

Courage to Fight

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[0 : 0 0] Well, it's been said already, but once again, blessed Father's Day to you brothers and Father figures, what a joy it is to have a day to be remembered.

And so I was told in my Mother's Day message to tell it to the men. Y'all don't remember that, but one of our sisters yelled out, sitting right over that direction, tell it to the men. And so men, I am under orders to tell it to you today. I won't tell you who it was if you didn't know, I won't tell you. It was so funny. Last Mother's Day, we allowed Esther to appoint us to Jesus. And today we're going to allow Joshua to appoint us to Jesus. Hope that's okay.

Let's pray. Father, as we come to your word, it is striking that it's Father's Day. And so we give honor and glory to you, our great Father. You are the best Father ever. You are the root of all fatherhood. Our goal, our desire is that we would be fathers in your image and in the image of your son, our Lord Jesus. So Father, please do your work in us. It's great to be in worship, but Lord, we want worship to be in us. And we pray, oh Lord, that we would behold Jesus, our Lord and Savior, and hope in this life and the life to come. Speak to every male in this place. Everyone, no matter how young or old they are, speak to them in particular. But the word of God is for all who have ears to hear. We know this. And so Father, grant your son grace to preach your word to your people.

And may we leave this place changed because we have met with the living God. In Jesus' name, amen.

Joshua chapter 1, I'm going to be focusing really on verses 8 and 9, especially verse 8, but I'm going to read 1 through 9 for the sake of the context so you'll have this all in your head, brothers. I hope you have a Bible nearby. You may want to reference it at some point in the message.

[2 : 3 7] Hear now the word of God. After the death of Moses, the servant of God, of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, Moses, my servant, is dead.

Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the great sea, toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life, just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses, my servant, commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good 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 good success.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. That is the word of the Lord, brothers.

Thanks be to God. You may be seated. June 19th, 1865. The word finally reached Galveston, Texas, as you know. We call that Juneteenth. And they found out two years after the fact that the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed, declaring the slaves free. Now, we are told what happened when they got the proclamation was that a church worship service broke out. Now, I don't have the record, and maybe there, I'm not sure there is one, I'm going to try to look for it, I'm not going to find it. I don't have the record of everything that was said in that service, but I do know the motif.

[5 : 29] You see, because the slaves were living, those who believed in the Lord, that is, were living their lives according to the Exodus. The Exodus motif was huge in the Christian slave narrative. They were hoping that just as Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage, that they too, as those who trusted in the Lord would also be delivered from American chattel slavery. And on that day, in 1865, on that day, on Juneteenth, they who hoped in the Lord were satisfied.

It was the beginning, in many ways, of satisfaction. But they were free. They stood on the word of the Lord.

On October 18th, 1998, a pastor you've heard me mention by the name of James Montgomery Boyce drove down to Washington, D.C. with another pastor from 10th Presbyterian Church named Carol Wynn.

They came to Washington, D.C. to a church called Wallace Presbyterian Church. And they came so that Dr. Boyce could preach the ordination sermon of this unknown black pastor named Kevin Smith. It was the largest ordination service that that huge presbytery had ever seen because Dr. Boyce was there.

And he was greatly respected. And when he preached, he chose for his passage, Joshua chapter 1, verses 8 and 9.

[7 : 33] Needless to say, that passage has been ringing in the mind and heart of Pastor Kevin Smith for years since. In the spring of 2012, again, that same pastor was called to come to a pretty well-known church in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

And he went on a retreat with the staff of that church. And the two of the pastors who were here at that time decided to try to encourage him. And so they turned to Joshua chapter 1, verses 8 and 9.

And they made it clear that the former pastor, outgoing pastor, was not dead like Moses, but yet the call was still the same. Needless to say, this passage has great significance in my life.

Moses' fight was over, brothers. But Joshua's fight was not.

He was just getting started. As long as there's breath in our lungs, brothers, we have a battle to wage in the name of the Lord Jesus.

[8 : 59] Warriors are needed. But not just fighters. Wise warriors. Men like, there will be no slides, so forgive me guys.

Men like the men of, in 1 Chronicles 12, 32, the men of Issachar. They were said to understand the times.

To know what Israel ought to do. Those kind of men. Those kind of warriors are needed. And even wise men, and being wise is not enough, though essential.

See, brothers, we don't need macho warriors, but we still need courageous ones. Courageous warriors of righteous obedience, of justice, and of faith, hope, and love in the name of Jesus.

