

Joshua 3

Moses is dead. God has chosen Joshua for the daunting task of leading the several million children of Israel out of the wilderness into the land which we have entitled the promised land. It is the land of inhabited by the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, etc., etc. (**Joshua 3:10**) Early in this book God has given Joshua some exceedingly great and wonderful promises.

Joshua 1:5 *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

Joshua 1:9 *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*

These are just two of the many promises that God has given to this new leader of the Nation of Israel.

In Chapter 2 Joshua sends out spies who are hidden by Rahab. They return with an encouraging report that the Lord has prepared their way before them. They report that the people of the land are “*faint*” with the news of Israel’s soon crossing the Jordan.

Now as we have read here in Chapter 3 the children of God are prepared to pass over the river and conquer Jericho and eventually the rest of the land. God gives them very specific instructions on what they are to do, and this includes the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant into the overflowing river and eventually into the land outside the city of Jericho. God promised to perform a miracle and open the river so that the people could pass through it without getting their feet wet. Another of God’s promises that came to pass miraculously.

Joshua 3:17 *And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until*

all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

The old year is over. The bulk of the New Year lies just ahead [written at year’s end. Ed.]. What lies ahead? Only God knows for sure. However, I am confident that we can trust Him to do “*wonders*” for us in this Year of opportunity. Many years ago a preacher gave me some guidelines for my life at the new year that have stood the test of time. I do not even remember who it was that gave me these ideas, but they are still as applicable today as they were those many years ago. I believe that we can benefit from these suggestions just as much today as in yesteryear. We have “*...not passed this way heretofore...*”, but we can be confident that nothing will happen during the year which will catch God by surprise. Our Pastor has been preaching on some of these recently and perhaps this will reinforce some of the truths that he has been preaching to us.

Notice in Verse 3 of Chapter 3 –

And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

The ark was a physical object that was to remind the people of Israel that God was with them and was going to go before them. And so it is today. If you are a child of God by the New Birth, then surrender to His will, and God will guide you and direct you in the paths that you should take. **Psalm 139:1-18** and **Hebrews 13:5**. He will go before you and prepare the way for you. **John 14:1-6**.

Not a one of us has lived such a perfect life that we could say, I have no regrets, but God desires that we confess and forsake the past mistakes and go on for Him. In the Navy we were introduced to this saying, “*Today is the first day of the rest of your life.*” I do not know where

that saying came from, but God has a couple of verses in the New Testament which may have been the source. **Philippians 3:13-14** *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Forget your past failures, and go on for God.

Determine with all of your heart to develop a more intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Let the words of the old song, “*Oh, to be like thee, pure as thou art*” become your theme song this year. **Philippians 1:21** *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

Philippians 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ...* If we do these things, then **Hebrews 12:1** will come true in our lives. We will eliminate the sin and weight that hinder our closeness to our Saviour.

Hebrews 12:1-2 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

What will help us this year to follow the Lord, and to develop that intimate relationship and forget our past problems?

Get into God’s word daily. There is another old saying with great depths of truth to it: “*Sin will keep you from this Book, or this Book will keep you from sin.*” I have found that to be true personally. Many times in the word of God, He

admonishes us to stay in the Book. He told Joshua this in no uncertain terms.

Joshua 1:8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

Other scriptures remind us of this need.

2 Timothy 2:15-16 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.*

Psalms 119:9-12 *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.*

Attend a scriptural, Bible believing, Bible preaching church regularly. I cannot tell you how important that has been in furthering our walk with God. We've been members of good churches for over 40 years and our lives have been blessed because of those churches. Not a one of them has been perfect, but we have learned valuable lessons in each and every one.

Hebrews 10:23-27 *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of*

judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Finally remember the acronym JOY. The secret to real JOY is:

JESUS
OTHERS &
YOU

Think of others before yourself. Learn to be a giver. The New Testament principle is giving.

Luke 6:38 *Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

No one can be a real Christian (A follower of Jesus) without being a giver.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Follow these suggestions, and you will be blessed like Joshua of old.

Joshua 24:15 *And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*

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WOULD
YOU
DARE



TO BECOME
A
JOSHUA