

Bay City Wesleyan Church
July 10, 2016

Sunday Morning 07-10-2106

Life is full of new challenges. Where will you find the courage to face your new challenge? God's promises become reality as the Holy Spirit leads and you follow in obedient faith.

This is the time for recommitment, for all of us to say we still do what Jesus wants us to do.
<http://bible.com/events/63100>

Meet This Summer's Challenges with Courage

Life is full of new challenges. What new challenge are you facing right now? Yesterday's portion of courage is gone. Where will you find the courage to face your new challenge?

Join us this summer as we uncover new sources of courage in the adventures of Joshua. He faced the challenge of turning wanderers into warriors, sojourners into soldiers, and travelers into trailblazers. Jesus helped him and he will help you. Starts today.

We live in a highly individualistic culture. We all think in terms of "I, myself and me." (If you just thought, "Oh, no I don't" then you proved my point.

As a result, sermons, messages, and Bible study lessons focus on an individual's response. At the conclusion of my messages, I usually invite you as an individual to do something in response to a particular passage from the Bible.

Today is different. Today I will address us as a congregation, as a church family with a mission. At the end of this message, I'll call all of us renew our collective commitment to follow Jesus.

Moses was the Lord's man to set his people free from slavery in Egypt. Joshua had been his right hand man. Shortly before Moses died, he instructed the people to renew their covenant promises in the land the Lord was about to give to them.

He told them to put six tribes on one side of a designated valley with the other six tribes facing them from the other side. Once they were assembled the priests and worship leaders would call out the blessings of obeying the Lord and the curses of disobeying him. After each one the people would declare, "Amen." The whole ceremony is recorded in Deuteronomy 27-28.

Joshua 8:30-35 NLT

Then Joshua built an altar to the Lord, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal. He followed the commands that Moses the Lord's servant had written in the Book of Instruction: "Make me an altar from stones that are uncut and have not been shaped with iron tools." Then on the altar they presented burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord. And as the Israelites watched, Joshua copied onto the stones of the altar the instructions Moses had given them. Then all the Israelites—foreigners and native-born alike—along with the elders, officers, and judges, were divided into two groups. One group stood in front of Mount Gerizim, the other in front of Mount Ebal. Each group faced the other, and between them stood the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Lord's Covenant. This was all done according to the commands that Moses, the servant of the Lord, had previously given for blessing the people of Israel. Joshua then read to them all the blessings and curses Moses had written in the Book of Instruction. Every word of every command that Moses had ever given was read to the entire assembly

of Israel, including the women and children and the foreigners who lived among them.

Sermon in a Sentence:

Yesterday's promises are only as good as today's promise keeping.

How can we recommit to Jesus' mission and improve our promise keeping?

1. Make prayer the top priority again!

This kind of prayer breaks our self-sufficiency and rebuilds us with the sure knowledge that Jesus' grace is enough.

This kind of prayer humbles us under the weight of sin's guilt and shame and restores us with the freedom of Jesus' forgiveness.

2. Get back to completing Jesus' mission.

Jesus was crystal clear on his mission here on earth. "I came to seek and save those who are lost." Luke 19:10 (NLT)

We must be crystal clear on our mission here in the Bay City area. "We came to seek and save those who are lost."

3. Pray, get back on mission, and reinforce the importance of the Bible.

The Bible comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable. If we're afflicted and not receiving comfort from our Bible reading, then something is off target. If we can't remember the last time the Bible disrupted our thinking and acting, then something is wrong.

If the lessons in our Bible study groups or the messages we hear on Sundays leave us indifferent, unchallenged, and unchanged, then something is really wrong.

If something is wrong, then we need to go back to step one and PRAY!

4. Pray, get back on Jesus' mission, reinforce the importance of the Bible, and corporately restate our commitment.

This is the time to declare, "Jesus, we promised to follow you. It was our desire then and we still do plan to obey you."

A New Point of View

We've been part of the 80 percent of churches that hold even or decline because we don't reach the lost. But our King Jesus calls us to breakout of that rut to join the 20 percent who grow by carrying on Jesus' mission.

Our Commitment

1. WE WILL PRAY, ALONE AND TOGETHER.

By thanking Jesus for his forgiving, transforming grace
By asking for the Holy Spirit's help in our lives and in our service to the lost ones
By listening to Jesus' direction for us

Amen! So be it!

2. WE WILL COMPLETE THE MISSION OF JESUS IN THE BAY CITY AREA

By praying for His love to motivate all we do
By inviting the unclaimed to follow Jesus with us
By warmly welcoming those who meet with us

Amen! So be it!

3. WE WILL PROTECT THE HARMONY OF JESUS' CHURCH

By acting in love toward each other
By refusing to gossip, grumble or complain
By following the leaders Jesus establishes

Amen! So be it!

4. WE WILL SERVE OTHERS AS JESUS DID

By developing a servant's heart
By volunteering our time, gifts, and talents
By being equipped to serve

Amen! So be it!

5. WE WILL SUPPORT OUR TESTIMONY TO THE COMMUNITY

By living in obedience to Jesus' teachings in the Bible
By attending public worship faithfully
By giving generously and regularly

Amen! So be it!