

“JOSHUA: Influencing Others – *Transitions*” (6.25.17)

Ever been stuck in life -- not knowing what your next move should be -- all
you can do is pray & ask God to intervene – to show you which path to walk down?

Essentially: life is a series of transitions & choices that ultimately determine where
we end up in life.

+ (TWO TYPES) of transition in life:

- ✓ 1st type of transition = ones we anticipate and are generally positive (getting out of college, singleness to marriage, starting a new job, having a baby)
- ✓ 2nd type of transition = ones that are dreaded and are generally negative transitions that we find ourselves facing a **NEW NORMAL** we didn't sign up for:

+ *Broken marriage/divorce* is devastating to everyone involved, **a new career that you worked hard to get into only to realize it isn't good a good fit, a sudden death** of a loved one/or friend, **healthy one day to being diagnosed with a serious illness.**

Transitions in life are inevitable – more often than not they arrive without warning.

I remember a season in Becky's and my life that we got to experience these (TWO
TYPES) of transitions all at the same time.

(TWO TYPES of Transitions @ once)

+ 1st *ministry we were stuck – stuck in a ministry of a dying church*; stuck doing all the things that still have to be done in a volunteer-less church; *stuck barely eking out a living between youth ministry and two part-time jobs*. After 8 years of service, and literally being told that I could stay at this church forever, but I would never have a future as a preaching pastor, *Becky and I began praying – no, begging – God for a different opportunity*. We actually went on a 6 week Daniel Fast in order to seek God's favor and direction, but God remained silent. It was the very weekend that I told Becky that God must want us in Nashville that Tim Coop from Tucson,

Arizona came to do a revival. Becky and I were hooked; we knew we wanted to be where Tim Coop was. So the day that he finally called us was like a dream.

✚ **Transitioning to Tucson was the greatest.** I literally got my dream job. Small group ministry was a new field in those days. My job was to connect with as many members of Pantano Christian Church as possible. So, I got to go horseback riding and called it a meeting. I got to go bike riding, and called it a meeting. I got to go hiking, and called it a meeting. . . you get the picture. I was paid to play all day long in a church that was 10 times the size of the one I had just left in a city that sunshined 350 days a year.

✚ **But this transition was not so great—somewhat pain-filled.** Becky and I had always lived near family. We said good-bye to both sets of parents and had to give our family dog away because it would not have tolerated the extreme temperatures of the desert. We got a real picture of how far away Tucson was when it took us 3 days to drive there. We moved to a place where we quite literally knew no-one. We rented a small apartment sight unseen, and it turned out to be a bit like a dungeon – the only window being under a stair case.

Transitions are a natural part of life—sometimes they come in waves and are absolutely unrelentless.

This morning we begin a new series in **the Book of Joshua** that vividly describes (1) major transition after another for Joshua & nation of Israel.

Before we dive into this amazing OT book – I thought we'd trace back thru scripture to see how Joshua became such a powerful man of influence.

I. **JOSHUA** – how this OT leader **built his influence thru every transition.**

A. **Numbers 11:28** or p. 115

✚ Joshua was born in a slave camp in Egypt. He was trained at the feet of Moses. Today we might use the term “intern.” The man who spoke with God face to face

trained and disciple Joshua. He was Joshua's mentor. (*You want to be a man or woman of God? Spend time up close and personal with godly people...*)

B. ® Exodus 33: 8-11 or p. 71

+ JOSHUA was tutored & shaped by Moses.

C. ® Exodus 17: 8-16

+ For 40 years, Joshua and Caleb tromped around the wilderness, following Moses. It was Moses' time to lead, and they did not try to usurp his authority. Even though Joshua himself was aging, he was obedient to God, waiting for God's timing. Instead of pushing their own agenda, good leaders wait upon God.

D. ® Numbers 13: 16 or p. 116 (SIGNIFICANT TRANSITION – had to choose)

✓ ® Numbers 13: 17-20

✓ ® Numbers 13: 25-33

✓ ® Numbers 14: 1-12

✓ ® Numbers 14: 26-30

+ As followers of Christ, every time you go through a major life transition, anticipated and positive or dreaded and negative, takes us to a **NEW NORMAL**, there are **principles we need to know and put into practice...** there will be a scary intersection where the promises of God meet the reality of life and what path we choose ultimately determines where we end up.