Do we have any warriors out here today? But without courage, even while claiming to follow Jesus, we won't stay in the fight, brothers.

- [10 : 07] We end up with tons of men who have a privatized faith. Or worse, no faith. You see, a privatized faith keeps us from standing boldly and respectfully for what we believe.
- We don't need a privatized faith, brothers. We're not called to that. We are called to a faith that is personal, but it's not private.
- And Jesus, our commanding officer, wants to give us courage to fight his fight, his way. But do we have any warriors out there?
- Do we have any warriors? I got two introductions. Here's my second one. It's a cultural moment, really.
- It's a cultural introduction. And you know what I'm about to say is true, because you know. Men are disappearing. We have lots of males, but not a lot of men.
- [11 : 20] Even we have given in, like I said, to that macho, hyper-masculinity cult. And you see this even in Christian circles. Or we have given in to the push to feminize us, even to the point of transgenderism.
- Brothers, we are not women. And women are not men. God made us different for a reason. And we need both. Many Christian men, I'm sad to tell you.
- I hope, it's not true here, but I want to give you what's out there. Many Christian men are not interested in leading their families spiritually. They're advocating to their wives. We don't know the word, but we know sports and politics.
- You know who I ought to vote for, but you can't tell me where the book of Hezekiah is. There is no Hezekiah, right?
- I got it. That's what I'm going to make sure you watch. We'll wait. Too many men still believe fathering as many children as possible with as many women as possible is true manhood.
- [12 : 26] They're still out there, brothers. The internet is propagating men who practice toxic masculinity as role models. Our younger men are being challenged by some of these guys on social media and the internet to be this Uber man.
- I mean, good grief. Pornography addiction is all too common. Struggle for men even before they get out of high school. Too many don't have real relationships with other men who really know us and hold us accountable as a band of brothers.
- We're long rangers still, even with all the social media and the likes and dislikes and friendships and all this stuff going back and forth. No one knows us.
- Oh yeah, there's some improvements and praise God there are improvements, but we're still long rangers and the enemy of our souls is trampling men in the dirt. We need help.
- I need help. I'll admit it. Forget you. I need help. And that's what God sends us. Hey, man, this is beautiful. And verse, I want you to notice, and I read the whole context because I want you to hear this.
- [13 : 40] In verses 6, 7, and 9, the living God tells Joshua repeatedly to be strong and courageous. At one point, he says, be strong and very courageous.
- Three times in this passage. Now, he's speaking directly to God. Joshua is speaking directly to God. So, if God tells him three times in the same conversation to be strong and courageous, guys, do you think he thought about that?
- Now, you may say, I'm no Joshua. I'm not called to be the leader of a million people. Or I don't. I just. But this is a perfect picture of what it means to be a godly man.
- Young men, aspire and pray for this. That God would do such a work in you. When he talks about being strong and courageous, those two words together, they're kind of synonymous in many ways.

But they give the idea, listen, brothers, of firmness, of boldness, of stability and strength. That's what he's saying to Joshua.

[14 : 54] You're going to need this as you go into this thing, man. Moses is dead. His mentor will no longer be there to guide him or bear the responsibility of leadership.

Joshua is about to undertake the most challenging time of his life. Maybe some of you are in that place too. His was to lead the people of God to take possession of the promised land.

God had promised a place for his people, but it was occupied territory. And the people of that land had sinned greatly against the Lord, even to the point of sacrificing their children to the god Malak and fire.

Listen, guys, this is the Canaanites had God had had it up to here. And now it was time for judgment to come.

And so he is doing two things here. He is sending his people in judgment upon the nations there, but he's also providing a place for his people. In Joshua's case, this will mean physical mortal combat against opposing armies.

[16 : 04] People will die. God's judgment had come because of the detestable things they have done in his sight. Listen, this is God's fight. But his people are called to take part in it for his glory and their good.

Men, you and I are not called to a physical fight, but to a spiritual one. I hope you're going to have to enter into some kind of physical fight. But that's not what we're called to.

There, our fight is not against human beings, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and the powers and the spiritual forces of darkness in the heavenly places.

Our fight, brothers, is one that is spiritual. People will suffer eternal death. Lives will be lost. Yes. Glory will be given.

Yes. Effort and struggle are called for in this spiritual fight. So there's no time for couch potatoes or conscientious objectors.

