



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Joshua 1:1-18

Lesson 1

Fall 2020

"Be Strong And Courageous"

TRANSCRIPT

We're starting a new book this morning and that's the Book of Joshua. It's the sixth book of the Bible: So Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua. And we are going to look at the first chapter, Joshua, chapter 1, verses 1 through 18. And I'll read it. I'm going to read the entire chapter,

¹ Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, ² "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. ³ Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. ⁵ No man will *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses, My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸ This book of the law... (This may be referring to the five books of the law that Moses wrote, but I think it's probably a reference to the Book of Deuteronomy—which was to be read by the king, later. (When they would have kings; he was to write it down, and he was to read it.) I think that's probably what's referred to here.)

...⁸ This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, to possess it.' "

¹² To the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, ¹³ "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God gives you rest and will give you this land.' ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle shall remain in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but you shall cross before your brothers in battle array, all your valiant warriors, and shall help them, ¹⁵ until the LORD gives your brothers rest, as *He gives you*, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land, and possess that which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise." *(He is referring to the lands east of the Jordan that they conquered first, and they were given that possession. We'll talk about that more when we come to it.)*

¹⁶ They answered Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only may the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses. ¹⁸ Anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only be strong and courageous."

Joshua 1: 1-18

So there they repeat the Lord's words to Joshua. May the Lord bless this reading of His Word, and bless our time together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, what a good thing it is to be together with Your people on the Lord's day like this, and we thank You for it. It's a beautiful day, with the sun shining, and it's particularly good because we're here together, and we seem to be coming together more and more, and so we thank You for that. We praise You for restoring us a little bit to normalcy and we pray that continues. And Father, we not only thank You, we praise You because You are who You reveal Yourself to be in Your Word, and who You revealed Yourself to be in this first chapter of the Book of Joshua. You are Holy, You are good, and You are sovereign and faithful, and we can rely upon You for everything in this life. May that be the lesson we learn from our text this morning.

Thank You for giving us the great privilege that we're exercising at this moment: Being able to petition You; being able to come to You boldly, as the author of Hebrews puts it, to the throne of grace any time. You invite us to come all the time. There's no restriction on that. You would have us pray continually and come to the throne of grace, and we can do that and know that You hear us. —And that is to say You answer our prayers. So we thank You for that, Lord. We pray You would bless us this morning, Spiritually, guide us through our passage, and help us to understand it and apply these things to us. Give us confidence to deal with each day in Your power and wisdom. Give us the confidence that You gave Joshua, because we have the same assurances that You gave to him—You're with us and so we are to be strong and courageous.

Bless us physically, Lord. Keep us healthy, as well. We thank You for doing that, because so many of us are healthy. But we pray for those, as we have done in the past, who have comprised health, and are vulnerable to this virus, and all kinds of things that float in the air. Bless the health of this nation. We pray for that.

We pray for the economy. I think of the businessmen that are in this assembly; I think of the women who work as well, all who work to support themselves; support their families. I pray that You'd bless them and preserve their jobs. And for the men or women who own businesses, who have small businesses that are particularly affected by this situation, we pray that they would be blessed. That You'd bless their businesses, that they would survive and they would prosper.

Bless our leaders, Father. We pray that You would bless all those in government that You have appointed over us. We pray that You would give them wisdom and that You would enable them to guide this nation through this dark hour. And especially, Lord, we pray that You would bless Your Church. We pray that You would make this church a light in the midst of darkness, and we pray that You would use us daily, wherever we are. And we pray that Your rich blessing would be on us. And Lord, perhaps through the difficulties that we have experienced the past number of months, that through that perhaps a revival may come and people may understand their dependence on You and look to You.

Lord, we pray Your blessing on us now. Prepare our hearts for a time of study and worship together. And we pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

In the year 426, after a long and faithful ministry, Augustine stepped down as bishop in North Africa. His successor was a little-known man named Eraclius. At his first sermon with Augustine seated on a throne behind him, Eraclius began, "The cricket chirps, the swan is silent." It's a clever compliment, but one that probably let slip a feeling of inadequacy. One of, 'Who can fill his shoes?' And how could he not wonder that? —Augustine was a towering figure of history, even in his own day.

