



New Living

Welcome!

We are glad to have you with us today and want you to feel comfortable as we enter into worship.

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How to Achieve Spiritual Success

Joshua was faced with the daunting task of overtaking the leadership of the Israelites. Not only was this an enormous responsibility, but he was to lead a nation of people into battle into the land of Canaan. This was the same nation that a generation earlier refused to enter the land and suffered the punishment of Almighty God. The question had to be going through his mind, *will they do it again?*

In Joshua 1:1-9, we find that God comes to Joshua and tries to give him a little encouragement in the task at hand. God wanted to let Joshua know that He was behind Him. We as Christians today sometimes need that same kind of encouragement. We have tasks, trials, and hurdles that may seem unbearable. But, just as God stood by Joshua, He will stand behind those who put their trust in Him.

God told Joshua in Joshua 1:8, *For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.* We should all desire success and be willing to do whatever is necessary to obtain that success. How do we do this?

First, we must be faithful. In verses 6,7 & 9 of our text, God tells Joshua to be strong and courageous. Joshua had to demonstrate his trust and confidence in God by being firm in his stand with Him. His task was not going to be easy, but despite all of the obstacles, God assures him that they will prevail. *For to this people, you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them* (v. 6). It is as if God was saying, "Sure, I know the task is going to be great, but I am with you, therefore be strong and courageous for I am going to give my people this land." Every battle was a test of Joshua's faith, but God assures victory. Joshua just had to believe.

We need faith every bit as much as Joshua did. Not only a simple faith which believes in Christ, but a deep sense of trust that God will take care of His children. We must have faith in the Word of God. If we do what is written, we can live confidently before the Lord. We must have faith in heaven letting that motivate us to follow the Lord, and we must have faith in the justice of Almighty God.

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Second, we must not fear. Verse 9 says *Do not be afraid or be dismayed...* Fear is what destroyed the generation before. In Deuteronomy 31:6, Moses warned the 2nd generation not to do the same. So, here, God is reminding Joshua of two things: the words to the first generation (Numbers 14:9) and the words of Moses to him (Deuteronomy 31:7-8). Faith and fear are not compatible. Because the first generation Israel did not believe, they did not receive. The same is true for Christians today. If we do not believe, we do not receive. Fear paralyzes the servant of God. Fear causes us to doubt our faith and our God thereby moving our focus from the eternal to the temporal becoming displeasing to God.

Third, follow the Lord. God intended Joshua to exercise great care over the law. He needed Joshua to beware of his obligations to the covenant. This would involve meditation and a sincere desire to constantly keep God's wishes at heart. It was important for Joshua to follow God's wishes to the best of his ability and not presumptuously choose a different way. Today, God's servant may follow in the same way. Paul wrote, *be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a workman not needing to be ashamed, handling accurately the way of truth*, 2 Timothy 2:15. When we are committed to God, it will be seen in the way we submit and conform to His wishes. Jesus taught that total devotion to God is necessary: *"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him*

when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels", Mark 8:34-38. We must live with eternity in view. When we elevate our perspective to a spiritual level, the value of submitting to the Father will be clearly seen. The passing pleasures of this world will be seen for what they are: vanity.

Though our circumstances are different today than what Joshua faced, the message from God is just as relevant as ever. Like Joshua, let us continually place our trust in God. He will always be here for us. How strong is your trust in God?

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