[17 : 22] That's really not really much of a conscience, really, to object to God's fight. Courage and strength are needed for us because the stakes are high. The stakes are really high, very high, the highest of stakes.

The well-being and the eternal destiny of people. We're entering into that fight. Courage to fight comes from three things in this passage. And the first one I will spend most of my time on.

The first thing we must understand, courage comes as you faithfully study and stand on God's word.

Write that down if you take notes. Courage comes as you faithfully study and stand on God's word. Verse 8 is huge.

This book of the law should 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.

[18 : 28] Then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. All Joshua had were the first five books of the Bible, which we call the Pentateuch, or we call also the books, the five books of Moses.

That's all Joshua had. Actually, he would have been privy to God inspiring Moses to write them. He would have stepped into maybe the tent of meeting and found Moses sitting there, writing out the words that we now refer to as Genesis and Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

He would have seen him do that. He was familiar with those scriptures, but now he was to become intimate with them.

You see, familiarity with the scriptures is good, but not nearly enough. We need details, brothers.

Is that enough to know that the Bible is the word of God? That's very important. Is that enough to know where the various books of the Bible is? That's certainly important. It's not enough just to know a verse or two here and there.

[19 : 50] That's not what he's telling Joshua to do. He's telling Joshua to become very much intimate with the scriptures. He was so, to be so intimate, he was to speak them.

This word should not depart out of your mouth. He was to make sure he was parroting, as it were, as a parrot bird, parroting the word of God in his speech as he spoke to his family, as he spoke to his subordinates, as he spoke to the fellow soldiers, as he spoke to the women, as he, whoever he spoke to.

The idea here is that he is communicating with those around him what thus saith the Lord. Family, it is easy to parrot the ideas of our culture.

And we do it well. You may have a degree in those ideas. You hear them at work, these ideas.

You hear them in the media. And we find ourselves, listen to me, guys, and you're doing it, and if you don't believe it, just check yourself out. Go this week and just listen to yourself sometime.

[21 : 09] You will find yourselves repeating what you've heard from the culture a lot. But is that what God is calling us to?

Not so for you, brothers. God's word is to be in your mouth. This is so when we speak, his wisdom pours forth.

It's nothing wrong with knowing the latest leadership trends and reading the latest leadership books or whatever. Nothing wrong with that. Or economic trends and studies or biological research.

It's nothing wrong with knowing those things at all. I hope you do know those things. But if you do not know the word of God, you will become worldly. You will become spiritually dull by default.

Something will control your mouth. And by the way, Jesus, our Lord, said it is out of the heart that the mouth speaks.

[22 : 18] So whatever controls your mouth actually controls your heart. Something's there. Something is reigning and ruling there. You see, the Bible will give you a foundation for your work.

It will give you guardrails for your integrity that you can hold on to. See, when you hear the ideas from the culture, you can see and determine what is good and what you should practice and what you should perpetuate because you now have a foundation called the word of God.

The Bible talks about discernment. Ability to know good from evil. And that only happens as the word of God is percolating in your soul.

When we cut you, brothers, do you bleed bibline? You see, God is speaking to us in the scriptures.

Do you believe this? God is speaking to us in the scriptures. It is his word. It is God breathed, as Paul said. God inspired and caused it to be expired through us.

[23 : 30] The Bible is the story of redemption, meaning it is his story of how for his own glory, he sets people free from sin and death to serve him as they enter his kingdom through the cross of the Lord Jesus.

We come into a new life. That's what the Bible is showing us, that history, history, all of history is about what God is doing around the world and the nations as he sends forth the glory of Christ to save people and bring them hope in the midst of darkness and death.

This is what the Bible is giving us and showing us. You are all God's sons who believe in Jesus. You are joint heirs with Jesus the Son.

And God has sent his Son for you. And they simply called him the Word. He is the Word.

He is the Word of God who comes to forgive our sins, to enlighten our hearts, to make us alive to him. So that we can hear his voice and follow him.

[24 : 58] But God says this, brothers. Listen. He says to us to let this Word saturate our mouths, our minds, all through our heart.

He wants that Word to just percolate in us. Why? Why? So we can have eggheads? And be able to quote theology and scripture so perfectly?

That's all good. But is that the goal? No. He says that we might be careful to do all that is written. Are you following me?

I'm in the text. If you got Bibles there, if you don't have one, look, it's right there. Careful. That's the goal.