Not as towering, however, as Moses. What must have Joshua felt when his time came to succeed his mentor and father in the faith, the lawgiver himself? That's how the Book of Joshua begins. Moses is dead, and the Lord commands Joshua to lead the nation across the Jordan River and into the promised land.

Three times, in verses 6 through 9, we read God's command, "...be strong and courageous...", (or 'strong and stout'). In verse 9 the Lord added, "Do not tremble," which might suggest some fear in Joshua. But it's not as though Joshua had not been properly groomed for the position. He had been. In verse 1 the Lord calls him Joshua ben Nun, or Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant.

He was attached to Moses from the beginning, first as general of the army of Israel, then as Moses' aide-de-camp. His first appearance is in Exodus 17, verse 9, when

he led the army of Israel in a battle against the Amalekites. Originally his name was Hoshea, which means 'salvation'. But Moses changed it to Joshua, (or Yeshua), which means, 'the Lord is salvation'. He learned the significance of his name in that first battle where he showed himself to be a great warrior. Exodus 17:13 states, "Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword."

But he did it in the power of the Lord. It was in that battle that Moses stood on a hill overlooking the field, and he raised his staff—the same staff that he raised when he divided the Red Sea. As long as the staff was raised, Israel prevailed. When Moses arms got tired and lowered the staff, Israel failed. So to keep his arms from falling, Moses sat on a Rock while Aaron and Hur supported them till the battle was over. Everyone saw it. It happened as a sign that victory is the Lord's—not man's. God's people win by heaven's might, not their own. And Joshua learned the lesson well.

Joshua was chosen as one of the 12 spies that scouted the land of Canaan. He was the representative of the tribe of Ephraim. He and Caleb returned with a good report. 10 spies gave a bad report. The people followed the faithless spies, and the result was, Israel did not enter the land, but wandered it—wandered in the desert for 38 more years.

Those were years that were lived in a very hard place; but they gave Joshua a good education. As Moses servant, Joshua accompanied Moses everywhere. When Moses would go to the tent of meeting to speak to the Lord, Joshua was there—where the Lord spoke to Moses face to face. Now that description of speaking to him face to face set Moses apart from all of the prophets and people. The Lord spoke to him face to face. The Lord knew Moses, He said, "as a friend." That was the Lord's description of Moses, "His friend". And Joshua was there. He saw this. But what he also saw was the modesty of Moses. As great a privilege as Moses had, as great a man as Moses was, he was called the humblest man on the face of the earth.

One event that must have made a deep impression on Joshua is recorded in Numbers 11. Seventy elders were gathered around the tent of meeting, outside the camp, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon them and they began to prophesy. But there

were two men who remained in the camp, that were separated from this group, Eldad and Medad. And the Spirit came on them also and they prophesied as well. And Joshua learned of it, and it offended him. It angered him. They were not a part of this group. They were not associated directly with Moses and he thought that was wrong; and an offense to his mentor.

So he told Moses about it and he asked him to put a stop to it. But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD'S people were prophets." (Num 11:29). In other words, "It's not about me. I'm just a servant of the Lord, serving His people. I want them blessed, even if it means I'm diminished." Joshua was a loyal man, and that is good. But by Moses' example, he learned the virtue of meekness; of humility and selflessness that glorifies God before personal honor. He learned true leadership; that it rejects self-aggrandizement and it seeks the elevation of others over self. Now that is unusual and that is hard but that is leadership.

George Whitefield was like that. He was the great preacher of the great awakening in the 1740s. Crowds of tens of thousands would attend his outdoor meetings in Britain and America. One historian wrote that Whitefield was arguably the most famous person in Britain and America—or at least the most famous person not named King George. When his friends wanted him to form a denomination with himself as the head, Whitefield said, "Let the name of Whitefield perish, but Christ be glorified."

That was Moses. And Joshua learned from his example, and certainly from their many conversations. He learned a lot: He learned war; he learned trust; he learned humility—he was prepared. He was well prepared for the position to which God had called him. Still, when the Lord spoke to him in verse 2, it must have been a sobering moment for Joshua as he considered his new responsibilities—a moment that tested his faith and courage. Verse 2. "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel."

