredients for a blockbuster hit, it’s got action, intrigue, and espionage, it contains examples of trickery and deceit, bravery and courage, it’s full of spectacular battle scenes and outstanding special effects. It would no doubt be a war epic, a film of military conquest, full of thrills and chills. But it goes way beyond that, it has deeper meaning for you and for me, spiritual instructions on what makes a leader and how to walk in victory and have good success in our Christian lives. And may God speak to our hearts and change our lives as we study this book on possessing that which God has given to His children, the book of Joshua.

And it’s worth noting once more at this point that Moses was unable to lead the children of Israel into the fullness of God’s blessing for their lives, he could only take them to that point of entry. But God reserved the privilege of leading them into victory and the fullness of His provision for His people for Moses’ successor (if you’ll allow me that term) general Joshua. And we know that Moses represents for us in the scriptures typically speaking; the law and the law is a revealer of sin not a remover of sin, it can only take us to the point of seeing our defeats, realizing our failures. But Joshua, which is the Hebrew form of the Greek word Jesus, was the one who would lead them into the life of victory and blessing. And so it is with us, Joshua teaches us that the law can never grant us a life of victory and bring us into rest, but rather it convicts us of sin, only Jesus can lead us into the Promised Land, the book of Joshua teaches us that we can entrust our battles to the Lord Jesus. And tonight we’re going to go over the 1st chapter of the book of Joshua, emphasizing the 1st 9 vs which is all about the making of a leader. I thought about taking a different approach to this since we just went to the leadership conference and the 1st bible study out the mouth of Pastor Sandy Adams was on Joshua Ch 1, the 1st 9 vs. But then I thought well, I went up there to receive, I did receive, it’s probably not coincidence that he taught over the very area we were headed into and when I told him that, he just opened his bible and handed me his notes.

So instead of reinventing the wheel, though I'm not reading you his notes. I'm going to be emphasizing those same things to you that were helpful for me and those of you who were there will just have to sit through a double dose of the 7 principals of leadership.

VS1-2

The 1st principal that we see in vs 1 for you note takers is preparation we read that before Joshua was raised up into a position of leadership, he had his place of apprenticeship as Moses' assistant. Your bible might say Moses' minister, but that doesn't mean that Joshua was Moses' pastor, the word minister there is used in the truest sense of the word, the word minister means servant. Joshua was Moses' servant, his assistant, his apprentice, before a person can lead, they must 1st be willing to learn and to be led, themselves.

Joshua was more or less Moses' shadow for years, going where he went, doing what he said, not questioning Moses' instructions but rather following through with zeal and diligence, no questions asked. Joshua learned about leadership by being led himself, you recall that when Moses was called up Mt Sinai to meet with God to receive the law that he took Joshua with him. And Joshua was only allowed to go up so far and then Moses had to go alone and we read that Joshua stayed by himself waiting for Moses for 40 days. I don't think I've ever been completely isolated for even 4 days, what a test of allegiance that must've been for Joshua. I'd think all kinds of thoughts would be running around in your head, you might be OK for about a week or so but by the time you'd waited in isolation for a month I be wondering if maybe God struck him dead or if I'd ever see him again. Maybe I should return to camp, maybe I should try and find him, but Joshua persevered and was faithful to his leader, even above Moses' own brother and the rest of the nation. You recall that when Moses finally returned to Joshua, the rest of the nation had given up on ever seeing him again, or so it would seem. And no doubt that in and of itself would've been another temptation for Joshua, he'd been hearing what he likened to the noise of war going on in the camp at the bottom of the MT. And he probably felt like checking it out, and when Moses returned Joshua said it sounds like the noise of war in the camp and Moses said to Joshua "*It is not the noise of the shout of victory, Nor the noise of the cry of defeat, But the sound of singing I hear.*" In other words Joshua, they're all partying, they've forsaken the Lord. Joshua alone remained faithful, and the Lord would honor that. Joshua proved out his faithfulness again when Moses called the 70 elders to himself in order to lay hands on them so that they might help him with the needs of the people. And you remember that 2 men began prophesying that Moses didn't lay hands on, and Joshua said Moses forbid them. In other words, Moses they're stepping out of line they're doing something that you didn't give them permission to do, just say the word and I'll take care of it. Joshua was in unwavering allegiance to his leader and it was there that he learned, a lesson in humility. Moses said, "*Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!*" In other words hey it's not about me, I wish that all of the Lord's people were dominated by the Spirit of God, life would be so much more trouble free if every one were under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

And Joshua had to learn that even though he was faithful to Moses, hey, if God wants to do that work it's important that we step out of God's way in humility rather than kicking against the goads. In Ex 33 we're told that God appeared to Moses in the tabernacle and spoke to him face to face, but we read in vs 11 that when Moses would return to the camp, Joshua the son of Nun, did not depart from the tabernacle. He just hung out in the presence of God, maybe hoping to catch a glimmer of the glory of God, maybe hoping that some of the anointing would sort of rub off on him.

