

## God's Formula For Success: Conquering by Faith

Scripture Reading: Joshua 1:1-9

**1 "After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: 2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. 3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. 4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea [a] on the west. 5 No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. 7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you**

**will be prosperous and successful. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."**

I want to preach a message today to the Fathers of our congregation from Joshua's life and the key to his success in life.

One of the most encouraging books of the O.T. is the book of Joshua.

All of us need to know of the power of faith so that we can live a life of success and also have a church that is successful.

God's Word says in I John 5:4 **"...this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith."**

Men, we need to know that we can as husbands and fathers to conquer the challenges of our day by faith.

Joshua is a wonderful example illustrating the power of faith.

Joshua teaches us the key to victorious living.

And the principles Joshua lived by and by which he was successful, are the same principles we can live

by and be victorious in Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord.

### **Who was Joshua?**

- Joshua was a man God used to fulfill His promise to the people of Israel to lead them into the land of Canaan.
- He was born as a slave in Egypt but experienced the supernatural deliverance from Egypt, and the crossing of the Red Sea.
- During the second forty years of his life, Joshua was a minister to Moses, assisting Moses, leading in battle, and observing the ways of the Lord.
- Now Joshua comes to the time of his appointment as leader of the Israelites following Moses' death.
- Remember with me in Moses was the anticipation of the people of Israel going into the Promise Land that God had promised them.

### **Joshua's heart and liver were prepared for this challenge.**

- In the book of Numbers (27:18) it tells us that Joshua was a man controlled by the Spirit of God.
- In Numbers 32:10-12 it tells us that he was a man who wholly followed God.

There is a common desire within every person to feel successful.

We often measure our worth on the basis of how successful we are.

How we measure that success is often based on a worldly standard rather than a Godly standard.

Success by the world's standard often means luxury, wealth, and possessions, achievements, notoriety, and fame, beauty, brains and brawn.

If we measure our lives by the world's standards we will have an inaccurate and incomplete view of whether or not we're successful.

God's standard of measurement is nothing like the world's standard.

(Illustration of books I saw in the bookstore: Ned Grossman, How to Succeed in Life.

1. We become what we think about.
2. Decide exactly what you want.
3. Determine the price you have to pay.
4. Commit to pay the price.
5. Work hard, one day at a time.
6. Never give up.

There was another book on success nearby that had 3 formulas for success, similar to the first one.

What was really interesting is where I found the books: on the clearance table.)

God's formula for success is completely unlike the world's formula.

And His formula works for every person, in every situation, whether it's at school, in our business, our families, or our church.

The pathway to success cannot be traveled by anyone who does not practice God's formula for success.

These principles are taken from Joshua 1:6-9.

### **Principle #1: Faith's Challenge**

Verse 2 ***"Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.***

It was a challenge from God to accept His Word and to Act upon His Word.

Joshua's biggest challenge was to see what God would do if he were to be obedient.

- Now mind you – Joshua had already seen God at work in other victorious experiences

in Egypt, at the Red Sea and against Amalek.

- Joshua knew the people on their own could not do anything without God.
- Joshua had witnessed the disobedience of the Israelites and how they suffered from the consequences of this.
- It was the consequences of unbelief.

And now, God challenges Joshua to go into the Promise Land and possess it.

The compromise of that would be like Israel of old who wandered in the desert for an entire generation – 40 years.

It is really the picture of the carnal life in the believer.

But Joshua receives the challenge of God to experience what God had already promised them.

### **Practical Application:**

Folks, do you believe that God has already promised us a land that is beyond our understanding?

- God has first of all challenged us.
- We are to live a life and experience a life that is in Christ Jesus.

- We are to experience spiritual conquest in obeying the Lord's commission to us when He said,

**19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."**

- If we go
- If we make
- If we baptize
- If we teach
- Then we get His promise to be with us to the very end of the age.

Matthew 16:18

***And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***

**Faith's Assurance:** All of God is behind His Word.

Listen folks, God's "I Will" is enough!

God promises us that when we do what He commands us to do He will be with us.

Verse 5 says, "No ***one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was***

***with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you."***

**Faith's Appropriation:**

As Joshua responded by faith, knowing the promise would be fulfilled in every place that the sole of his foot would tread, so we men must believe there is something that God has promised us, and if we will have the faith and believe it to be true, God will do it!