Careful to do all that is written. You must be careful. The word careful means to be on your guard. God is talking to Joshua in the midst of the people of Israel who has followed God finally for 40 years in the desert.

[26 : 12] And he's still telling Joshua, you got to be careful to do what I'm telling you, bro. Because he knows, brothers, that other voices are going to be speaking to Joshua.

Voices of unbelief from the very people of God themselves. Moses had them. Joshua got them. We got them. And then he knew that as they went into the Canaanite territory, the nations would also be speaking.

The culture, the unbelieving culture would be speaking to Joshua. And he had to be careful. And we have to be careful. On our guard.

Because our goal is to do the word. To live the word. To practice the word. Yes, I'm talking about obedience. But it's obedience. Listen here.

God saved Joshua by grace like he saved Moses and like he saved the rest of the nation. He didn't have to choose them. He chose them because he decided to love them.

[27 : 19] Joshua is responding to being chosen by God by grace. And now that he is chosen by God by grace and given a position of leadership, he is now still responding to that grace with a life God wants of obedience.

You are not saved to be disobedient. He took you from disobedience. And living for yourself. He has brought you into his kingdom and said, Jesus says this, follow me.

That's what God is calling Joshua here. As he goes into battle against the forces of darkness, follow me. You need to know my word.

And watch this, brothers. He goes, there's a step in here. Look, there is, don't let it be tart from your mouth. Be careful to obey it.

There's one thing in the middle. Did you see it? Meditate. Meditate on it day and night. Did you see it? Meditate. You shall meditate it on day and night so that you may be careful.

[28 : 29] How are we going to be careful? How are we going to guard? How are we going to be on the alert? He says there must be something called meditation upon the word of God.

We're not talking yoga. We're not talking transcendental meditation. We're not talking anything Eastern here in that sense. We are talking.

We're not talking about emptying your mind as in various religions. That is not biblical. You can't really do it anyway. We're not trying to become mentally passive.

No, we're not trying to create our own reality. No. When the Bible says meditate, it means to, it's like talking to yourself.

It means filling your mind with God and scripture. If you are visualizing anything, if you are visualizing what his word will look like if it became reality in your life, you are thinking, you are repeating the word to yourself.

[29 : 37] It would, memorization would aid this process. Come on, God, take notes. Memorization, I know. Dirty word. Biblical word. It means, guys, it means effort on our part.

In the name of Jesus. And meditation leads right into prayer. It becomes part of prayer because we recognize that we are weak men.

And so we're always calling upon the Lord to help us. But listen, he wants to help us as we fill our minds with scripture. Put it on your, come on, come on, skip.

Write it and put it on your mirror. Make a three by five card. No, better than yet. Put it, make an A note on your cell phone. Pull out, Google, Google keep or whatever it is you use.

Make a note. Oh, I read this this morning. Put it there, boom. And then throughout the day, bam, there it is. Make it a screenshot. Put it on your desktop.

[30 : 41] Come on, somebody. I got, I laminated. I got verses laminated that I've laminated and pinned to the window in my office above my computer screens. And as I look up daily, there are some significant passages that remind me why I'm doing what I'm doing.

What God has called me to be and do. Brothers, are you with me? What's on your mirror? What's on your phone? Is it reminding you of the faithfulness of God and the truth of God as you deal with the garbage inside of you?

Because we all got garbage. I'm talking to the men, not you ladies. You don't have garbage. Meditation leads to doing in prayer.

Story is told of two brothers who were walking through the woods, came upon a bush with some wild berries. Good wild berries. They weren't poisoned. They ate their fill, right?

But soon they had to go. They don't live there. They had to go. And so one guy says, listen, I'm going to give, he picked as many as he could and put them in his shirt. You know, cuffed his shirt. He got as many berries as he could.

[31 : 53] But the other brother decided to take a, to dig down and take a piece of the bush. Come on, brother. Come on, brother Lenar. You feeling it? So he went back. His brother ate up all his berries, but the other brother planted the bush.

And the bush took root and began to grow. So the second brother had berries when his other brother didn't. The second brother had berry pie, berry pancakes, berry jam.

He was berry happy. I'm sorry that came out. That was out of my notes. This is what meditation on the Word of God will do for you. You will have life.

You will have truth. When all your, when all others are listening, are trying to figure out what should I do? How should I respond on my job? How should I lead my family?

