

BE COURAGEOUS

PROP: A flashlight

THEME: COURAGE - God Pledges to be with Joshua

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 1:1-7

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: ² "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. ⁵ No man shall *be able* to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.



SAY: Everyone is afraid of something. Have you ever been afraid in the dark? A very common fear among children and adults is fear of the dark. When a person is afraid of the dark, they are usually letting their imagination get carried away. If a person continues to dwell on those thoughts, the fear only gets worse. For example, in the dark, sometimes we hear noises that seem scarier than what they actually are. Has this ever happened to you? (*Pause for responses.*) Have you ever been someplace that is very dark and been afraid? (*Pause for responses.*)

There are ways to overcome being afraid of the dark. One way is to use a flashlight! That will help bring light into the darkness. But perhaps the best way to overcome this or any fear is to turn to God. Next time you are feeling afraid, just say, "*God knows what hides in darkness! God is with me!*"

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 31:8 "The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

SAY: Today's lesson is from the Old Testament and teaches us about God's pledge to be with Joshua and reminds us that when we walk with God, we can always find the courage to do things we never imagined possible.

SAY: What is faith? Very simply, faith is believing that God will do what He says He will do. Faith is the key principle that underlies the book of Joshua, and the whole of Christian life.

God gives Joshua a promise: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you." Then immediately God gives him a command: "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them." (Joshua 1:5-6)

Is faith believing the promise? Yes, but that is not what is most important. Faith is believing the promise enough so that we are strong and courageous when we are faced with any problems and obstacles that may come along with it -- because they always do!

Faith requires courage and strength because, only when we exercise courage and strength, do we maintain our belief in any real way. If we give up and cave in at the sign of the first problem, we don't have faith. We have unbelief. We all struggle with this . . . even Joshua struggled! Joshua is filled with God's Spirit, has worked alongside Moses, and has been on the mountain with God. But Joshua still needs this kind of encouragement and exhortation to keep his faith in God.

Never let fear stop you from becoming closer to God or keeping your faith. We all have a fear of something . . . what is something that you are afraid of? (*Pause for answers.*) Joshua had many fears: he had a fear of people, a fear that people won't approve of his plan, a fear that he would fail, a fear that he'd make a fool out of himself, a fear that he wasn't strong enough, and even a fear that God might let you down. But he overcame all of his fears by having the courage to keep his faith.

God promised Joshua in the Old Testament and He promises all of us here today: "I will never leave you or forsake you. Therefore, be strong and very courageous!"