All Joshua did was to claim what God had already promised.

Folks, listen to me, we live so far below the promises of God.

God promised to give the land – all they had to do was to claim it and possess it.

God provides and faith takes it.

It was legally theirs from the moment that God uttered His promise;

It was experientially theirs when they entered into the land to possess it.

**Spiritual Application:**

Church family, listen to me, all of God's provisions are waiting to be claimed today.

After we have been saved through Jesus Christ by faith there are some major things that we can claim as promises of Jesus to us.

When we do this, we become wonderfully rich.

But the tragedy is that so many of the Lord's riches remain unclaimed by His children.

The result is, we wander in the wilderness for 40 years or longer.

## **Principle #2: BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS**

Notice the number of times God brings this command before Joshua. (v. 6, 7, 9).

What is courage?

Courage has several synonyms: bravery, valor, fearlessness, heroism, confidence, nerve.

It also has several nicknames: guts, grit, backbone.

There's one very important thing we need to notice about courage.

You will never witness courage in someone who is at ease in Zion.

Courage is seen in the person who's back is against the wall, when the odds are against them, when the pressure is on, when the flaming arrows are close, when the pain is intense, when the attack is at hand.

We see courage in David when he walks into the Valley of Elah with his sling to take his stand against Goliath.

We see courage when Moses stands eye to eye with Pharaoh.

We see it in Elijah when he challenges the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel.

Courage can only be seen in the midst of conflict and struggle.

Why did God tell Joshua that he needed to be courageous?

What was Joshua going to face that was so difficult that he would need to be courageous?

Besides being the leader of the nation of Israel, God had given Joshua a project to complete.

His first task was to lead his army into Canaan and drive out the people who lived there.

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Sounds like an easy job, but remember, 40 years before this under Moses' leadership he had sent 12 spies into the land of Canaan.

They came back with stories of giants living in the land who made them look like grasshoppers.

When the people heard this they became afraid and refused to enter the land.

There were seven nations living in Canaan, all of them larger and stronger than Israel.

By all human standards Joshua was facing an uphill battle.

He had every reason to turn tail and run.

That's why God encourages him so many times: Be strong and courageous.

Do you ever feel like you're facing an uphill battle?

Do you feel like the odds are against you?

Honestly, there are hundreds of times in our lives when we're faced with situations that, to our eyes, seem impossible!

There are outward circumstances like illnesses and disabilities, broken relationships, financial hardships, the loss of a job, etc.

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Then there's the inner conflicts that test our faith, like attacks on our personal integrity, remaining faithful when no one is looking, enduring the sting of loneliness and separation, standing alone when you're misunderstood.

There are many times in our lives when we need to hear God's command to Joshua, "Be strong and courageous."

There's something else we dare not overlook.

Even though Joshua and his nation were small in comparison to the enemy, they had somebody on their side that would tip the scales in their favor. Look at Joshua 1:9 (read).

Compare that with Deut. 7:17-19, 21 (read).

***17 You may say to yourselves, "These nations are stronger than we are. How can we drive them out?" 18 But do not be afraid of them; remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt. 19 You saw with your own eyes the great trials, the miraculous signs and wonders, the mighty hand and outstretched arm, with which the LORD your God brought you out. The LORD your God will do the same to all the peoples you now fear. Just like Joshua and the nation of Israel, we may see ourselves as small in comparison to***

***the enemy, but we have Somebody on our side that is going to tip the scales in our favor. 21 Do not be terrified by them, for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a great and awesome God.***"

God's formula for success begins with, "Be strong and courageous."

But there is an addendum I want to put on it that will make it complete.

"For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Real success is not a matter of strength and courage alone, but strength and courage that comes from the knowledge that God is walking with us.

Don't miss the point!

For Joshua to lead the people into the land of Canaan and claim God's promise he must be strong and courageous.

They couldn't do like their fathers had done a generation ago and grumble and complain and refuse to enter the land because of their fear.

Listen to Moses recount the story of their failure in Deut. 1:26-32 (read).