What should, they're asking those questions. But the Word of God will percolate up in your heart. Come on, somebody. Because the Spirit of God will take what you've mentated upon and bring it back to your remembrance.

[33 : 00] Thomas Watson, the old Puritan said, the reason we come away so cold from reading the Word is because we do not warm ourselves at the fire of meditation.

How many times have you read the Bible and walked away and said, that was nice? As you're, I'm trying to be practical here.

As you're reading the Scriptures, maybe you read a chapter, just one chapter. Maybe you read a paragraph. But something there, boop. You got a boop. God said, look at that.

You said, ooh. That's the one you meditate on. Come on, somebody. That's the one you begin to mull over in your mind. That's the one you begin to imagine and seek to understand.

Well, what God's saying here. Ooh, okay, look at this context. You begin to think about. Because the Bible makes sense. It's a flow of context. You begin to say to yourself, what's he saying here? Ooh, what are those?

[34 : 01] Is there a promise to be had? Is there a sin for me to confess? Is there, what am I learning about God? What is that same verse? What am I learning about myself? Let that verse. God made it go, boop, for a reason.

Don't walk away. Meditate. Take it. Take it with you. So when you speak, his wisdom pours forth from your mouth.

It's like you were a cup of tea. Better yet, a cup of hot water. Steep and real hot water. The word of God is the teabag.

Now, you can dip that teabag in that hot water of your life. With this sermon is one dip. You go read for a minute. Read sometime.

You're dipping again. Maybe you even had a Bible study for a little bit. You know, with some friends. If you're in a small group, you dip it again. But you want it to also steep.

[35 : 14] Meditation is letting the word steep. It's letting it drop the teabag in the water. No dipping. Drop it in. British will tell you, don't Americans dip their teabag.

They let it steep. Let it just sit in there. Meditation is letting the word just sit in your heart, in your mind. Let it just soak in there.

And you end up with Psalm 1. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord.

And on his law, he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields his fruit in its season. His leaf does not wither. And all that he does, he prospers.

Why? Because his roots are covered with the word of God. Let the word steep. Don't let it just percolate in your heart for you before you start talking to somebody else about it.

[36 : 17] Let it percolate for you. All of this is so that you might do and experience God's prosperity, which I have no idea what that will mean for you.

But listen, brothers, how do you define success? If you're looking, if you're, once again, if you're, if you are listening to the culture, he who dies with the most toys wins.

And you will die. If you're listening to the, the culture is always telling you what success means. But God is telling Joshua, success is not found in what, listen, in what you are doing, is found in what you are becoming.

Because when the word of God steeps and seeps in you, you are being shaped into the image of Christ. Now, yes, we, we expect many times, especially in this country, that, that, that might provide some success in what you are doing.

But listen, brothers, success is found in Christ's likeness. Success is found in, in, in your life honoring the Lord. Success is found in seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, not your righteousness, his righteousness.

- [37 : 36] Success is found in trusting in him to add all these things to you. But again, if you're not grounded in the word of the Lord, something else is telling you what success is.
- And you're living for it. And you've been bamboozled. You've been sucker punched. Last two things, and I'll, real brief.
- But this was the big one, like I told you. Your fight is what, your fight is for Christ. And what he says is right and true and good.
- That's what your fight is for. For his glory. It is written, is one of our slogans. It is written. The second thing, and second and third thing, real quick.
- Courage comes when you realize that God has sent you. In the first part of verse 9, God says again to Joshua, Have I not commanded you?
- [38 : 43] Be strong and courageous. Have I not commanded you? He's reminding Joshua that his purpose and his identity is found in God's calling.
- Have I not commanded you? And yes, God commands you, brothers. He doesn't offer suggestions. He doesn't offer suggestions. He is not an American.
- This is not a democratic republic. It's a theocracy. The kingdom of God is a theocracy. And we live under the benign dictatorship of King Jesus.
- And he speaks, we listen, we go. And we can ask questions. It's okay to ask questions. I don't understand. And he may decide to give you more information.
- But when a day is over, our identity is found in his calling. And what he has said who we are. And who are we? Men of God. Who are we? Disciples of Jesus.
- [39 : 43] Who are we? Sons of God. That's who you are. Joshua is the son responding to his father. And his father is saying, you got to go to war, son. His identity.
- Have I not commanded you? Who are you? And he's sending you into various callings, brothers. You are being sent, as Jesus says in John 20, 21.
- As the father has sent me, even so I am sending you. What did he send him to do? Jesus was sent to bring glory to his father by seeking and saving the lost.
- Seeking the kingdom and seeking to bring people to him. If I be lifted up, he said, I will draw all men unto me. As the father has sent me, even so now I am sending you, sons.
- You must go. Our calling, our identity is wrapped up in that word, sent. Third thing, courage comes when you are confident of God's presence with you.
- [40 : 43] Oh my goodness. He says it to him. The Lord your God is with you wherever you go. In that passage, he says it twice. He is with you.
- That section. He is with you. You are never alone. Brothers, I know. I know what it's like to have to lead and feel like you are alone. It ain't cool.
- It ain't cool. I know what that means. And many of you do too. You know what it's like to be the only Christian where you work.
- Maybe the only Christian in your family, in your immediate family. And God is calling you to stand in the midst of that. And man, it's hard.
- The pressure, the cultural pressure. It's real and you feel it. But I want to remind you of something. That's Joshua chapter 5.
- [41 : 46] Love this passage. In chapter 5, Joshua is doing some reconnaissance. He's checking out Jericho before they go in. And while he's doing that, he runs into somebody.
- Joshua is by Jericho. He's looked up and there was a man standing beside him with a sword in his hand. Now, when you see a guy standing beside you with a sword in his hand, you want to be clear what his intentions are.

