

EVERYDAY COURAGE

Part 15 of Foundations 260 - OT. Joshua 1:1-11.

Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. May 31, 2026.

Dismiss the Middle School

STUDY GUIDE

As you came in this morning, you should have received a bulletin. Inside, you'll find a simple study guide you can use in a few different ways: to follow along with today's teaching, to reflect on during your personal devotions this week, or to spark conversation in your small group.

More resources are available online. The link is in your study guide.

See the slides. Go to famousGod.com and scroll down to the link to our Small Groups. Click on that, and it will bring this ... **(see slide). Today's small group questions are also there.**

Let's get started on today's teaching ...

VICTOR

When I was a kid, every Saturday morning, I would walk down to the corner store to buy my comic magazine called Victor.

It was full of stories about heroic deeds: Alf Tupper, the runner who was called The Tough of the Track. Braddock VC, the WW 2 fighter pilot, and Gorgeous Gus, the soccer player.

I read it cover to cover every week. Loved it!

The tales of adventure had a common theme: courage. But it was courage of a special kind; courage that involved amazing heroics, great danger, and extraordinary events.

And I would guess that's how most of us think about courage. So, we tend to believe that courage is rare and for special people, and as a result, we don't think of it as part of our everyday, ordinary lives.

But it is. Courage is needed by every faithful follower of Jesus, all the time.

Last week's Foundations 260 OT readings brought us to the book of Joshua and the military conquest of the Promised Land. It was a holy war as we discussed last Sunday (you might want to review last week's teaching for details).

At first glance, it looks like a story from my Victor comic. General Joshua is leading his brave warriors across the Jordan to fight. It's all valor and heroism. But a closer look at the passage actually reveals a deeper truth.

That deeper truth is what I'd like to teach on today. **Let's begin by reading Joshua 1:1-11.**

JOSHUA 1:1-11 (CSB)

1 After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses's assistant: 2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now you and all the people prepare to cross over the Jordan to the land I am giving the Israelites. 3 I have given you every place where the sole of your foot treads, just as I promised Moses. 4 Your territory will be from the wilderness and Lebanon to the great river, the Euphrates River — all the land of the Hittites — and west to the Mediterranean Sea.

5 No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. I will be with you, just as I was with Moses. I will not leave you or abandon you. 6 "Be strong and courageous, for you will distribute the land I swore to their ancestors to give them as an inheritance.

7 Above all, be strong and very courageous to observe carefully the whole instruction my servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or the left, so that you will have success wherever you go. 8 This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to meditate on it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do.

9 Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, 11 "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get provisions ready for yourselves, for within three days you will be crossing the Jordan to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you to inherit.'"

So ... what is that deeper truth about courage?

THE TRUTH ABOUT COURAGE

The truth about courage is this: it is not just for heroes and larger-than-life personalities. It's not only for soldiers or missionaries.

Courage is a requirement for every faithful follower of Jesus.

We need to be courageous in our everyday, ordinary lives. Moms and dads, students, workers, retirees, coaches, teachers, and preachers. Every faithful follower of Jesus needs courage every day.

That's what Joshua 1 tells us, and it will become obvious as we dive a little deeper into the passage.

So... what is courage, and how do we find it?

WHAT IS COURAGE?

My simple definition is: Courage is doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, according to God's will and word, in any situation, at any cost.

Courage isn't about warfare heroics; it's about spiritual discipline. We see this in chapter 1, where God tells Joshua to obey the word:

Joshua 1:7-8 (CSB) Above all, be strong and very courageous to observe carefully the whole instruction my servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or the left, so that you will have success wherever you go. 8 This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to meditate on it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do.

Joshua was a five-star general and Israel's leader, but he was also a man under authority; God's authority, mediated through God's word.

The phrase “observe carefully” joins two synonyms for **obedience**. Joshua needed to REALLY obey. His compliance was to be total - **“do not turn from it,” “meditate on it day & night.”**

Not only in the big stuff, not only when he was fighting, but in everyday living, whatever he did, wherever he went.

Here's the thing: that kind of everyday obedience takes courage, so God instructed Joshua: *“Be strong and very courageous to observe the whole instruction carefully...”*

Why does obedience require courage?

WHY DOES OBEDIENCE REQUIRE COURAGE?

Obedience requires courage because:

It will cost us something. God's ways are not popular. Ancient Israel had a really hard time obeying God, so Joshua needed to prepare for pushback and outright rebellion. And the situation is the same today. There's often a price to pay to do God's will in God's way.

It will confront our desires. We may have to say no to some things we love. Not only sinful desires, but good things. Obedience does not always satisfy our drives for comfort, safety, popularity, or smooth sailing.

It will test our faith. Do we trust God enough to obey even when we can't see the outcome? Often, God delays, and we get discouraged.

So... we need courage to obey, but... how do we find it?

HOW DO WE FIND COURAGE?

The biblical kind of courage does not come from within. It's not innate or natural. Biblical courage is a choice we can make based on two realities:

1. WE FIND COURAGE BY TRUSTING THE PROMISES OF GOD

The Lord told Joshua:

Joshua 1:3 (CSB) I have given you every place where the sole of your foot treads, just as I promised Moses.

Joshua 1:6 (CSB) Be strong and courageous, for you will distribute the land I swore to their ancestors to give them as an inheritance.

Joshua believed God. He'd experienced God's faithfulness in the Exodus and for 40 years of wandering in the desert. So, Joshua sent word to his officers:

*Joshua 1:11 (CSB) ... within three days you will be crossing the Jordan to go in and take possession of the land **the LORD your God is giving you to inherit.***

The Christian life is a promise-driven life. It's not really a philosophy or a moral code. It's living with confidence in God's many promises.