Now that indicates the importance of this book. It is a bridge between the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, and the rest of Scripture. The promise given

then, will now be fulfilled. Without the Book of Joshua, there would be a gap in the history of Israel. So this is a very significant book, and in a practical sense, this is a very significant moment because what was promised then, is now about to be fulfilled, showing that God keeps His Word.

But considering this command in verse 2, how does a person, regardless of his training ... and, as I said, this man, Joshua, was well prepared ... still, how does he fill the shoes of such a man as Moses? Anyone who thinks that he can and is eager to do it, probably really isn't ready or prepared for that. Still, the mantle of Moses had fallen to Joshua; and it must have weighed heavy on his heart. He had lived in the shadow of the greatest man of his age and was now succeeding him.

But not only that, his mission, the mission given to him, was huge in and of itself: Verses 3&4, "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory."

This is what God had promised Moses in Deuteronomy, chapter 11, verse 24. It's what he had promised to Abraham in Genesis 15, verse 18. It's the promise of a large domain, covering all of what is today modern Israel, and well beyond that. The boundaries are from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the river Euphrates in the east. It includes portions of modern Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. And it was never fully acquired. Even in the time of David and Solomon, when the kingdom reached its fullest extent, the outlying districts were within Israel's possession and influence but never completely or permanent under their rule. So, to this day, God's promise to Abraham and Joshua awaits fulfillment. And that will only happen when the Lord returns to establish His kingdom on earth.

It was a vast region promised to Israel and a daunting task given to Joshua. But in it, the Lord gave him encouragement. In addition to His command that Joshua lead the people into Canaan was the statement that He was giving all of the land to them. Well really, that says it all, doesn't it? "I'm giving all of the land to you." —It wasn't an empty

promise. God's Word is absolutely reliable. It's absolutely reliable because He is reliable. And He's reliable because He's absolutely sovereign. Nothing can frustrate the Lord God.

In verse 1, it is the LORD who spoke to Joshua. The word LORD, Jehovah, or Yahweh is His name. And it's His personal name. At the burning bush He revealed the meaning of it to Moses; "I AM Who I AM." And that means He is the eternal God—without beginning, without end. He is the I AM; the uncreated, self-existent, self-sufficient God. The bush itself illustrated the nature of God and who He is. The flame was in the bush but the bush was not consumed. That's the curious thing that drew Moses to it. He came to look at this bush—this unusual event of a bush burning without the bush being consumed. But that was the point. That's the illustration. The fire was self-sufficient. It didn't need fuel from the bush. That's a picture of God.

We are His creation. He's not dependent upon us or anything in this great universe in which we live. He is sovereign; He's self-existent; infinite; and invincible, so His promises cannot fail. They're not dependent on anything but Himself. And He's all powerful. And really, that's enough. "Go forward. I'm giving it to you." That says it all.

But He doesn't stop there. In verse 5, He added to that promise, a personal pledge to reinforce to Joshua the certainty of victory. "No man will be *able to* stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."

Now that shows who the actual leader of Israel and the general of its army was. It's the LORD God. What greater encouragement can there be than that? It's the encouragement the author of Hebrews gives us in Hebrews, chapter 2, in verse 10, where he calls Christ "the author of our salvation." That word '*author*' means 'leader'; and it can be translated 'captain' or 'pioneer', (it's been translated that way). And the picture that that gives is the Lord leading us through this world to the promised land of heaven. We are absolutely secure. We have an infallible leader. And that's the assurance Joshua was given here. Success was certain.

And he was well equipped, as nobody in Israel was, to lead the people into their inheritance. He was well trained and he was a man of faith. He'd proven that when he

scouted Canaan 38 years earlier and, along with Caleb, gave the good report that contradicted the faithless report of the 10 spies. They, Joshua and Caleb, knew that the land had been fortified with cities with tall walls and it was populated with giants.

—They knew all of that, but they said, "If the Lord is pleased with us, then He will bring us into the land." (Num 14:8). 'The Lord won't fail us.'

