

Study Guide



Joshua 3:1-17 – January 29, 2017 Confidence in God's Leader

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we walk through Joshua we are going to see how Joshua relates to our everyday battle of faithfulness. **Our aim and our prayer for this study is to gain the wisdom we need for the battle of faithfulness.** During our time in Joshua we will be adapting our study guide from [Crossway's book, Knowing the Bible: Joshua, A 12-Week Study](#) by Trent Hunter. We recommend you purchase this book and use it in your Community Groups and for personal study as we go through Joshua. We have copies of the book available in our bookstore.

For this weeks study on Joshua please check out the following pages...

Walk Prayer & Missions

March 25- April 4—South Sudan
For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared
Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

January— Core Class @ 9am
February 12th— Member's Meeting
February 25th— Community Group
Leader/Co-Leader Meeting
March 5th-April 9th— [Connection Group](#)
March 17th-19th— [DNow](#)
May 26th-31st— [Student Life Camp](#)

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[We Will Not Be Shaken](#)":

For we trust in our God
And through His unfailing love
We will not be shaken,
We will not be shaken,
We will not be shaken
[x2]

Though the battle rages
We will stand in the fight
Though the armies rise up against us on all sides
We will not be shaken
We will not be shaken
We will not be shaken

For in the hour of our darkest day
We will not tremble, we won't be afraid
Hope is rising like the light of dawn
Our God is for us He has overcome

All those against Him will fall

For our God is stronger

He can do all things
No higher name we can call
For Jesus is greater
We can do all things

Joshua 3:1-17

Finally, after centuries of waiting, the Israelites were now about to cross into the land promised them. Here in chapter three we have the preparations that the people had to make in order to cross the river, followed by the crossing itself and the astounding way God brought it about. What did the people feel when Joshua said, “**Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you**” (Josh. 3:5)? They face a raging Jordan river with no means of getting across, they could not imagine how they are going to enter into the land. However, they knew the Lord had done wonders for their parents when he brought them out of slavery and parted the Red Sea (Ex. 3:20). Now it was their turn.

In this chapter, it is vital for us to see the wonder of God’s mighty acts and never stop recalling and proclaiming them. Throughout chapter three we see the ark leading the way for Israel. The ark, representing God’s presence among his people, leads the way so that they “**shall know that the living God is among**” them (Josh. 3:10-13). It is God himself who leads his people into Canaan, who cuts off flooding waters and holds them back as it were with his hand. This whole event is God’s plan and the Israelites, though active, are primarily spectators (Josh. 3:4).

However, God’s people must be rightly prepared for God’s wonders if they are going to appreciate it, if they are going to be fortified in faith. It is crucial for Israel to recognize that what happens is God’s work. **They are called to prepare themselves (Josh. 3:5).** If they do not prepare themselves, they could see God’s work and not understand its true value and significance. Do you prepare yourself for worship? If we are not impressed with the holiness of the living God in public worship, is it because we have not prepared ourselves to see him as holy? Could it be that we fail to see the Lord’s working in our lives simply because we have not prepared ourselves or expect it?

Our God is a living God who works, intervenes, comes, saves, rescues, and counsels his people in all their situations. As Romans 8:32 shares, if God gave up his own Son for us, can we be confident that he will grant us with what we need for our full salvation? **His purpose is to restore his image and make us more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ.** We need to become increasingly dependent on him to produce the fruit of his life within us. This will give us understanding in God’s purposes and confidence in his wisdom and ability to bring our lives to a glorious conclusion.

Our dependence on God will change our worldly perspective. We will see our lives caught up in something greater than our immediate needs or circumstances. We will be used as part of his plan to carry out his purpose for his eternal kingdom. He is a God of the impossible and nothing is outside of his control. He still makes a way for those who prepare themselves to him and who trust and obey him. Just as the ark is a symbol of God’s covenant faithfulness, Jesus Christ is God’s covenant faithfulness for us today, who has promised never to leave us or forsake us (Heb. 13:5). It is this God, for whom the waters rise and stand in a heap, is with us. We need to trust him, and because we trust him, we need to obey him.

Discussion

1. Read the whole chapter through. After reading the story through, list the factors in the story that, on a human level, make this mission seem impossible.
2. In verses 1-6 what instructions did Joshua give to the people so that they would know where to go?
3. What is the meaning of the Ark of the Covenant in this story? What or whom does the Ark of the Covenant represent?
4. What are the functions of the Ark in this story?
5. What do you think is the significance of the statement in verse 4, "You have not passed this way before"?
6. As you read this story in what sense was Joshua the leader of the people and in what sense was God the leader? Did the people follow Joshua to the crossing of the Jordan or did they follow the Ark? What was Joshua's responsibility as leader of the people?
7. In verses 7-13 how does Joshua say the people will know the living God is among them and that he will drive out the peoples of the land before them?
8. In order for the people to see the work of God on their behalf by holding back the waters of the Jordan, what would they have to do first?

9. At one level, God's purpose in performing this miracle is to move his people into the land, but in verses 9-10 what does God say is his deeper purpose in performing this miracle?

Application

1. Do you think it was easier for the people of Israel to follow the priests and the Ark into the flood waters of the Jordan than it is for you to obey God's call to do something "impossible"?
2. What "impossible" challenge are you facing in your spiritual life—in your walk with God? Do you need a breakthrough—a crossing of the Jordan? What first step of faith do you think the Lord is asking you to take so that He can show you his great power and faithfulness to you? Please share the "impossible" challenge with your community group.
3. Have you experienced something like this in your life already—something that required a step of faith first and then a breakthrough followed? Please be prepared to share what happened to you with your community group.

Note: Many of these questions are substantially based upon questions in the Book entitled "Joshua" by Trent Hunter (available in the NFCC bookstore, at Lifeway Bookstore, or online.)

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Joshua to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you lead your groups! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!