

ENTER THE JOURNEY

THE LESSON: JOSHUA 1

Life is like a journey. We do not know ahead of time exactly how it will unfold or where it will take us. In that sense it is almost impossible for us to be prepared. But if we are believers, we go on our way equipped with the Holy Spirit, the knowledge of our Christian identity, and the fellowship of the community of faith. If we've been baptized and confirmed in the Prayer Book tradition then we are further equipped with the promises we've made, and the teachings of the catechism.

Jesus was an amazing teacher. His disciples had been with him just long enough to hear his teaching and witness some miracles, when he sent them out on a short term missionary journey with these instructions: "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money, and do not have two tunics..." (Luke 9:3). Does it sound radical to you? Well, this was a learning experience for the disciples. And a big part of what they needed to learn was to trust God to lead them and provide for them when they didn't know what their experience was going to be like. Though they had no physical resources, the disciples had the benefit of having been witnesses to Jesus' ministry and having received his authority. When they returned a short time later to debrief with their Lord, they found they still had a lot to learn, but with the very best Teacher.

In this world, things do not always go according to our plan. There will be blessings and triumphs. And there will be struggles, distractions, and failures. But for the Christian pilgrim there is the knowledge that none of these things are surprising to our God. He will provide. He will be present. And he will offer us grace upon grace.

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God had led the people of Israel out of their slavery in Egypt, but because of their disobedience they had wandered forty years in the wilderness. Now, God was about to lead them into the land that he had promised them. But it was not going to be easy. They would face many enemies and temptations. On the brink of this new chapter, God instructed Moses to share these words with the people: "Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6). Though Moses had led them this far, the task was given to Joshua to lead them on. Let's take a look at the opening narrative of the Old Testament book of Joshua.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE "FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES", WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.))

During this unit, we're going to take some of the prayers that come from the liturgies of Baptism and Confirmation and pray them for one another as a reminder and a renewal of commissioning.

Spend some time reflecting on and praying with the words of this prayer:

Almighty and everliving God, who makest us both to will and to do such things as be good and acceptable unto thy Divine Majesty: We make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants. Let thy fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them; let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

(ADAPTED FROM THE ORDER FOR CONFIRMATION, BCP PAGE 560)

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JOSHUA 1: **GOOD REASON TO HAVE COURAGE**

¹After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant,
²"Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. ³Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. ⁴From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea towards the going down of the sun shall be your territory. ⁵No 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. ⁶Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷Only 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. ⁸This 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. ⁹Have 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."