

CCC GOD'S STRATEGY FOR YOUR SUCCESS P8

Achieving Through Believing - Part 7 of 8

Joshua 1

Joshua 1. God gave Joshua an impossible assignment here. He said, 'I want you to possess the land.' But Deuteronomy 7:1 tells us that in the Promised Land there were seven enemy nations, each of whom, individually, were larger and stronger than Israel. So in order to possess the Promised Land, in order to become everything they ever desired to be, in order to become and obtain all that God had for them, they were going to have to knock out seven major enemies. See friends even the Promised Land has it's problems. They were going to face 7 things in their life that were large then they themselves could ever handle... and they knew it.

But as I have always said "There is Good News" there is always Good News for us in God's Word, the Bible, and the Good News is God never asks us to do anything without His help and God did ask Joshua and the Israelites to do this on their own either. He gave Joshua a five-point strategy for success in obtaining the promise land and these steps are for us to follow also in obtaining success.

That's what we're going to look at today -- God's strategy for success. The word "success" is used twice in this passage of scripture. In verse 7 and 8 we find the promise where God says, "If you do what I have said here I guarantee you'll be successful." We're going to look at the steps for God's strategy for success. Let's start by looking at Joshua 1:1 *"After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, the son of Nun, 'Moses, my servant, is dead. Now then, you and all of these people get*

*ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I'm about to give them [the Israelites]. In other words, this is graduation day. They're getting ready to go into the land for the first time and God says, *I will give you every place where you set your foot as I promised Moses.* Then He gets very **specific** and **He defines exactly** what Joshua is to take over. *Your territory will extend from the desert and from Lebanon to the great river of the Euphrates, all the Hittite countries, and to the Great Sea on the west and no one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life.*"*

What does this passage teach us? Five principles:

1. BE CLEAR IN YOUR DIRECTION

That's the starting point. God specifically outlines the What? the When? the Where? and the Why? Joshua was to take over the land. He says, "This is what I want you to

do." You need a clear-cut goal. You don't need a vague goal. You need a precise idea:

2. BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR DESIRES.

Typically, once you set a God-given goal, immediately after you set it, you begin to doubt it. You begin to question it. You begin to ask yourself things like "Is this really God's will?" "Does God really want me to have this? Do I really deserve it? Is this just a selfish request? What if I'm wrong?" You start second guessing yourself, and the Bible says, "*A double minded man is unstable in all of his ways.*" James 1:8 You have to not only be clear in your destination, in your direction, what do you want out of life, but you have to be confident in that desire.

That's typical. We often start doubting the very goals that God gives us. The very calling and gifts He has

given each of us. You've got to have confidence. You've got to believe in God. You've got to believe in yourself. You have to believe that God wants to bless your life. You have to be confident in your desires.

Evidently, Joshua even had a problem with this. Over and over he felt very inadequate. In this passage, God keeps having to give Joshua a pep talk. Four times in this passage, God says to Joshua, "You can do it! Go for it!" In verse 6 He says, "*God says to Joshua, 'Be strong and courageous.'*" v. 7, He says, "*Be strong and very courageous.*" v. 9, He says, "*Be strong and very courageous.*" v. 18, He says, "*Be strong and very courageous.*" Four times! He's saying, "Get the point, Joshua!"

The literal translation of this in Hebrew, and this is the way the Good News Bible translates it, is "*Be*

determined and confident." Joshua, believe! Believe I can do it. Believe you can do it. "*Be determined and confident.*"

Why does God say that? Because fear, not problems, is what keeps you in the wilderness, is what keeps you wondering. Even the Promised Land has it's problems, it's giants in it. You have problems wherever you are. But it's fear that keeps you in the wilderness and you must be confident in your desires.

When you are committed to doing the will of God, God can speak through your desires. God can use your desires as guiding steps when you are sincerely saying, "God, I'm predetermined to do Your will." Be clear in your direction and be confident in your desires.

There are some things that rob us of confidence. Typically, three things:

1. Experience. Experience robs us of confidence.

You say, "Experience should make me more confident!"

Not always. It depends on what kinds of experiences you've had. If you've had a bunch of failures, heartbreaks and hurts you might have a tendency to say, "It's never worked before. It's never been done before. Why should I try again? I've always failed." Never let a bad memory ruin your future. Experience will rob you of confidence.

2. Emotions will rob you of confidence. A lot of people -- most people -- tend to make decisions based on their moods. They say things like, "I don't feel like it! I'm just too tired." If you're going to be successful, you have to learn to master your moods. Most of the things that are accomplished in life are accomplished by people who didn't feel like doing it at the time.