Joshua had great faith—and he was spiritually armed. In Numbers 27, verse 18, the Lord described him as "a man in whom is the spirit"—the Holy Spirit. And Moses, because of that, was to lay his hands upon him to be his successor. Now that's what we should look for in a person to teach us and to lead us as an elder or deacon, one who lives by faith and walks by the Spirit. That was Joshua. He believed the Lord. He was a man of God.

And yet, even as a man of God—really, perhaps because he was a man of God—he had concerns. His faith was tested. That's suggested in the next two verses, (vs6&7), where the Lord says, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous". And he repeats that in verse 9.

Evidently, Joshua, this great and godly man, needed to have this counsel repeated and reinforced because there were lots of reasons for him to be weak and cowardly. And he knew his inadequacies. The giants and fortresses out there; the long months and years of fighting that lay ahead; the greatness of Moses that would invite comparisons and criticism; the high standard that he had to meet; those were all obstacles to success that could get even great men of faith to worry and doubt.

"Who is sufficient for these things?" That's the question that may have been on his mind. I suspect that it very much was. It's the question that Paul asked in 2 Corinthians, chapter 2, verse 16. Then he gave the answer a few verses later. "Who is sufficient for these things?...Our sufficiency is from God." (2 Cor 3:5). And God is more than sufficient for all of our needs—our every situation.

That's the basis of the Lord's counsel; the basis of the Lord's encouragement. It's based on everything He has just said; He wasn't giving worldly counsel. He's not saying,

'dig deep', 'find some courage', 'be a man'. Joshua's courage was based on God's sovereignty. He controls people and events. He ordains the end, and He cannot be frustrated through the process. And best of all: He's with us and He will never forsake us.

That's who the Lord is. That's what He does. And that is what guarantees success. Not personal gifting or strength or genius; the Lord gives all of that, and the Lord gives it to be used, and He uses all of that. But our confidence is not in that, it's not in ourselves. Our confidence is in the Lord. And in that confidence he, Joshua, was to go out in faith and with courage.

But faith is always guided by an objective standard. And I really want to underline that point. We have a path to follow. It's not our 'intuition'; it's not our 'feelings'; it's not a 'desire' that we have and if we just believe hard enough God will bless it. It's not that at all. Our standard, our 'object of faith', that which we follow, is the Word of God.

That's what the Lord said next when he told Joshua to obey the Scriptures. "...be careful to do according to all the law which Moses, My servant, commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success." (vs7&8).

It takes strength and courage to do that—to be obedient to God's Word—because the way of the world often seems to make sense. It offers a quick fix very often. There's pressure to follow the way of the world. But we're not to do that. We're not to turn from the Word of God. We're to trust the Lord. We're to walk by faith. And He will always prove faithful. In fact, His Word is the source of strength and courage—it's life giving. That's Romans 10, verse 17. "Faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

Do you want strong faith? I know I say this often; I often ask that question; but do you want strong faith? Meditate in the Word of God day and night. Joshua has been

called a prototype of the happy man of Psalm 1, or the original pattern of that man. And in that Psalm, he meditates on God's Law "day and night". And as a result, he's "like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither." (vs 2&3).

That's a tree that weathers the ravages of drought. And it does so, not because it's actually strong in and of itself, but because its source of water never runs out. It's planted by streams of water. And the student of Scripture is like that. He or she is stable in all situations, and productive.

Biblical meditation is an active mental process. In Psalm 63, verse 6, David wrote of "remembering" the Lord and "meditating on Him". So it's calling to mind the Lord and His Word. It's thinking on that. Biblical meditation is an active mental process. It involves two things: Remembering the Lord and His Word; and talking about it to oneself, (and the idea may be talking out loud). This word, (*meditating*), is used of making a sound or speaking. Some have translated this 'murmuring'.

Centuries ago, people normally read out loud. I'm talking about 1500 years ago or so. In his confessions, Augustine mentions seeing Ambrose. He and a friend visited Ambrose in his home, and there was Ambrose sitting in a room. He was the great preacher of that day, in the city of Milan. And what they saw surprised them because Ambrose was reading the Scriptures. He was meditating on the Scriptures. It said his eyes were moving but his mouth was closed—he was reading silently—and that was very unusual. Because at that time most people read out loud. And they did that, perhaps, because that helps a person's concentration to read out loud. And that seems to be the suggestion here.