All right, let's put it like this. You got a guy standing beside you with a glop. And you don't know him. And you're about to go into battle. Now, you're reaching for your weapon at that point because you don't know what's going on here.

So Joshua asks a good question, okay? Are you for us or for our adversaries? Listen to his answer. No. Talk about what?

He says no. But then he says this. I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have come. Joshua. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, what does my Lord say to his servant?

[42 : 55] And the first thing he says, Moses experienced. Second experience. Here you go. Take off your sandals from your feet. For the place where you are standing is holy, baby. Because I'm here. The commander shows up.

This guy we believe is a pre-incarnate picture of Jesus. The second of the second person of the Trinity, that is. Shows up and says, Joshua, I'm not here to take sides.

I'm here to take over. I'm with you, bro. But you're going to follow me. Worship. Worship. And let me tell you what you're going to do.

Joshua needed a leader to lead him. So that Joshua could lead the people. What was happening here is that now God is showing up to lead Joshua.

And through Joshua, God is leading the people. It's God's war. The battle is the Lord's. And he came to fight the battle. Listen, that's what they learned. And that's what Israel learned.

[43 : 55] The battle is not ours. It's the Lord's fight. And on the cross, Jesus dealt the death blow to the force of the darkness.

That's victory on the cross. He is dealing the death blow to sin, to Satan, and to our flesh, our fallen nature. He dealt the death blow. And now we are following Jesus in the mop-up mission.

We still got some skirmishes, but he already won the war, baby. And he is saying he is with you in the sicknesses, in the pain, in the job situations, and job losses, and job findings, and housing.

And wherever you are going, because he sent you, he is now saying, lo, I am with you always, even into the end of the age. Great commission promise, right? Brothers, you're not alone.

I know sometimes it feels that way, but that's why you've got to let the book of the law, the word of God, percolate down in your souls.

[45 : 04] You can't just be a casual reader of the book. You can't just be a sometime reader of the book. You've got to dive in. Read chapters, brothers. Read through books of the Bible.

Read through the—get on a Bible reading plan, whatever it takes. Look, come to Sunday school. I know that sounds childish to some of you, but it's not. That's good teaching there. You are missing out on good teaching where you can ask questions if you don't come to Sunday school.

And brothers, if you don't know the Bible, why in the world are you not in Sunday school? You can't rub two scriptures together. Why are you not feeding yourself?

Why? What's keeping us? We are distracted, fellas. We are distracted from the very things we need most. Well, Pastor, I'm working 60 hours a week.

I hear you. Why are you doing that again? But that's just—you've got to work that out. Are you really doing that for what you say you're doing it for? Do you really need all of that extra cheddar?

[46 : 08] Maybe you do. Maybe you do. How do you start? Can you give God? Can you start the day? Can you take some time? How much TV do you watch?

When you come home, then. I work 70 hours a week, but you spend four hours watching a football game. Come on, now.