***26 But you were unwilling to go up; you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God. 27 You grumbled in your tents and said, 'The LORD hates us; so he brought us out of Egypt to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us. 28 Where can we go? Our brothers have made us lose heart. They say, 'The people are stronger and taller than we are; the cities are large, with walls up to the sky. We even saw the Anakites there.'***"

***29 Then I said to you, "Do not be terrified; do not be afraid of them. 30 The LORD your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes, 31 and in the desert. There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place."***

***32 In spite of this, you did not trust in the LORD your God,***

Watch this now!

The outcome of their fear and unbelief was...what?

God became angry with them and took away from that generation the blessings he had reserved especially for them.

God doesn't want Joshua and his generation to make the same mistake.

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I think we need to apply this principle not only in our personal life, but also in the life of this congregation.

It would be very easy for us to look at this congregation with only our human eyes and human understanding and say, “We’re just too small in insignificant to have any influence on the city of Pataskala and Licking Country. Let’s just do what little we can and be satisfied with that.”

You know what I think about that kind of philosophy?

I think it’s a weak excuse for a weak faith.

In God’s success formula the first thing we must do is be strong and courageous, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

### **PRINCIPLE #3: OBEDIENCE TO GOD’S COMMANDS (v. 7)**

Notice how the Lord delivers this to Joshua: “Be careful to obey ALL the law....”

It would be convenient if we could pick and choose which of God’s principles and laws we could follow and which we found to be too demanding and too harsh.

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(Illustration of looking for fruit in the grocery store, only you’re shopping for “principles.”

- “Let’s see I’ll take some joy.
- Here’s some love, I always like that.
- Patience...hmmm, sometimes that upsets my stomach.
- Forgiveness? I’m not in the mood for that today.)

The law that Joshua was given was very detailed, and God expected him to learn it, meditate on it, and apply it.

Verses 7 and 8 teach us that successful living is living by the principles of God’s Word.

It was God’s purpose for Joshua that if he was to be a leader, which men, God has called you to be a leader in your home.

If you and I are going to be the leaders that God wants us to be then there has to be absolute obedience and surrender to the Lord’s will for our lives.

And guys, this is going to require that we have strength, courage and obedience.

We are not under that same law today, but we live by the same principles.

Jesus said that there are two commands that are most important.

What are they?

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.
- Paul called love the fulfillment of the law;
- James called it the royal law.

Whatever you call it, God's formula for success wouldn't be complete without it.

### **PRINCIPLE #3: SATURATION IN GOD'S WORD (v. 8)**

***now let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.***

Illustration of buying a computer without an operating system, and then trying to install all of the necessary software. I could have saved myself hours of misery if I had simply read the instructions.

Some of you have husbands like that too, don't you?

Mistakes are made because we don't read the instruction manual.

That same principle is true when it comes to the Christian walk.

Many of our mistakes could have been avoided if we had saturated ourselves in God's word.

One thing that has occurred to me is that ignorance is no excuse for acting stupid.

The mistakes I made with my computer were made in ignorance, but that didn't stop me from suffering the consequences for being stupid.

My ignorance was a deliberate, voluntary ignorance.

The information I needed was available. When we try to live without consulting God's word, it's a deliberate, voluntary ignorance.

Men, God challenges you and me to be in His Word and to know His Word.

We have no excuse for not being students of His Word.

But that ignorance will not stop us from suffering the consequences for being stupid.

The wisdom we need is available.

It's not just about reading it; it's about meditating on it and letting God's word saturate our spirit.

God's Formula for Success works, but there are no shortcuts.

It calls us to be strong and courageous. It calls us to be obedient to His commands.

It calls us to saturate our spirit with His word.

### **Conclusions:**

How can we men become more like Joshua?

What can we do to accept God's challenge to us, whatever it is?

Men – we have some land to conquer.

We have some promises of God that are out there for us to claim.

First, you can believe in Jesus Christ and receive Him as Savior and Lord.

Second, You can believe that the Lord God will never leave you nor forsake you.

Thirdly, You can believe that God has an answer to all of your problems you are facing today.

You can believe God's Word and begin today by reading it and claiming the promises within it.

As A Church:

Collectively, we have to believe that God has something wonderful and great for this church.

Together, We must do exactly what Jesus commanded us to do.

And we must expect these things to come as a result of our obedience to Him.