3. Excuses. Rationalizations or justifications.

Things like, "I don't have the time. I don't have the money. I don't have the ability. I don't have the energy. All of these are excuses. The Bible says, *"You have not because you ask not."*

The third principle taught in this passage is:

3. BE COMMITTED TO YOUR DECISION.

That means once you have started, never, ever look back. Luke 9:62 says, *"No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of heaven."* Don't look back! Any farmer knows that if he looks back while he's plowing, he's going to plow a weavy line. Commitment is the key to accomplishment. No commitment means you'll never finish anything.

This is what God says in verse 9b *"Joshua, don't be terrified. Don't be discouraged. For the Lord, your God, will be with you wherever you go."* Stick with it! Hang in there! Keep at it! Keep on keeping on! Be committed to your decision. Once you've made it, stick with it.

Look what Joshua did in vs 3:5 *"Then Joshua said to the people, Consecrate yourselves. For tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you."* Consecrate -- that means an act of total, unconditional, unreserved commitment and discipline towards something. It means laying it all on the line. It means going for broke. They were in essence saying, "God, we're going to go for it even if we fail!" And that, says God, is a principle of success. There are some things that typically will discourage you and will tempt you to give up.

1. Problems. Problems will tempt you to give up. I said a few weeks ago in one of the earlier messages in this series on Achieving Through Believing that every idea, every good idea, has something wrong with it. Every good idea has a problem to it. You don't reject something just because it's got a problem. For Christians, a problem should never get you down, well maybe down on your knees talking to God. A problem should be turned into prayer requests. Problems will tempt you to give up. Another thing that will typically discourage you and will tempt you to give up.

2. Pressures will tempt you to give up. You want to say, "This is too much responsibility! I'm going to throw in the towel. I can't do this on my own. I can't handle the pressure. I want to quit. I want to give up."

Another thing that will typically discourage you and will tempt you to give up.

3. People will tempt you to give up, to let go of your commitments. They will disappoint you sometimes. Sometimes you'll be misunderstood. Maybe ridiculed, maybe criticized. The fact is negative attitudes are contagious. So the third key in God's strategy for success is to never give up. Commitment. Be clear in your direction. Be confident in your desires. Be committed to your decisions.

4. BE CORRECTED BY YOUR DEFEATS.

Learn from your mistakes. 1:7 God says, talking to Joshua in His pep talk, *"Be strong and very courageous and be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you. Don't turn from it to the right or to the left* [don't get off

track] *that you may be successful wherever you go.*" Be careful. Don't get sidetracked. When you make a mistake, don't get off course.

Mistakes are part of life. Everybody fails and makes mistakes. If you blew it, welcome to the human race! We all make mistakes. We all blunder. The Bible says, *"All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."* Successful people learn from their failures. They learn from their mistakes.

A young man in a church came to the lead pastor one day and said, "I want to know the secret of success." The wise pastor said, "The secret of success, young man, is making right decisions." The Young man: "Great! How do you learn to make right decisions?" The lead pastor said: "By experience!" The Young man said, "How do

you get experience?" The lead pastor said: "By making wrong decisions!"

Thomas Edison said, "Don't call it a failure. Call it an education." Don't call it a mistake, call it an education. If that's true some of you are highly educated! Geniuses!

- Great achievers know how to do two things.

1) They're big enough to admit it when they're wrong. They can say, "I was wrong." They can admit error.

2) They do something about it. They don't just stand there and moan and groan and have a pity party. They do something about it. They learn from their mistakes.

We always learn more from failure than we do from our successes. I cringe at some of the mistakes that I have made in my life, some poor judgments, dumb things, and things where I've really embarrassed myself. I cringe at

those kinds of boo-boos. But I'm also grateful for the lessons I've learned from those things. One thing about it, I'm a quick learner. It doesn't take me doing the same mistake very many times before I get wise and think, "That doesn't work!" God says, "Learn from your mistakes."

I've learned that you can learn from anybody if you just know the right question. Every one of you could teach me something if I knew the right questions to ask you. Be corrected by your defeats.

5. BE CONSCIOUS OF GOD'S DEPENDABILITY.

This chapter (Joshua 1) is filled with promises from God. God says over and over, "Joshua, you can depend on Me. You can count on it. You can bet your bottom dollar I'm going to be here for you all the time leading you and guiding you and protecting you if you will let me Joshua.