Joshua served Moses, and was prepared for leadership, Billy Graham has been quoted as saying, "if I knew the Lord would not come back for 3 years, I'd spend 2 of those years studying and 1 of them preaching." 2 Tim 2:15 "*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*" Never underestimate the importance of preparation, Joshua was faithful during his days of preparation and God raised him up to lead His people.

The 2nd principal is found in vs 2 and that's purpose, God give Joshua his marching orders, to be a successful leader one has to have a purpose. And your purpose needs to be God given and it needs to be clear, you need vision, it's been said that we need to have a vision, then we need to state the vision, stand on the vision, and stick to the vision. and Again a leader must know, he must know that he knows, and he must be able to make it abundantly clear to those around him that he knows. Here we are committed to the solid teaching of the word of God for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. And I'm committed to certain distinctives with in the ministry that agrees with the perspectives of Calvary Chapel of which time doesn't permit us to delve into all the Calvary Chapel distinctives, but I can tell you that all you have to do to find them out is read your bible because that's we believe, that's what we teach and that's what we desire to live. W/out vision the people perish, and the vision of a church in it's proper place comes from the pastor who's received it from God, and shares it with trusted men and then passes it on to the people. We never see where Joshua takes a poll or takes a vote, he got his orders from God, and moved, it's not the polls of public opinion that counts, it's right and wrong and we need men who are leaders, men of fortitude, honesty and a belief in that which is right. Not in what's easy or what's public opinion, and there are times that you will draw fire on the stand you've taken, but we're to hold fast to what God has called us to do, the job of leadership is to stay on course even when it's not popular, we're not called to be man pleasers, we are called to be God pleasers. In vs 3-4 we see the 3rd element.

Vs3-4

#1 Preparation, #2 purpose, and #3 is perspective, God gave Joshua not only purpose, but also perspective as to how it would play out. And notice with me for a quick side note that promise in vs 3 is in the past tense, God tells Joshua that every place the sole of his foot would tread, He had already given him.

It was a done deal, all he had to do was take it, the same is true for us as believers today, everything we need to enjoy the fullness of the blessings of God upon and with in our lives God has already given us in Christ and all we have to do to receive it is lay hold of it by faith, the same way you received Jesus in the 1st place. It's always struck me as odd how we've received Jesus with such simple faith and then we make everything else He has for us so difficult, when He desires that we receive the promises that He has made us as simply and easily as we did everlasting life, we believed it and acted upon it. He says here that every place the sole of your foot treads I *have* given to you. The 3rd principal is perspective, when a pastor sees the big picture, it keeps him from getting stuck in a rut, he can make changes, correct the course so as to stay on target.

Vs5

The 4th principal, power or persuasion, God intends to make Joshua a man of influence, "no man shall be able to stand against you." You might call it authority; there will be a weight to his words that will inspire and impact others, when he speaks people are going to listen to him. Not because of who he is, but because of who God is in Him. "As *I* was with Moses so *I* will be with you", but that persuasion doesn't usually take place over night, people need to have the time to see who God is in your life, to gain integrity in their sight, maybe you've heard the statement, "people will care about what you know, only when they know that you care."

As a leader you'll have to allow the Lord to prove out who He is each and every day of your life through you to others, God accepts us as we are, people don't and if God is to impact lives through our words, it has to be backed up through integrity and our actions. If you desire the reigns of leadership you're inviting upon yourself daily scrutiny- and rightly so.

Vs6

The 5th principal we'll simply call people now in our next gathering Lord willing we'll comment on this phrase be strong and of good courage which is no doubt an attribute needed by leaders, but the emphasis of this vs is people. Once God has prepared you for the work, given you purpose, perspective, power or persuasion, you need people, with out people there's no one to lead, but the problem with people is that the more people you have to lead, the more problems there are. Because once the land was conquered it would be up to Joshua to see to it that each of the respective tribes got their allotments of land. And that task would plunge Joshua headlong into the work of dealing with people, dealing with personalities, dealing with quirks and complaints, the attitudes and anger and chastisements of people. But as Sandy shared so delicately with us a couple of weeks ago, "if you can't stand the smell of sheep, don't be a shepherd." You see it's impossible a leader for God with out a love for God's people. Spiritual leaders according to the bible are supposed to be a gift from God to His church.

