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# Pointing You in the Right Direction

The goal of Bible study must be *transformation* rather than mere *information*. Like a navigator's compass, these studies are designed to guide you toward Christ-centered transformation through active study, discussion, and application of God's Word. The following symbols have been placed throughout the pages of this study in order to help you interact with Scripture personally and within a group setting:



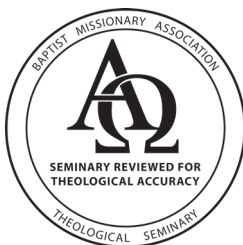
Meditation verses are suggested for individual daily study of God's Word based upon each lesson's focus.



Discussion questions help you study on your own in order to prepare for conversations in your group setting.



The note-taking sections are intended for the weekly group setting and feature fill-in-the-blanks. Your group leader will provide the words for the blanks. Additional space is provided for note-taking.



# The Promises of God

*Joshua 1:1-9*

“I ain’t afraid of you,” we hear the young child blurt out as he stands with fists clenched by his side, looking up into the face of the neighborhood bully. He’s had enough; he’s been bullied for the last time. Although he doesn’t want a confrontation, everything else he has tried has failed. Now he has to face it head on. The child is learning a lesson that will serve him well for years to come: bullies thrive on fear. They get what they want through intimidation and fear. When their target responds with courage, their control is broken.

Satan is a bully. He loves to intimidate us to keep us cowering in fear so that we don’t step out with boldness to serve God. The solution for believers is not a show of bravado or taking a course in bully management, but rather it is finding courage through trusting God’s promises to take care of us.

One of the best examples of this kind of courage comes from Joshua. He was thrust into a leadership position that could have had him cowering in fear. Instead, he accepted the challenge and led God’s people to great victory.

This week’s lesson begins a new study taken from the exciting book of Joshua. This book tells the story of how God’s chosen people, the Israelites, moved from being wandering nomads to a nation occupying land formerly held by the Canaanites. The primary focus of these lessons will be to highlight the awesome promises God gives his people both in Joshua’s day and today. Along with these promises, however, is the expectation that his people respond with faith and obedience.



## MEDITATIONS FOR THE WEEK

Monday	Rom. 4:18-21	Thursday	1 Sam. 17:34-37
Tuesday	Heb. 12:1-3	Friday	Ps. 56:8-11
Wednesday	Ps. 46:1-3	Saturday	Matt. 6:28-30

# WHAT TO DO WHEN PARALYZED BY FEAR

As Joshua took over leadership of the nation, God expected him to be firm and bold. This was a command Joshua had already heard a number of times (Deuteronomy 31:6, 7, 23). God's expectation was that Joshua would boldly lead the children of Israel to possess the Promised Land despite the obstacles he might face or the fears that might threaten him. God confirmed this command by telling Joshua that he must not be frightened or dismayed (Joshua 1:9). Instead, he challenged Joshua three times with the command to be strong and of a good courage (Joshua 1:6-7, 9).

## GROUP LESSON NOTES

ANSWERS WILL BE PROVIDED IN GROUP MEETING.

- 1 Fear can be \_\_\_\_\_ with God's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Fear can be \_\_\_\_\_ with God's \_\_\_\_\_.



*Do you think that Joshua had to deal with the same kind of fear that we do? Why?*

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*What do you think would have been the thing that caused Joshua the most fear? Why?*

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## HOW TO BE MOBILIZED BY FAITH

There was a reason the land the Israelites were approaching was called the Promised Land. Over four hundred years earlier, God had promised that this entire land would be given to Abraham's descendants. These descendants now stood at the border of the land, having endured years of captivity in Egypt and forty years of wandering in the wilderness. Now it was time for the promise to be fulfilled. God's command to Joshua was "Arise...Go" (Joshua 1:2).

The key to Joshua's obedience was faith. Faith is simply taking God at his word. God's promises provided the fuel for Joshua's faith. The nation was not attempting a plan conceived in Joshua's mind. Rather, this was God's plan for the nation. Nothing would be impossible for them to accomplish as long as they marched at his command.

### GROUP LESSON NOTES

ANSWERS WILL BE PROVIDED IN GROUP MEETING.

1 Faith is \_\_\_\_\_ when we \_\_\_\_\_.

2 Faith is \_\_\_\_\_ when we \_\_\_\_\_.



*We often hear that as believers we are supposed to live by faith. What does that mean?*

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*Since faith isn't something that can be seen, how can we tell if we are living by faith?*

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## CONCLUSION

If anyone knew the consequences of not trusting God, it was the Israelites. They had just experienced forty years of judgment because of this. We also have failed to trust God far too many times. However, standing on the border of tomorrow, we are given another opportunity to walk with God in faith. Let's not allow the bully Satan to keep us in the wilderness.

Faith's most severe tests come, not when we see nothing, but when we see a stunning array of evidence that seems to prove our faith vain.

~ Elisabeth Elliot