

## Joshua: Called by God

### Joshua 1:1-9

We, like Joshua, are called to an overwhelming task, but we serve an incomparably great God. Will you pick up the mantle of spiritual leadership and courageously follow God's calling on your life?

If you received a phone call from God, what do you think He would say?

- You're doing great. Keep it up.
- Read your Bible more; pray more; throw in some fasting.
- Couple of areas you need to work on. Pay attention to your tongue.
- Often when God calls individuals in the Bible He gives grand, overwhelming vision of His glory; or a powerful reminder of His greatness, strength, presence.
- Almost always gives a huge, overwhelming task to accomplish.
- In other words, God's call generally focuses less on us, our particular sins or strengths, and more on a big God and a big job.
- Most of us will never receive in this life a vision of God, but we are given a task
- The big jobs God calls us to do are a significant tool in our sanctification. We are called away from our petty, foolish failings, priorities and idolatries, and toward an overwhelming task that only God can accomplish through us.

#### I. Called by God – Joshua 1:1-5

##### A. Lead God's people – 1:2

- “**all this people**” = Millions of people who only knew Moses as leader
- Not Moses' people, but it would be hard to follow Moses!
  - Moses was Israel's first national leader; one of the greatest leaders they would ever have. Intimidating to follow such a man.
  - humblest (Num 12:3); greatest leader in Israel's history (Dt 34:10).
- Not solidiers. Children of slaves; lived in tents in the desert
  - Didn't possess the latest weaponry; skill in fighting; training
- Children of stubborn, rebellious, insubordinate, complainers, idolatrous
  - Water, food complaints
  - Fear of giants in the land
  - Had they learned from their parents' mistakes?
- Leading this people not an easy job; Moses had tried to turn it down!

##### B. Claim God's land – 1:3-4

- Promised Land
  - Same boundaries as promised to Abraham
  - Same boundaries described in Genesis 2
  - Special/important land. From this place God would extend His rule
- God had given it (past tense) – 1:3
  - They had to work to claim it. Trust AND obey
  - Model for spiritual life; next week

### **C. Conquer God's enemies**

- Why did they need to be conquered? Exceptionally evil
- Amalekites – "no fear of God"
  - Sodom and Gomorrah (not even 10 righteous)
- Israel kept out of land 400 years to give opportunity to repent
  - Genesis 15:16
  - A few who feared God – Rahab; Gibeonites

### **D. This calling was overwhelming**

- People can do great things. Man on the moon.
  - Apart from Me, you can do nothing
  - Some things are impossible without God
- What is our calling?
  - Salvation – Rev 22:17
  - Sanctification/ Representation – Eph 4:1; 1 Peter 2:21
  - Service – Rom 12:6
  - Great Commission – Mt 28:18-20
- Many Christians, most churches abdicate this calling
  - All nations, even our own community, our family or neighbor is overwhelming
  - We can pull off programs
  - We can pull off "nice"
  - Devoting our lives to ALL NATIONS?!
- God delights in giving us tasks beyond our abilities
  - so that He gets glory
  - We learn to depend on Him

Joshua's calling sounded different, but it was equally overwhelming. In order to carry out this calling, God commanded Joshua to do three things

## **II. Commanded by God – 1:6-9**

### **A. Be Strong.** What kind of strength would he need?

1. Physical? Joshua was 80 years old when he took this job
  - May not have amazing physical strength, but still make an impact
2. Emotional
  - Moses was a great leader, but there were times when emotional fatigue took over
  - Num 20:10-11. VERSES – struck the rock
  - Depression and despair – Elijah, David, Jeremiah
  - Alternative translation – Moses was most "miserable"
3. Intellectual
  - Smaller, less equipped, less trained army than his opponents
  - Joshua was a military genius
4. Relational strength
  - Not something Joshua could do on his own; "group project"
  - Wisdom – keep dissension from the newly formed nation
  - Fortunately, Joshua had Caleb

Get ready for the challenge. God calls us to a life that requires strength

## **B. Be Brave – Joshua 1:6, 7, 9**

3 times – this was an issue for Joshua

Define courage

- Not trembling, not dismayed. Not paralyzed
- Not the absence of fear. Courage and fear go together. Moving forward in face of fear
- You can't be both brave and safe. Safe = no bravery required

God calls us to a life that requires bravery

Paul asked for prayer for boldness

Is it safe to follow God's calling? Depends on how you define safe. Suffering, persecution, sacrifice, eternal destiny that is secure. Only life that is worth living.

God does not call us to anything for which He has failed to supply the resources

**as we look at this final point...**

## **C. Be dependent – 1:8**

- **Word of God – Ex 33:11**
  - Waited by the opening of the tent
- **Presence of God – 1:9**
- **Power of God – 1:5**

God is for us! He wants us to do well. He is not setting us up for failure, then waiting to pounce.

### **Application**

Consider your calling – salvation, sanctification, service; GREAT Commission

Christ's calling required courage as well. Son of God did not play it safe when He bravely went to the cross for you.

He is calling you to follow in His steps.