Missionary pioneer Hudson Taylor reportedly said, "God is not looking for men of great faith; He is looking for common men to trust His great faithfulness."

We find courage when we expect God to do what he said he would do: save us, strengthen us, protect us, provide for us, guide us, and so on.

Find a promise you can stand on every day.

2. WE FIND COURAGE BY EXPECTING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

God was with Joshua, and Joshua drew courage from that reality:

*Joshua 1:5 (CSB) No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. I **will be with you**, just as I was with Moses. I will not leave you or abandon you.*

*Joshua 1:9 (CSB) Do not be afraid or discouraged, for **the LORD your God is with you** wherever you go.”*

We've heard about God's presence so many times that we may be immune to how outrageous a concept it is. The God of the universe - all power and glory, the holy, holy, holy One - is with us, in us, and through us.

Joshua found the courage to do God's will in God's way because he believed God was with him. God's angel army surrounded him. He felt invincible.

Someone said, “*God's presence doesn't come and go. It comes and stays.*”

God is with us because God is for us. We're his people, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, restored to God. So, we're strong and courageous.

When we know we live in God's powerful, loving presence, we'll find the courage to do God's will.

COURAGE IN THE EVERYDAY, ORDINARY

Faithful followers of Jesus live by courage every day.

It takes courage to obey God in our ordinary situations:

- To turn from yourself to trust in Jesus as your God and Savior
- To be faithful in marriage for 50 years
- To change our baby's diapers when we're exhausted
- To do our homework when we'd rather be scrolling TikTok
- To speak the truth when a lie would make life easier
- To share Jesus with a rude skeptic
- To love and forgive people who hurt us
- To say no to sinful desires that feel so powerful
- To say yes to God's plan when it isn't our plan
- To resist the devil and stand firm in the faith
- To take up our cross daily and follow Jesus at any cost

Let's be strong and courageous. Our God is with us. And his promises never fail.

As you go home today, is there one thing you know the Lord wants you to do, something you've held off doing because it might be costly, inconvenient, or uncomfortable? What is one promise that you can count on? Do you believe God is with you? **Be strong and courageous: step out in obedience.**

PERSPECTIVES ON COURAGE

Written with AI assistance.

Courage is a major theme in Scripture, but it is more than a personality trait or “feeling brave.” It is the God-given strength to trust and obey Him when life feels uncertain, costly, or frightening.

When God calls Joshua to lead Israel into the Promised Land, He repeats the command, “Be strong and courageous,” and ties it to two things: obeying His Word and trusting His presence and promises. Joshua is told to meditate on God’s instruction day and night and not to be afraid, “for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Courage grows as God’s promises move from the page into our hearts and decisions.

King David shows another angle in Psalm 27. Surrounded by threats, he ends by preaching to his own soul: “Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart be courageous; wait for the Lord.” Biblical courage often looks like steady, hopeful waiting—continuing to pray, worship, and walk with God when there is no quick solution.

In the New Testament, courage is also tied to spiritual battle. Paul urges believers to “be strengthened by the Lord” and to put on the armor of God so they can stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Our courage is not self-generated; it flows from the gospel, the Spirit, and the truth we wear like armor.

And when the disciples are terrified in the storm, Jesus says, “Take courage; it is I. Don’t be afraid” (Matthew 14:27). That is the heart of Christian courage: not “I am strong,” but “He is with me, right here, right now.”

Be strong and courageous. That’s how faithful followers of Jesus live every day.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Review

- Review Peter's May 31st teaching and study guide.
- What were the main insights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- What were the main applications or takeaways for your life?

Discuss

1. Which part of the definition of courage ("doing the right thing...according to God's will and word...at any cost") stands out to you most, and why?
2. Which kind of obedience feels most real to you right now: obedience that costs you socially, or confronts your desires, or tests your faith?
3. What is one promise of God (like 2 Corinthians 12:9) that helped you generate courage to do God's will? How did it do that?
4. How does believing God is truly present with you in every situation (Joshua 1:9) change the way you face fear or uncertainty?
5. What is one ordinary situation this week where you know courage will be required to obey God? How does considering everyday faithfulness as real courage change your perspective?

Prayer Focus

- 247: "Lord, please add daily to the Cornerstone those who are being saved."

STAND ON GOD'S PROMISES

1. Promises of salvation – Romans 10:

The Christian life doesn't start with us trying harder; it starts with God making a promise. His first and greatest promise is that anyone who trusts in Jesus will be rescued from sin and given new life as a gift. Listen to how Paul puts it in Romans:

Romans 10:9-10 (CSB) If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation.

Salvation isn't a reward for religious effort; it's a promise kept by a gracious God based on what Jesus Christ has done for us. That never changes.

2. Promises of strength for the day – 2 Corinthians 12:9

Once God saves us, he doesn't leave us to grind our way through life on our own. Gives us daily strength to get us through. When the apostle Paul felt under pressure, he prayed for relief:

2 Corinthians 12:9 (CSB) But the Lord said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may reside in me.

God's gracious power is a gift we can count on in every situation.

3. Promises of the Holy Spirit's power for service – 2 Corinthians 12:7

God calls us into his church so that we can serve and be served in ways that make the church and each of its members strong and mature in faith. The power to do our part is not natural; it is the power of God's Spirit working through us:

1 Corinthians 12:7 (CSB) A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good:

The Spirit empowers us to serve, to love, and to bear witness far beyond what we could do in our own strength.”

4. Promises of heaven – John 14:1–3

On the night before the cross, when the disciples were anxious and confused, the Lord Jesus gave them a promise that every believer can count on:

John 14:1-3 (CSB) Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? 3 If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also.

The promise of heaven means that no matter how heavy today feels, the story ends with us at home with Jesus.