

Message Series: **God Knows. God Cares.**  
Message Title: **'When Fears Call, Courage Answers'**  
Scripture Source: **Joshua 1:1-9**  
Teacher: John Garner  
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### **In All Kinds of Moments**

Some stories of courage leave us speechless...we are humbled and if we pay attention, instructed by them. Illustrate: Telemachus – “In the name of Christ, stop!”  
What courage! In the face of ridicule and opposition, to the point of death, Telemachus manifested a bravery that challenges us. Could I meet a fleeting moment with that kind of courage? These stories are gifts to us. And yet, I believe that there are courageous actions happening day to day, often done ‘behind the scenes’ where few people notice.

Some of the bravest people I have met attend this church. I do not say this lightly or glibly. Some of you have suffered profound personal loss and relational devastation through the death of loved ones, sometimes in tragic circumstances. And yet, you continue to move forward, to seek God and to invest in the lives of others. Your courage humbles, inspires, and instructs me. Your refusal to stay stuck in fear and bitterness challenges me to face my fears with thoughtful and prayerful courage.

### **A Closer Look at Courage**

“Courage is clearly a readiness to risk self-humiliation.” (Dennis)  
“Genius is talent set on fire by courage.” (Van Dyck)  
“He that loses wealth loses much; he who loses a friend loses more; but he who loses courage loses all.” (De Cervantes)  
“Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear- not the absence of fear.” (Twain)  
“Necessity does the work of courage.” (Eliot)  
“Without courage, all other virtues lose their meaning.” (Churchill)

Courage: “the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to FACE difficulty, danger, pain, without fear, bravery...the opposite is cowardice”

### **The Gift Fear Gives**

When we are afraid an opportunity is entrusted to us. We have a choice before us. Will I indulge my fears and stay stuck or will I manifest courage and move forward with actions, words and behaviours that help create a new reality, with God’s help and guidance?

In what realm of life would you love to manifest courage, do you need to exhibit bravery? Is it in the realm of relationships? Is it in the realm of spiritual beliefs? Is it in the realm of your physical wellbeing? Or could it be in the area of practical concerns...finances, school, work, retirement? Could it be in the realm of emotions, character traits and behaviours?

What one courageous action might God be asking you to take? Ponder that question with me...as we learn from one man’s courageous choices in the face of daunting fears.

### **Joshua’s Courageous Journey: Joshua 1:1-9, 3:5, 14-17**

Make no mistake, fear came calling on Joshua. The fear of the unknown, the unpleasant, the unfriendly and the unpredictable.

#### **1. One Chapter Ends: Joshua 1:1-2a ‘Moses, my servant is dead.’**

Joshua had been a trusted aide to Moses. Through ‘many dangers, toils and snares’ God had guided and provided for his people through in large part the courageous and wise leadership of Moses. Joshua would well remember moment after moment of Moses leading the people of God forward. But now, that chapter is done. Moses is dead. But the story is still being written and God has a role for

Joshua to take full responsibility for. What will he do in the face of his fears? Fears of inadequacy, of not measuring up in the eyes of the Jewish nation to the example and memory of Moses, fears of the uncertainty of the next chapter to be written.

**Personal Application** - sometimes we have to face the harsh and hard reality of a chapter of our life that has ended. The story isn't over, but to discern when a chapter has ended is crucial. We may have to swallow hard and ask God for the grace to face the fact of an ending. And that takes courage to face that fact. Illustrate.

What chapter has ended that you need to accept? Can you put a name to the chapter?

## 2. The 'Next Chapter' with a Promise from God. Vss. Joshua 1:2b-5

I treasure these words: "Now then, you and all these people get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them..."

God speaks boldly, directly and encouragingly to Joshua. 'Now then'...the language of a next chapter, of a future with God's guidance and provision promised. Ponder the promise. God states that as Joshua follows God with faithful obedience, God will empower Joshua to stand true and tall in the face of opposition. Vs. 5. And God will never bail or leave Joshua without resources.

**Personal Application** – What might your 'Now then' next chapter look like? What aspects of this promise of God do you need to saturate your mind with? Be specific.

Please understand, God has made a pledge to us that is rooted in his unchanging character and made available to us on the basis of a relationship with Jesus...he who has met our deepest need for forgiveness of sins and a restored relationship with God.

## 3. Assume Full Responsibility for Courageous Action: Joshua 1:6-9

God is not giving vague suggestions to Joshua. He repeatedly challenges Joshua to actions of bravery and unwavering courage, regardless of the very real fears that must be faced and stepped beyond. God gives clarity of direction that is rooted in Joshua being responsive and receptive to God's presence and words.

This 'next chapter' requires faith and obedience to God. And God says, 'I will be with you wherever you go.' Fears must be faced and stepped beyond. With the empowering help of God's strong and wise Spirit. See Romans 8:10-11

**Personal Application** – Are you assuming full responsibility to act courageously and in relationship with God? Are you saturating your mind and soul with God's truth? If this is a struggle, let us help you.

## 4. 'Time to Get Your Feet Wet': Joshua 3:5, 14-17

The raging river was crossed when people obeyed God and stepped forward, into their 'next chapter.' God provided supernaturally for them.

**Personal Application** – so, what one courageous action is God asking of you? Is it... Relational? Spiritual? Emotional, Behavioural? Practical? Give examples...will you step beyond your fears of the unknown, unpleasant, unpredictable and unfriendly...and manifest courage...for the glory of God, your own good and the good of others?

People need us to mature as men and women of courage, starting with those closest to us. Who can you learn from? Any faces come to mind? One main Face and story...Hebrews 12:1-3  
Your 'now then' moment awaits, your next chapter calls you...choose to be courageous.