

Joshua Part 5 - "Step" (6-11-23)
A well worn path to a brand new place

Series Overview & Goals

- Learn from Joshua's life - how to move forward and take new territory
- A journey of identity, freedom, leadership, victory, finding a home, and becoming a people

Review: Moses hand-off to Joshua - (Invest in, Stand with, and Embrace the future)

- Who are your spiritual parents?
- Who are your spiritual children?
- How can you invest in them?
- Stand and serve with them?
- Embrace them and the season you are in together now?

Today: "Step" - First steps into the promised land (Joshua chapters 3-5)

Context: 40 years is coming to a close - the next generation is taking their place & moving into new territory

1) Step of Faith - follow the Lord's presence (Pray)

Joshua 3:5-6 (ESV)

(5) Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." (6) And Joshua said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on before the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

Note: Get ready to watch God work - pay attention & follow His Presence

Joshua 3:11-13 (ESV)

(11) Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan. (12) Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man. (13) And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap."

Note: To move into the Promised land, you've got to take a step of faith, but you are not alone!

*Jordan River is at its highest point (vs. 15)

*To escape Egypt, God just opened the way, but to take new territory - we've got to take a risk!

Joshua 3:17 (ESV)

Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

Note: Our step of faith is on firm footing, when we are following the Lord's leading

Application: Our action should always be a re-action to the leading of the Lord, therefore we need to pray & obey!

2) Remember what God has done - stop and acknowledge the miracle (Praise)

Joshua 4:1-3 (ESV)

(1) When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, (2) “Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, (3) and command them, saying, ‘Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests’ feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.’”

Note: Remember the 12 men - same number as the 12 spies from 40 years prior - before they cowered in fear, now they will testify of God’s power & faithfulness!

Joshua 4:5-7 (ESV)

(5) And Joshua said to them, “Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, (6) that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’ (7) then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.”

Note: Don’t just rush across, grab hold of what has just transpired. Notice, “put the stone on your shoulder,” don’t just grab a pebble. This was a hugely significant moment - You need a marker to remember!

Joshua 4:20-24 (ESV)

(20) And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. (21) And he said to the people of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ (22) then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’ (23) For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, (24) so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

Note: Remember last week’s sermon - We need to connect the dots of God’s generational faithfulness, so we see our place in that larger story!

Application: Before rushing ahead and charging forward into the promise, we need to stop all along the way to remember & praise God. We need these memorial stones as reminders for future steps of faith.

3) Radical Obedience as they enter the land - it hurt, it cost them something (Prepare)

Joshua 5:1-2 (ESV)

(1) As soon as all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel. (2) At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time.”

Note: The enemy is running scared, but they slow down to obey rather than rush in!

Explain - everyone born in the wilderness had not been circumcised

Joshua 5:7-8 (ESV)

(7) So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised. For they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way. (8) When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed.

Note: They put themselves at risk in enemy territory, in order to consecrate themselves to the Lord

Application: Stepping into new territory requires radical obedience, and it will often come with sacrifice. We are better off preparing our hearts for faithful obedience and surrender, than any other “smart” planning or preparation we can do.

Prepare to Obey should be our daily mindset, no matter the cost!

Conclusion: Our Response - We need to . . .

- **Pray - so we can continue to follow the Lord's leading!**
- **Praise - so we remember the Lord's power & faithfulness and He gets all the Glory!**
- **Prepare - stepping into new territory requires radical obedience - it'll cost something!**