And as Sandy said what a privilege to be viewed by those whom God gathers to this church as a gift to them from God- and hopefully not a gag gift.

As a leader it's not going to work out if you have a hard heart and soft skin, you need hard skin and a soft heart, a major part of being a leader, is people. And Jesus is our example and we read concerning Him that even though His disciples denied Him, betrayed Him, and completely failed in their witness of Him that when He knew that "*His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*" You can't bail out when you get your feelings hurt if you're a leader or when you're betrayed by a friend, you've got to love those people whom God has placed before you to lead until the very end, battle scars and all.

Vs7-8

What's the 6th principal of leadership? Precepts or guidelines by which you function, Joshua had some guidelines that he was to function with in, meditate on, and apply, and he wasn't to deviate to the right or to the left, and what was the precepts that he was to follow? The word of God, the scriptures, the guidance of the people wasn't up *to* Joshua, it was *through* Joshua and God made it very clear that his success or his failure was contingent upon his faithfulness to the words of this book, and God's terms, conditions or stipulations hasn't changed as far as that goes even to this day. We're to be men and women of the word of God. I'm sure that we'd all agree that we live in a day where by people have itching ears and they're turning their ears away from the truth, and being turned aside to fables.

And believe me when I tell you that in these last days the truth is becoming increasingly unpopular. But Joshua wasn't to turn from it even one degree to the right or to the left, and neither are we his job and ours is to let the bible speak for itself, we're not to water it down. One has said, "Our goal is to add nothing to the text that would make it harder than God intended, nor subtract anything from the text to make it easier than He intended." We're like the pharmacist not the doctor, we just fill the prescription we don't write it and the prescription for what ails the human race is the word of God, the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

And finally in vs9.

Vs9

The 7th principal of leadership is presence Joshua could be strong and of good courage because the presence of the Lord would be with him where ever he went. And that was a lesson that Moses was very familiar with we read in Ex 33 that Moses didn't want to go anywhere but that the presence of God didn't go with them, and if God wasn't going with them they didn't want to go.

And that needs to be where we are in our hearts as individuals and as a body, if God's not leading us into two services I don't want to go, if God's not in the out reach of the coffee house I'll shut it down, if God isn't directing us in our missionary endeavors, then we'll pull the rip cord. Whatever it is that we put our hands to if God isn't with us we don't want to go there, we want Him to go before us and to fight our battles for us. We read in 2 Chronicles 32:7-8 where Jerusalem was surrounded by the king of Assyria and Hezekiah says to the people, "*Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid nor dismayed before the king of Assyria, nor before all the multitude that is with him; for there are more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles.*" Men are always looking for better methods, using the arm of flesh, but God is looking for better men. Men of preparation, purpose and perspective, persuasive men who love God's people, keep God's precepts and are full of His presence. Let's close out the chapter.

Vs10-16

You could capsulize this by saying that Christianity is not a spectator sport we're all in this thing together as Paul would write in his letter to the Galatians, bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Like it or not we're in this warfare together, and men who are leaders need faithful men who will follow, not always questioning everything that goes on or having to know every detail of every situation but rather they trust the Lord in them and are behind them. I'm thankful that I'm not like the pastor that said "My congregation is 100% behind me, 50% want to pat me on the back and 50% want to stab me in the back." That's one of the troubles that come along with being a leader, you can never be sure if the people are following you, or chasing you. All I know is that I'm thankful for the body that God has given me to serve and my prayer is that the feeling is mutual. Notice vs 17.

Vs17

Here we could add an 8th aspect that's vital for any leader and it's where you come in, pray for them, they say "the Lord your God be with you." and That my friends is a prayer oh how I need your prayers, and I would like to solicit your prayers daily so that I might be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and be an effective leader of God's people, pray for me that the Lord my God would be with me, read Eph 3vs 14-19 feel free to offer that prayer up for me as well. And I know that you guys pray for me and I could never express to you how much that means to me and how much I appreciate it and you can know that I pray for you as well.

Vs18

The making of a leader, preparation, purpose, perspective, persuasive, a love for God's people the precepts of the word of God, full of God's presence and prayer.

