

No One Said “Easy”

Joshua 1:1-9

Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ servant, saying, “Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (NASB)

Imagine standing at the edge of the woods, prepared for a day hike with your backpack full of supplies, a cold water bottle at your side, and good strong shoes on your feet. Right at the start of a trail is a sign: “Be careful.” Five minutes later, just after the first bend is another sign: “Be careful.” Then, after climbing over a log in the path is a final sign: “Be careful.” It’s pretty clear at this point that the journey ahead will require some caution. The warnings don’t mean that you will not soon see deer grazing in the woods, talk with other excited travelers, or sit down for a breathtaking sunset at the end of the journey. There will be beautiful experiences during this journey, but you have been warned that you have to be careful as well. These warnings are there because people have traveled this path before and care about your successful completion too.

When God appointed Joshua as leader of the Israelites, the one who would lead them into the Promised Land, God promised him that the people would be successful and prosperous in their coming journey. But he never promised that that the coming battles would be easy. By telling Joshua three times to “Be strong and courageous,” God tells Joshua, the Israelites, and us that we are not alone in the battles of life. There will be good and beautiful days ahead, and there will be stumbles and troubles as well. Yet we can be strong and courageous as we journey forward with our Lord.

MLD

Point for Prayer:

What next step in the journey do you need to take? How can you be strong and courageous in your journey?