I don't think the lesson we're to take from that, is to meditate you need to read and think out loud. But what that shows is that meditation involves communicating with ourselves over Scripture. It involves speaking to ourselves. It involves thinking about who God is, what He has said, and what He has revealed. And here Joshua would be strong and courageous and successful, wherever he went, when he was in the most difficult of times, regardless of circumstances, as long as he meditated on God's Law and

obeyed it. As long as he followed it. There'd be no victory over enemies, and no prosperity of the land apart from that. The record of Joshua's life is that he did that. —And so he succeeded.

Joshua's generation was faithful. But the next generation was not, and they provide a very clear foil to what we see here in Joshua, because it abandoned the counsel of the Lord. It abandoned the Word of God. It turned aside, as God told Joshua not to do. In the Book of Judges we read this refrain toward the end of the book, "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

That explains the Book of Judges, and what happened. They followed their own counsel, they rejected the objective revelation of God, and conformed to the world with disastrous results. —They were overcome by enemies and they lost their freedom. It was a cycle, all through the Book of Judges.

And it will be no different for us. The people of God can only prosper as they know and believe God's Word—and obey it. There's simply no other way. The Scriptures are absolutely sufficient. There's no substitute. That doesn't mean that if we follow the Word of God there'll never be setbacks in our lives, as men count setbacks. We'd say, in a sense, there are no setbacks, in that everything is worked out in the province of God for our good, even though there are difficulties. But that is the point. There will be difficulties. Our life will not be filled with health and wealth. —That's a myth. Righteous Job didn't have health and wealth all of his life. David the psalmist, the sweet singer of Israel, a man after God's own heart had trouble. Apostles were beaten, jailed, and killed. "In the world you have tribulations," Jesus said. But even then, even then, we can have success in life by being faithful to the Word of God, and thereby being fruitful and glorifying God. And that's our chief end.

That's a successful life, a life that brings glory to God and is faithful. God will bless that life. And usually that kind of life is a peaceful life, it's a prosperous life, an orderly life that brings blessing. But we must be people of The Book. We must be people who meditate in it routinely—soak ourselves in Scripture. That was the Lord's instruction to Joshua.

So along with the clear statement of the sovereignty of God, there is the principle of our responsibility—the responsibility of man. God has made promises. He's good for those promises. He never fails. But Joshua and his people must obey. They had to obey. And to impress that on Joshua's mind, the Lord, for a third time, repeats His good counsel, verse 9, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Well now it was time to prepare for war. So encouraged by the Lord, and armed with His promises, Joshua acted wisely and decisively. He commanded his officers to pass through the camp and tell the people, "Prepare provisions for yourself, for within three days you are to cross the Jordan." (vs11).

Napoleon said an army marches on its stomach. It relies on a good diet. And that's true of Israel's army. In order to do God's will and attain their inheritance, they had to make preparations for their material, their physical needs. It's another example of people being responsible to achieve God's purpose.

But some of the tribes had already obtained their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan. What would they do? That's recorded in Numbers 32, and Deuteronomy 3, where the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and a half-tribe of Manasseh had asked for their inheritance in the already conquered lands of Gilead and Bashan. And Moses consented to that on condition that when the time came, they would cross the Jordan with the other tribes and assist them in conquering Canaan. And they all agreed to do that.

Well now the time had come to honor their vow. And Joshua reminded them of that and exhorted them to leave their wives and their children, their herds behind, until the campaign was finished. Verse 14, "Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle shall remain in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but you shall cross before your brothers in battle array..." (*that means fully armed; at least in modern Hebrew, that's the way, that's the expression, that's used of being armed. So with all of your arms*), "...all your valiant warriors, and shall help them, until the LORD gives your brothers rest, as *He gives* you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God

is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land, and possess that which Moses the servant of the LORD, gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise." (vs14&15).