+ At this intersection/in times of transition (where the promises of God meet the reality of life) *there is often both FEAR and COURAGE:*

- **Fear:** an internal alarm that goes off within us in some fashion when we're facing imminent danger, feeling threatened, or feeling helpless to avoid or change the situation.
- **Courage:** the quality of mind or spirit that enables us to meet danger or face opposition or the challenges of life with fearlessness, calmness, and firmness.

E. Moses transitions out of leadership & Joshua transitions into leadership

Joshua's NEW NORMAL = 600,000 able-bodied military aged men.
(including older men, women, and children) between 2 to 3.5 million souls to watch over.

✚ Moses instruction begin to make sense b-c Moses knew how difficult being a godly leader, family man, servant of God could be!

- ✓ ® Deuteronomy 31: 7-8 or p. 163
- ✓ ® Deuteronomy 31: 23
- ✓ It's why Moses said "...**be strong and courageous**"

F. ® Deuteronomy 34: 5-12

II. **JOSHUA** takes over the reigns of leadership when he was 85 years' old
and he serves for 25 years as the leader of Israel.

A. ® Joshua 1: 1-6 or p. 168

B. God has already told him he will be victorious – So why would he need strength and courage?

✚ God's promises of victory always come with conditions.

C. ® Joshua 1: 7-9

THEN implies if you don't do these things it won't happen... conditional -- *you will be successful in all you do!*

✚ God didn't give Joshua a war plan for victory.

- ✓ **His success would come only** by keeping his eyes on the Lord **and** doing exactly what He commanded in His Word.
- ✓ This was not a task to be done with natural strength but with obedience.

D. This is the same blueprint for victory that God gives us!

1. **This biblical truth** is illustrated throughout the pages of scripture

- a. The Holy Spirit releases His power the moment you take a step of faith.
- b. **In Joshua 3** we find Joshua faced w/an impassible barrier the floodwaters of the Jordan River receded only after the leaders stepped into the rushing current in obedience & faith.

2. **OBEEDIENCE** unlocks God's power!

- a. God waits for you to act 1st!
- b. Don't wait until you feel **powerful or confident.**
- c. **Move ahead in your weakness;** doing
the right thing in spite of your fears & feelings.

I'll close with the question that started our conversation -- **SO HOW DID JOSHUA BECOME SUCH A MAN OF INFLUENCE?**

III. In every transition -- Joshua chose to trust God instead of himself.

A. **TWO PATHS** that you can choose to follow-trust:

When you find yourself at **another confusing intersection/transition** in your life... between God's promises and the reality of your life, there are two paths you can take:

1) **1st path = Path of Self-Deception** (I can handle it – I know best)

- I've never met someone who intentionally screwed up their life.
- Every time it was someone doing what they thought was best for them at the time, or what was the easiest way at the time.

✚ ® Proverbs 3: 5-6 or p. 482

2) **2nd path = Path of Faith—Obedience**

✚ ® Joshua 1: 7-8 (Joshua's key to being a man of influence)

B. Spiritually = *ignorance is NOT Bliss.*

Some of us think that we will be able to stand before God someday and say I did the best I could based on what I knew, but that won't work.

1) The first step of Faith *is to be careful with scripture.*

2) At every intersection/transition in life the very first question should be is: **What does God's word say about this?**

C. Daily meditation on God's Word is the key to courageously accomplishing all that He sets before us. **It includes five essential elements.**

1) **Reading.** We must first know what God has said in His Word.

2) **Believing.** Then we should believe His Word and His promises.

3) **Absorbing.** Next, we absorb Scripture into our thinking so we understand it, and it governs our thoughts.

4) **Obedying.** Knowing what God has said, we respond with complete and full obedience. This is the goal of meditation.

5) **Trusting.** ® | Corinthians 10: 13 or p. 876

God goes before us. God promised to take care of the enemy before the Israelites arrived.
They still faced battles, but God
assured them of victory if they had faith and obeyed Him.