I'm going to take care of you. I am dependable!" In this passage there are four things that God promises to do if we will obey Him. He says, "If you will obey Me in every area of life I promise four blessings." And they are amazing, unbelievable guarantees.

1) God promises if we obey Him, His power. v. 5.

"No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life." If you are in tune with God, you will be invincible. Nothing can stop you. Things that were literally impossible, God says, "That's not impossible! Nothing can stop you if you're really in tune with Me. I'll give you My power."

2) God promises His protection. v. 5 *"As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. And I will never leave you or forsake you."* God says not only will nothing stop you, but nothing can harm you because He is with you.

3) God promises prosperity. v. 8 *"Do not let this book of the law depart out of your mouth but meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything [not some things] written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."* I didn't say that; God said that! You will be prosperous and successful if you obey all the principles in God's word.

4) God promises His presence. v. 9 *"God will be with you wherever you go."* That's an amazing guarantee. The condition is obedience to everything God says in His word. v. 7 "obey all the law", v. 8 "be careful to do everything written". You don't get to pick and choose the rules you like and then throw out the rest. God says there's a reason for every principle in the Bible and if you obey them all or I will say try to... He promises power, prosperity, protection and His presence in your life.

Joshua 24:15 summarizes Joshua's life and why he was such a fantastic success. Joshua is saying, You guys make a decision. Decide if you're really going to be for the Lord or not, but don't be lukewarm, wishy-washy. *"If serving the Lord seems undesirable to you then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the river or the God of the Amorites in whose land you are living. But [this is the key to his life] as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."* Joshua says, "Regardless of what anybody else does, I'm going to live for God. I'm going to be committed to Him and not just me but my family, my household." I want to share something with you if fathers would say that, *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* what a difference we'd see in our families

Praise Team to come forward.... Prayer:

Think about this. I want us to have a little time of personal evaluation. I'm going to ask you some questions and if you can answer these questions positively, then I think you're ready for God's strategy for success.

- 1) Do you know where you're headed in life? What are your deepest desires? What are your goals? Are they clear? Are they specific? Are they worthwhile? Are you letting other people determine what's important in your life?
- 2) Are you confident in your desires? Or do you fall victim to doublemindedness and doubt in your life? Have you let your past control your future? Do you tend to base your decisions on your moods? You say, "I don't feel like it." Do you find yourself making excuses for not even trying?
- 3) What are you really committed to? Anything? A guaranteed way you can be miserable is to live your life

only for yourself. Don't be afraid of making commitments. Have you ever committed your life to Jesus Christ? If you haven't, why not today?

4) What are you learning from your mistakes? Can you see what God is trying to teach you? Are you open to change? Can you admit it when you're wrong? Or do you just stubbornly keep making the same mistakes over and over?

5) Are you willing to follow God's instructions completely? Are you willing to say, "God, I want to follow You, regardless?"

The benefits God has promised are His power, His protection, prosperity, His presence. Your responsibility is to obey Him in all of life, not just the areas that you want to pick and choose.

There's only one person you can put your trust in that will never, ever, let you down, and that's Jesus Christ.

I would challenge you, if you've not opened up your life to Him, do it today. In your heart, right now, just quietly say, "Jesus Christ, I commit myself to You with no strings attached." That may be a little scary. That's ok. It's like jumping the Grand Canyon. He says, "I'll catch you." Say, "I give myself to You the best I know how and I commit myself to You. Be the Savior of my life. Make me a born again person. Give me a new life. I want to follow You."

Lord, we do thank You for Your word and we know that You have outlined these principles for our benefit. Help us to apply them in our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen

Message Notes

GOD'S STRATEGY FOR YOUR SUCCESS

Achieving Through Believing - Part 7

Joshua 1

God never asks us to do anything without His help. He gave Joshua a 5-point strategy for success.

v. 7-8: The Guarantee

1. BE _____ IN YOUR _____ (vs. 1-4)

2. BE _____ IN YOUR _____ (vs. 6, 7, 9,18)

"A double minded man is unstable in all of his ways." James 1:8

Three things that can destroy your confidence:

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3. BE _____ TO YOUR DECISION (vs. 9b)

"No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of heaven." Luke 9:62

Three sources of discouragement

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4. BE _____ BY YOUR DEFEATS (vs. 7)

Example - Chapter 7:1-13
The Defeat at Ai

5. BE _____ OF GOD'S _____
God promises us four things if we obey Him

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(vs. 5a)

*

(vs. 5b)

*

(vs. 8b)

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(vs. 9b)