

Forward March: Commit

Joshua 1:10 – 18

I. Intro

- A. Final message on moving forward as people and as a church: **1st** – taking risk (3 types of churches), stepping out on faith; **2nd** – being people of courage to act on faith and accept risk; today – commitment
- B. Webster definition commitment – *the state or an instance of being obligated or an emotional urge to drive forward*; that’s what these messages have been about – willing to take the risk, step out on faith, the courage to do both, and the commitment to move forward
- C. Background of passage
 - i. After Moses' death
 - ii. Joshua placed in position of leadership by God over God's people – the Israelites
 - iii. After 40 years wandering, now preparing to enter the Promised Land
 - iv. 5 times between **v. 6 – 8**, God tells Joshua to *Be strong and courageous or be careful and obey*
- D. **READ Joshua 1:10 – 18**
- E. **Question:** If given the chance to know the future, how many would want to? Many who long to know their future; money spent on palm reading, fortune telling, studying astrology
- F. Three verses in scripture relate to wanting to know the future:
 - i. Proverbs 27:1 (NIV)
 - ¹ Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. - **Not to presume about tomorrow, our lives are but a mist, here today and gone tomorrow**
 - ii. Matthew 6:34 (NIV)
 - ³⁴ ... do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. - **Not be anxious, worry over tomorrow**
 - iii. Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NIV)
 - ⁴ Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap. - **Not to procrastinate about tomorrow, to an extent we are to plan for “tomorrow”**
- G. When God leads – we accept whatever risk may be involved with God's plan and direction – we rely on God's strength for courage to act in faith and obedience – we then commit, follow through in obedience knowing God is leading and guiding all the way (as Joshua is told in **v. 5, 9**)

- H. **Question:** In what ways do we commit when following in obedience to God?

II. 1 – Commit to the Plan

- A. **Question:** What plan would that be? God's plan; Raises another question – What is God's plan? (answer that in a moment)
- B. When Israelites were freed from Egyptian captivity and headed into the wilderness, they didn't follow God's plan – many times they asked Moses to let them go back to Egypt; they were constantly wanting to do things their own way, follow their own plan; even when reaching the Promised Land at first, they were too afraid to follow God's plan and go on into it because the people there were like “giants”
- C. **Question:** Why is it people have difficulty following God's plan? Pride, fear, hard-heartedness and stubbornness; we see all of this during Israelites time in the wilderness
- i. **Pride (the Golden Calf):** **READ Exodus 32:21 - 24**
 - ii. **Fear:** **READ Exodus 16:1 – 3**
 - iii. **Hard-heartedness and stubbornness:** **READ Exodus 33:2, 3**
- D. **Question:** Why is it that the church has difficulty following God's plan? Church is made up of prideful, fearful, hard-hearted and stubborn people
- E. **v. 2:** God lays out His plan for Joshua and the Israelites; not only did He reveal His plan but He assured them He would be with them the whole way
- F. **Question:** What is God's plan? To follow Him in obedience
- G. **Survey:** A survey done a while back discovered that 27% of all the people in America have never given any thought to the future. 60% of people given some thought - usually related finances. 10% have given serious thought to the future – these are the high achievers. However, only 3% of the population developed a plan. They are the super achievers. Those following a plan outperformed High Achievers 10 to 1.
- H. To follow a plan, times we have to let go of the past in order to possess the future
- i. **Illustration:** Like a youth pastor that had taken over a very successful youth ministry from the previous youth pastor. At his first youth meeting he held a memorial service for the previous ministry. It was his way of saying that the past, as wonderful as it had been, was over. It was time to plan for and work towards the future
- I. May be time some people, and churches, to have funeral service to bury their past so they can get on with seeking out God's plan for their future

III. 2 – Commit to the Word

- A. If we're going to follow God's plan for our lives individually and as a

- church, it's essential that we seek and follow His Word
- B. What the Lord told Joshua before the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land: **v. 7**
- i. Telling Joshua don't get sidetracked or become distracted by other thoughts, philosophies, etc.; don't compromise the truth of God's Word
- C. Many believers start out with great intentions and commit to God's plan for their life but fail to commit to God's Word, therefore become sidetracked or distracted by the world
- D. Two questions:
- i. **Questions:** Is attending church once a week enough to mature spiritually? No, and just church attendance isn't all that's needed to mature spiritually either – but it is a big part
 - ii. **Question:** Is attending church once a week a good enough commitment in our serving Christ? Certainly not
- E. **READ Psalm 119:9 – 16**
- i. **Question:** What does it mean to live according to God's Word? Practice it – practice it with your life so it's instructions become your lifestyle; just like doctor telling us how to live, what to eat, how to exercise, things to avoid if we're to stay physically healthy – God's Word is our Heavenly Doctor's prescription for how to stay healthy spiritually
 - ii. **Question:** What does it mean to meditate on God's Word? If you know how to worry, you know how to meditate; means as we read, study God's Word we mull it over in our minds – digesting (as our body digests food so our spirit must digest God's Word), *rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15)*
 - iii. **v. 119:14, 16:** *I rejoice ... I delight* in God's Word, in following God's Word; **Question:** Does following and obeying God's Word truly bring you delight, bring you joy, or is it more a burden?
- F. Move forward for the Lord, whether as an individual believer or as a body of believers we have to commit to God's plan and have to commit to God's Word – finally ...

IV. **3** – Commit in Faith

- A. Seen last couple of Sundays that faith isn't just simply believing, it's also action; stepping out on faith mean's willing to take risks
- B. **READ James 2:20 - 24**
- C. Two things Satan will throw at us when we begin to commit in faith – fear and discouragement; fear keeps us from beginning, discouragement keeps us from finishing
- D. Why God tells Joshua over and over ... *Be strong and courageous* –

understand God not telling Joshua to be strong and courageous in Joshua's abilities, but be strong and courageous in the abilities of God

- E. See what the people of Israel say to Joshua after he passes along God's instructions to them: **REFER v. 16, 17**

V. Close

- A. **Non-commitment to God's plans, guidance and direction; non-commitment to God's Word; non-commitment in faith is what keeps people and the church wondering around *in the desert* accomplishing nothing and making no progress – progress is not for the people, it's not even for the church, progress (moving forward with a vision for the future) is for God's glory and His kingdom**
- B. **Some here today need to commit their lives to the Lord for the first time; admitting your plan for life is getting you nowhere, need to surrender and follow God's plan which believing in His Son's death for your sins and His resurrection for life everlasting**
- C. **Some here today need to commit their lives to the Lord in service; surrendering themselves to God's calling upon their life – serving Him wholly and completely through serving in His church, serving His people, serving the lost in this community**
- D. **If we're going to be the church in 2019 that commits more to God's plan, commits more to following in obedience to His Word, commits more to being people who walk and live by faith, then it's going to take each and every one of us**

- E. **Ephesians 4:4-6 (NIV)**

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called--

⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Sunday PM Questions:

- 1) What can we do as a church body to take more serious our commitment to God's plan for us as the church?**
- 2) What can we do as a church body to take more serious our commitment individually to God's Word – to *live according to His Word*?**
- 3) What can we do as a church body to take more serious our commitment to follow in faith and obedience?**

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