The nation had to be united. —The tribes had responsibilities to one another. There could be no rest until all enjoyed that rest and that inheritance together. And the three tribes agreed. In fact, they agreed with enthusiasm. They even threatened death to those who disobeyed. Verse 16, "They answer Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only may the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses. Anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only be strong and courageous." (vs16-18). It picked up on the Lord's command to Joshua—obey His Word. —Don't turn from it, "Be strong and courageous, Joshua." What a contrast to that previous generation that rebelled. This one acted with faith and under the conviction of God's power and His promises.

There's an exhortation to us here about unity. Jesus prayed about that in John 17. "Keep them in Your name, *the name* which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We *are*." (vs11). The apostles taught unity. The Church is a body, a building, a flock, a unit—and we function effectively only when we function together like an army on the march with a common goal.

It's hard to maintain unity. We can only do that by looking to Christ. He is faithful; and He provides. We are to trust Him and follow His guidance—follow the guidance that He gives in Scripture—just as Joshua was to do. Christ is our real leader. He is the great shepherd of the sheep. He's the "Captain of our salvation."

Gifted men come and go. They are a blessing to the church. But we're not dependent on them. Charles Wesley said, "God buries His workmen, but carries on His work." He wasn't dependent on Moses or Joshua or Peter or Paul or Augustine and Luther. Christ builds His church. But in doing that, we get to be His workmen in that task. And there's no greater privilege in life than to be God's workmen—to be what Moses was, the servant of the Lord.

You want success in life? And I mean success as the Bible counts success, which is eternal success—which is not the accumulation of power and possessions—but it is the things that please God and bring glory to Him. He honors that. If you want that, then follow the formula: Joshua 1:6-9, 'Meditate on the Scriptures day and night. Believe them and practice them. Pursue the holiness of God and His glory, not your own. Follow Him with courage and conviction, and He will bless.' That's the promise of Matthew 6, verse 33, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." You won't want for any good thing and you will become a complete person.

That's the good life. That's the greatest life. It's a meaningful life. None of us is sufficient for these things. We need to understand that; understand that we are weak in and of ourselves. But the Lord is not; He is sufficient. We will be strong and courageous as we look to Him, as we study His Word, fellowship with Him in prayer, and walk by faith in spite of the circumstances that will try to turn us aside to the right or the left. That will make us a Joshua in our generation.

Joshua is a great name; it has a great meaning, "The Lord is salvation." In Greek, as you probably know, Joshua is Jesus. And He, Jesus, is the greater Joshua, and the fulfillment of all that Joshua ben Nun, Joshua the son of Nun, pictured. He brought Israel into the promised land. Jesus, the Son of God, has brought His people into the eternal promised land of the kingdom to come. Every believer, even now, is a citizen of heaven. It shows the certainty of our entering into it.

Are you a believer in Jesus Christ? He died in the place of sinners, experienced the judgment of sin on their behalf, so that everyone who believes in Him will escape the judgment to come and have life, eternal life. Do not look to Him if you've not trusted in Him. Come to Christ. Believe in Him. Have forgiveness and eternal life. Then with strength and courage, follow Him, the divine leader, the captain of our salvation, as He

leads us on to eternal victory and glory. May God help you to do that, and help all of us to learn the lessons that He gave to Joshua. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You for this great text of Scripture, this text that reminds us of who You are. You are a Holy God, a sovereign God, and a faithful God. And the promise that You gave to Joshua is a promise for us. We're to be obedient; We're not to turn aside from Your Word to the right or to the left in spite of all the pressure that may be upon us to do that. We're to be faithful to Your Word, and You will prove faithful to us. You cannot deny Yourself. You cannot lie. You cannot fail. May we be strengthened in our understanding of who You are and our resolve to follow You. We thank You for our Lord Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation, Who is leading us even now.

And now Lord, as we turn to the elements before us, and we take the Lord's Supper, we pray that You'd prepare our heart for that. May we reflect deeply upon our Savior, who humbled Himself as the second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God—to become the Son of Man, to enter into this world, to become one of us that He might take our place in judgment and bear the judgment that we deserve, so that we could have His life and be with Him for all eternity. Thank You for this time together. Prepare our hearts for it; we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

(End of Audio)