

Message: “STRONG AND COURAGEOUS” by Pastor Jon Whisner, 1/16/22

Description: When God called Joshua to take Moses's place as Israel's leader, he had specific instructions for who Joshua was to be and how Joshua was to lead. In a day when there is so much restlessness and constant change, and a vacuum of godly leadership, this Scripture needs to be applied and acted upon more than ever before.

Key Scripture: Joshua 1:1-9

Takeaway / Application: Before God gets to the details of *what* He wants Joshua to *do*, He first tells Joshua *who* he needs to *BE*. We cannot pass on what we ourselves do not possess. Before deploying for the mission, we must first develop the man. Before we can lead, we must be led.

- Joshua 1:9a is a COMMAND from God. Pastor Jon reminded us in his message that men do not die for *suggestions*—but men will fight, will dare, will stand, will risk, will give their life for *commands*. When God calls us to His mission, He clearly maps out for us through the instruction of His word what the standards, principles, truths and absolutes are that we are to go to battle for. Are there any commands, mandates, laws, responsibilities that you are shirking? Are there any areas of your walk with Christ where you are AWOL? 1 John 5:3 says that if we really love God, we will keep His commandments.
- Joshua 1:9b is more about *being* than it is about *doing*. The Lord CALLS Joshua to BE strong and courageous. Pastor Jon gave a quote from a movie where the character says, “*It's not who you are underneath, it's what you do that defines you.*” This sounds really good, but it is wrong. God first focuses on the condition of our heart before he instructs the conduct of our hands. Read Ephesians 6:10-18 which is all about spiritual warfare. You will see that Paul instructs these Christian warriors to BE before he tells them what to do.
- Joshua 1:9c brings us CONFIDENCE & COMFORT from God when we obey His commands and respond to His call. The Lord reminded us that “*God is with you wherever you go.*” We are not alone! That reality ought to bring us calm and courage. Pastor Jon referenced many examples in our church of those who have had courage to face cancer, because, not only was God with them, but their spouse was with them. Can you share an example with your group of a difficult experience or season in your life that you endured because you were not alone?
- Read Philippians 4:9. *Learned. Received. Heard. Seen.* Pastor Jon concluded his message by challenging our men to courageously lead those who are following our leadership. Crawford Loritts said, “*At birth we look like our parents. At death we look like our decisions.*” In this turbulent time, can our families look to our hearts, our life, our conduct, and confidently follow our lead? Do we bring confidence to our family through our faithfulness to God?