Take a little of that time. I ain't telling you to give it—open the book. Some of you like to read. Get a good book about the Bible as well as reading the book. On the topic of doctrine that's important to you.

Oh, I've got to stop. That's just too much here to go. All right. And the brother said, all right. That's telling me to shut up. Do you—I know some people will object to everything I just said.

Christians will object to some of the things I just said here. Not because I said it. I'm not saying it. The scriptures are clear. The Bible needs to be— They will say, I can't tell my boss what is written, or my professor, or my neighbors.

[47 : 16] You're talking about telling people the Bible. Don't let the word depart from my mouth. You want me to tell people the Bible. People don't want to hear the Bible, Pastor Kevin. They want to hear from the latest gurus and experts.

You're not telling them the Bible. You just missed the whole point. It's not about what the culture believes. It's about what Joshua believed. God is talking to Joshua's heart here.

It's about what Joshua believes. You see, do you believe that the scriptures are literally the word of God, the only rule for faith and practice? Do you really believe that? Do you believe that Jesus is the center and focal point of the scriptures?

Do you really believe that in these pages is the pathway of true success? Do you really believe that God gives your life purpose and meaning and identity? Do you believe it? Do you really believe that he is with you wherever you go?

Brothers, it's not about what the culture believes. It's about what Willie believes and what Jack believes. What do you believe? That's when the word of God saturates your heart and you believe and trust that God is not speaking, with forked tongue that he's telling you the truth because Jesus is the truth.

[48 : 25] When you believe that, listen, the word of God will saturate you and you don't have to say to your neighbor, it is written. You can paraphrase because it's in your heart. You'll be able to paraphrase it and talk to them from the foundation of the truth.

From the foundation, you can communicate life. And then there will come time when you can say it is written, when you're doing a direct witness to somebody and they've trusted you and they love you and they know you love them.

Now you can sit down and say, what makes you so different? Now you can say it is written. Now you can bring them. But you don't start there. You start with what you believe and how, let that be the foundation upon which you build all your learning and understanding from the culture.

And then you can speak to the culture without even saying it is written. But what you are saying is written. Can somebody help me out there?

Can I get just one amen? I'm begging. Someone say he's begging for amens. Oh, help us. Just trying to help you out.

[49 : 35] Family, we're waging war. And Jesus, our Lord and Savior, our commander, has won it for us. We're skirmishing still.

And there are individual places where you're going to get your tail beat up if you don't trust him. But that's all right. I've lost a lot of fights, spiritually speaking. And the Lord picks me up, puts me back in the corner, checks my cuts.

He's my cut man. He fixes my cuts. He gives me water. Wipes off the sweat. Binds up my ribs that got cracked. And then he heals me and then says, okay.

Keep your left up. Jab with your right and stick and move. He sends me back into the ring. He'll fix you up. You've lost a few. Sure you have.

But don't stay down. Get up, you bum. Jesus loves you, right? Rocky, get up. Get up. Don't stay down there. You got knocked out.

[50 : 37] Yeah, you got knocked out. But get up. You ain't dead. Jesus resurrected you, remember? He resurrected you by his grace and mercy. You alive. Get up. Look at your cut man.

And he's your cut man. He's your trainer. He's your promoter. Look at him. Jesus, I need you. He's right there. Let him speak to you. Let him give you a strategy for winning his way.

You know, Joshua and the name Jesus are the same name. You all knew that. I know, but I'm sorry. But that's Hebrew is Joshua. Yahashua. Greek is Jesus. It's funny that Jesus is our Joshua.

Our true Savior who leads us into promised land. Joshua saved them from nations by waging war. Jesus saves us from sin, death, and the devil in hell by dying for our sins.

Jesus. Joshua needed a Savior. Jesus is that Savior. Is it yours, brothers? Settle it. Is it yours?

[51 : 48] Settle it. Maybe you will end your life like this. Joshua 24, as Joshua's done fleeting and fighting.

Therefore, he said to the church of the Old Testament, fear of the Lord. Serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods. They were still idolaters.

Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the river and in Egypt. Serve the Lord. If it is evil in your sight to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your father served in this region beyond the river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Settle it, brothers. Because he has not called you to be weak tea.

Settle it. Father, bless my brothers, my fathers. Help us, help us, my sons.

[52 : 50] Help us to be men of God. Men full of your word. Men who will follow Jesus wherever he leads. Amen. But when will my wife ever come back?

Men.