

II. Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."*

Read Joshua 1:1-9 aloud.

1. What was Joshua's situation in this passage?

What challenges faced Joshua as he prepared to lead the Israelites?

How do you think he was feeling?

2. Who was speaking in this passage?

What did God promise to Joshua? *Find the word "will" in 3-5.*

Which of these promises would be most comforting if you were in Joshua's shoes?

3. What were God's commands to Joshua?

2 – Cross the river

6, 7, 9 – Be strong & courageous

7 – Be careful to obey the Law & meditate on it

Why were these commands so focused on Joshua's personal faith?

What were other aspects of his leadership role where he needed God's guidance?

If his faith was strong, he would be able to lead the people and administer government. But without faith, even the best leaders will make poor choices. (Does that sound like Prov. 4:23 or Matt. 6:33?)

How does your faith help you manage your daily life?

4. What is the relationship between faith and courage?

How are they different? How are they connected?

5. How had Joshua already experienced God being with the people of Israel?

What events had Joshua witnessed where God was with Moses?

What other times did God promise to "be with you"?

Matt. 1:23 (Immanuel), Matt. 28:18, Heb. 13:5 are a few.

In what ways has God promised to be with us? In what sense are we more aware of God's presence than Joshua was? In what sense are we less aware?

Joshua ate manna and had crossed a river on dry ground, but he had no clue that God loved us enough to become human and die for us.

How often are you aware that God is with you? Why don't we feel that all the time?

The big question *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

What are the challenges facing you in the new year? How does your faith help?

III. Other resources

The point – While we may be aware of God's presence every minute of the day, he will never leave us nor forsake.

Prayer ideas

Praise God for who he is.

Thank God for being involved in our lives.

Ask for God to increase your hunger for him.

Pray for a person who would enjoy being part of our group.

Ask God to guide our congregation through the process of discerning whom he has prepared to preach at College Hills.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Tell the kids that you are going to play a game. Their job is to stay in the main room while the adults go out.

Adults go to other rooms, cut up & have a good time, then call kids to join you. Maybe eat yummy dessert and call for the kids to come try it.

While adults are having fun, leader take kids through a reading & discussion of Joshua 1:6-9.

Bring everyone together to talk about this passage.

Have one of the kids read verse 7 aloud. What is God's instruction?

What does it mean to "be careful to obey...do not turn from it to the right or the left..."?

How were the grown-ups trying to get the kids to turn away from my instructions?

What should you do when someone tries to distract you from the right path?

What are the promises in Josh. 1:6-9? How does that motivate you to stay on the path?

LIFE Group Guide

Joshua 1 -- Be strong & courageous

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme: **Be strong & courageous and meditate on God's word, because he will always be with us to help us.**

The December 30 sermon is a fitting conclusion to Steve Flatt's interim preaching ministry. It is an encouragement to be strong and courageous and focused on God's word. It promises that God will always be with us.

Leadership tip: Use your group meetings to encourage people to be strong & courageous. Many people have gifts they are not using for God because they are intimidated or need a little encouragement or coaching. When you affirm your group members, you affirm the work that God has already done in their lives.

I. Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- Our church has been blessed by Steve Flatt's preaching for the last five months. What was something memorable that Steve said?
- Which Christmas present are you most likely to recycle (give to someone else later)?
- As you think about the new year, what feeling comes to mind?