



## LESSON 1 // BELIEVE IT'S POSSIBLE

While we may be on a solid track in certain areas of our lives, there are usually one or more aspects in which we could use a fresh start. We may need to overcome some pain or hurt, or venture into something new God's been pointing us toward but we have resisted. Of course, we all need to grow deeper and stronger in Christ and a fresh start is always helpful along the journey!

This begins with real faith that a fresh start is possible! God sees a greater you and wants you to believe Him and take steps of faith in this process of growth. Let's see what we can learn about this from the Book of Joshua as he was preparing to lead Israel into the Promised Land:

**Joshua 1:1-9 (NIV)** *After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: <sup>2</sup> "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. <sup>3</sup> I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. <sup>4</sup> Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. <sup>5</sup> No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. <sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. <sup>7</sup> Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. <sup>8</sup> Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. <sup>9</sup> Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

To believe that a fresh start is possible, we must:

### 1. Hear God's voice.

The world around us and inside us is noisy. There are many voices demanding our attention and action. But there is only one voice we really need to tune into—the voice of God.

Joshua had to learn this lesson. Moses, the great leader of Israel, was dead. We can imagine that Joshua heard lots of voices that questioned ("What now?"), challenged ("How now?"), paralyzed ("Not you!") and expressed doom ("Never now!") to him. In the midst of all the external and internal voices, Joshua had to listen for another voice, a better voice, an accurate voice. "The Lord said to Joshua..." was the beginning of Joshua's fresh start.

To hear God's voice, we must believe that He speaks, listen for His still, small voice of hope and possibility and tune out the negative voices. Left to ourselves we will always slide into negativity. God's voice comes to lift you up—to give you hope and tell you that a fresh start is possible.

## 2. Confront our history.

Your history is the track record of any given area of your life, positive or negative. This affects the way you think about the possibilities of your present and future. While history is powerful, it is not necessarily predictive and negative history has to be confronted and dethroned. Notice how God handled this with Joshua:

**Joshua 1:2 (NIV)** *Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.*

What Moses had been unable to do because of the sinfulness of God's people, the Lord was going to help Joshua do. To believe that a fresh start is possible, we must confront, dethrone and counteract our negative history with God's promises. Our history, no matter how riddled with failure and false starts, does not dictate the possibilities of our future!

## 3. Believe in God's ability.

Although Moses was dead, God wasn't. He was alive and promised Joshua, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" as Joshua led Israel on this new venture. Only God has the power to give us the fresh start we need. The Lord will give us His power if we trust Him for it and submit our will to His. Notice how Jesus called His disciples to believe in God's ability:

**Matthew 19:26 (NIV)** *Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*

**Mark 9:23b (NIV)** *Everything is possible for one who believes.*

## 4. Embrace God's grace.

God required something from Joshua as He prepared and equipped him to lead Israel into the Promise Land. The Hebrew word translated "be strong" in Joshua 1 means "to grasp firmly." Joshua needed to firmly grip God's grace so he would have the courage to press forward, and he would do this by getting God's Word into his heart.

We also must get a firm grip on God's grace for a fresh start and this means getting "the word of His grace" (Acts 20:32) into our hearts. Only then will we be "prosperous and successful" in what the Lord calls us to do, as we meditate on His Word "day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it" (Joshua 1:8).

## Discussion Questions

1. What kind of "voices" make it hard for you to hear God's voice? How can you tune those out and tune in more attentively to what God wants to say to you?
2. What negative history do you need to confront and counteract in order to make room for God's promises for your present and future?
3. How can you embrace God's grace and power in order to "be strong and courageous" through Him in this season of your life?