

JUST CHECKING IN #247 October 2022
Everything Changes Except What Really Matters

Memorizing scripture has been a part of my spiritual disciplines starting back when I got saved in 1972. I was disciplined on the Morrisville campus of SUNY (State University of New York) as a brand new believer. Dale Marshfield and John Austin were two guys who took me on as their “project” to disciple me and get me free from my addiction to alcohol and porn and get me into the life changing Word of God. 50 years ago they gave me a little packet of bible verses from the Navigators called the TMS – Topical Memory System. First was the “Salvation and Assurance Packet”, then the “Walking by Faith” packet... as they memorized these verses and had me check their accuracy, it became something I wanted to do, too! My pastor, Tom Kingston, had me memorize and quote Galatians 2:20 before I was baptized the next summer. All those men who were my encouragers and mentors were fully committed to memorizing scripture. They told me... “It’s not the Bible on your bedstand that helps you in the battle. It’s the Bible in your mind and heart that helps you fight sin, think truth, and grow up in Christ.” That was true then and it’s still true today. Even though I have transitioned from teen to geezer, I still need that Word just as much today. I just finished memorizing Joshua 1 in the ESV and I want to share with you some of the truths that are so encouraging to me in this chapter.

Everything changed except what really mattered!

Joshua 1:1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, 2 “Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. 5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 8 This Book of the

Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” 10 And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, 11 “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.’” 12 And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, 13 “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, ‘The Lord your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.’ 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, 15 until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.” 16 And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you, as he was with Moses! 18 Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

EVERYTHING CHANGED

OK, let's get real. It seems like everything is changing so fast we can't get our heads around it. But that's not a new experience for God's people. Put yourself in their sandals with Joshua in chapter 1.

#1 LEADERSHIP CHANGED - MOSES WAS GONE

THEIR AMAZING, FAITHFUL LEADER... the guy who talked with God face to face like a friend... the guy who raised his staff and brought the 10 plagues on Egypt... the guy who raised his staff and split the Red Sea... the guy who raised his staff and brought the Red Sea waters down on Pharaoh's entire army and destroyed them.... the guy who prayed and stayed God's judgment.... the guy who prayed and brought water from the rock... the guy who prayed and saw God send manna... the guy who prayed and was used to give military victory... **WAS DEAD! MOSES WAS**

DEAD!!!! For 40 years they followed him and now they didn't even know where God buried him. Joshua steps in as God's new leader and I am certain most of the people wished it could go back to the good old days with Moses at the helm.

#2 LOCATION CHANGED - CROSSING THE JORDAN RIVER

They had lived for 40 years in the desert. They were used to that. It had been primarily peaceful as they followed the pillar of cloud for 40 years. Now, they were going into a land only Joshua and Caleb had ever set foot in.

#3 LIFESTYLE CHANGED - PEACE WAS GONE - CONSTANT BATTLES

And they were going to face continual battles for the next 7 years of conquest, and then another 7 years of settling into the land taking full possession.

#4 DIET CHANGED - MANNA WAS GONE

Joshua 5:12 tells us the day they celebrated Passover and ate of the grain of Canaan, the manna stopped! They had lived on manna for 40 years. Now it was gone. The guarantee, the safety net of supply was stopped.

#5 THE LEADING CHANGED - THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE WAS GONE

For 40 years they had followed the pillar of cloud and fire, but as soon as they cross the Jordan there is no longer any mention of it. Now they were to seek God's direction and leading in His Word. See Joshua 1:7-8.

Just try to imagine how huge these changes were for the entire nation. Everything seemed to have changed overnight. Yet, what mattered hadn't changed at all. Look with me at Joshua 1.

#1 GOD'S PRESENCE HADN'T CHANGED Joshua 1:5 *Just as I was with Moses, so I shall be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.* The cloud was gone but God wasn't! Moses was gone, but God wasn't! The Manna was gone, but God wasn't! The only thing that really mattered hadn't changed one bit! Nor has it changed with you and me! Matt 28:20 *I am with you always!* Hebrews 13:5 *I will never leave you or forsake you!*

#2 GOD'S POWER HADN'T CHANGED Joshua 1:5 *No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.* God had made it clear as a bell! He would protect and

empower Joshua so that he would cause the nation to fully inherit the land God gave them.

#3 GOD'S PROMISE HADN'T CHANGED Joshua 1:6 *Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.* God had promised this land to His people back in the days of Abraham, 600 years before. That promise was still valid and God was keeping it! God cannot lie! Titus 1:2 We have that same inerrant, inspired Word of God today to fill us with confidence and courage to walk with God no matter the changes that surround us.

#4 GOD'S PLAN HADN'T CHANGED Joshua 1:14-15 *"...but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."* God had planned this from eternity past! God revealed it to Abraham 600 years earlier in Genesis 15:13-14 *Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.* Nothing takes our God by surprise! It's all in His plan. Whether good or evil, obvious or confusing, sooner or later... Romans 8:28 *"all things are being worked together for good for those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose."*

#5 GOD'S PRECEPTS HADN'T CHANGED Joshua 1:8-9 *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."* God's precepts, commands, revealed will was still in His Word that He gave to Moses on the mountain. Obedience is still required of His children, regardless of how out of date it may seem to our present culture. Holiness, full devotion to Christ, complete confidence in His Word, full surrender to His revealed will, uncompromised confession of Him as the only way to heaven, and joyful obedience to His commands is still and will always be the rule for the

believer. Society changes its rules constantly. God does not! Here we stand! May God help us to stay joyfully faithful as we declare His glorious gospel to a world in desperate need, just as it has been since we left Eden!

“Lord, thank you for being the UNCHANGING ONE, the SAME yesterday, today and forever! We are so thankful for YOU as our ANCHOR in the midst of the storms that surround us. We rest in YOU, we rejoice in YOU, we delight in YOU, we seek YOU and we ask YOU to help us remember and not forget that the only things that really matter haven’t changed, will not change and cannot change! We bless YOUR NAME for being our UNCHANGING ROCK AND REDEEMER. We give you our hearts and our praise in Jesus’ name, amen.”

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4

Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts.

We are Pilgrims in Paradox.

Welcome to THE JOURNEY

Remember, you are very special to us and we thank God for you.

Ron & Val Berrus