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THE 66-BOOK 8-WEEK GROUP BIBLE STUDY SERIES • BOOK 06 OF 66

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

JOSHUA

Yehoshua — “the LORD saves” • An 8-Week Group Bible Study

By Greg and Kayla Gibson

WEEK 1 OF 8 • GENERAL / MIXED GROUP EDITION

Be Strong and Courageous — Joshua 1:1–3:17

Scripture Scope: Joshua 1:1–3:17 (ESV) • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

PARTICIPANT STUDY EDITION

Synchronized Section-by-Section with the Leader Guide Edition · Includes Group Reflection Workspace

Joshua — 8-Week Group Bible Study (Participant Study Edition)

Week 1: Be Strong and Courageous (Joshua 1:1–3:17)

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- **The title:** The book is named for its main human character. His Hebrew name, Yehoshua (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ), means "the LORD saves." Moses gave it to him, changing it from Hoshea (Numbers 13:16). In Greek the name is Iēsous, the same name the angel gives to Mary's son (Matthew 1:21).
- **The setting:** The book opens "after the death of Moses" (1:1), with Israel camped east of the Jordan on the plains of Moab, exactly where Deuteronomy ended. It closes with Joshua's death and burial in the land (24:29–30).
- **Its place in the Bible:** In English Bibles, Joshua begins the historical books. In the Hebrew Bible it opens the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings), the story of Israel in the land from entry to exile.
- **The structure (four parts):**
  - Entering the land (1–5): the commission, Rahab, the Jordan crossing, and the camp at Gilgal.
  - Taking the land (6–12): Jericho, Achan and Ai, Gibeon, and the southern and northern campaigns.
  - Dividing the land (13–21): the tribal inheritances, the cities of refuge, and the Levites' towns.
  - Keeping faith in the land (22–24): the altar of witness, Joshua's farewell, and the covenant at Shechem.
- **The big themes:** God's presence ("I will be with you," 1:5); courage rooted in God's word (1:7–9); the land as a gift and an inheritance; holiness and judgment; grace to outsiders such as Rahab and the Gibeonites; promises kept ("Not one word... had failed," 21:45); and the call to choose whom to serve (24:15).
- **Why it matters:** Joshua shows God keeping the promise of land he made to Abraham (Genesis 12:7; 15:18–21). It also leaves readers waiting for a greater rest than Joshua could give (Hebrews 4:8–10), a rest found in the one who bears Joshua's name.

How This 8-Week Study Works

Designed for weekly small groups, mini-churches, and community gatherings (75–90 Minutes per session) rather than daily homework checklists, each week of Joshua invites you to slow down and walk with Israel into the land together through six repeatable sections:

- **Section X.1 — Opening:** Sets the scene, the Week at a Glance, Head, Heart, and Hands objectives, the Opening Frame, and the Opening Entry Question.
- **Section X.2 — Historical & Literary Context:** Places the week's chapters inside the structure of Joshua and the ancient Near Eastern world.
- **Section X.3 — Movement 1:** The week's first guided passage: Guided Scripture Reading, Anchor Verses, Teaching Narrative, and Group Discussion Questions.
- **Section X.4 — Movement 2:** The week's second guided passage, following the same flow.
- **Section X.5 — Canonical Horizon:** Traces how the passage echoes across Scripture and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- **Section X.6 — Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer:** Moves the week's study into everyday life, previews next week, and closes in prayer.

Key anchor verses are printed in each section for quick reference. Longer focal passages are read aloud together from the ESV. Where Joshua gives long lists of kings, boundaries, and towns (especially in Weeks 5–7), the study summarizes them so the group can follow the story without reading every name aloud.

Choosing a Bible Translation: Top 5 Translations Compared

Every English Bible translation falls along a spectrum between two primary approaches: word-for-word translation (formal equivalence, which prioritizes literal accuracy to the original phrasing and sentence structure) and thought-for-thought translation (dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes immediate modern readability by translating idioms and ideas into natural contemporary expressions). Here is how five widely used English translations compare:

- **ESV (English Standard Version) — Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Follows the wording and sentence structure of the original Hebrew and Greek closely while using modern English; well suited to close study.
  - Cons: Because it tracks the original sentence structure, some phrasing can feel more formal than everyday speech.
- **NIV (New International Version) — Balanced (Between Word-for-Word and Thought-for-Thought)**
  - Pros: Widely read; balances accuracy to the original languages with natural, everyday readability.
  - Cons: Because some idioms are rendered as modern expressions, a few literal wordplays or technical terms can be less visible.
- **NLT (New Living Translation) — Thought-for-Thought**
  - Pros: Warm and conversational; reads smoothly aloud and helps readers follow the big picture of long passages.
  - Cons: Because it prioritizes meaning over literal phrasing, it can be harder to use for close word study.
- **CSB (Christian Standard Bible) — Optimal Equivalence (Balanced)**
  - Pros: Stays close to the original words where possible while smoothing awkward phrasing into natural modern English.
  - Cons: Because it is a newer translation, some well-known verses may sound different from the wording many readers remember.
- **KJV / NKJV (King James Version & New King James Version) — Traditional Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Historic cadence that shaped English literature and church history; the NKJV updates archaic pronouns ("thee/thou") while keeping the classic rhythm.
  - Cons: Often reads like older English poetry, with complex sentences and archaic or formal vocabulary that can be harder for modern readers to follow.

This study quotes the ESV.

Greg & Kayla's Recommended Study Bibles

Having a trusted study Bible on hand is one of the best ways to go deeper as you read through Joshua:

- **Greg's Favorite Study Bible:** The MacArthur Study Bible (ESV), which contains extensive explanatory notes beneath almost every verse, ideal for detailed study.
- **Kayla's Favorite Study Bible:** The ESV Study Bible, containing over 20,000 study notes, articles, and explanations.

The 8-Week Joshua Study at a Glance

Week	Title & Passage	Movement 1 / Movement 2	Canonical Horizon
1	**Be Strong and Courageous** (1:1–3:17)	The Commission and the Scarlet Cord (1:1–2:24) / Crossing the Jordan (3:1–17)	The greater Joshua; Rahab's faith; the God who will not leave
2	**Stones of Remembrance, Walls of Jericho** (4:1–6:27)	Memorial, Circumcision, and the Commander (4:1–5:15) / The Walls Fall (6:1–27)	Remembering God's acts; the heart circumcised in Christ; faith that brought the walls down
3	**Trouble in the Camp** (7:1–8:35)	Achan and the Valley of Achor (7:1–26) / Ai Taken and the Covenant at Ebal (8:1–35)	Holiness among God's people; a door of hope; Christ who bore the curse
4	**Deception and Deliverance** (9:1–10:43)	The Gibeonite Treaty (9:1–27) / The Day the LORD Fought for Israel (10:1–43)	Outsiders brought near; keeping our word; the LORD who fights for his people
5	**The Land Taken, the Land Remaining** (11:1–13:33)	Hazor and the Kings Defeated (11:1–12:24) / Much Land Remains (13:1–33)	Already and not yet; the LORD as inheritance
6	**Inheritance by Lot** (14:1–17:18)	Caleb and the Portion of Judah (14:1–15:63) / Joseph's Portion and the Daughters of Zelophehad (16:1–17:18)	Our inheritance in Christ
7	**Not One Word Failed** (18:1–21:45)	Shiloh and the Seven Remaining Tribes (18:1–19:51) / Refuge, Levites, and Rest (20:1–21:45)	Christ our refuge; every promise kept; the rest still to come
8	**Choose This Day** (22:1–24:33)	The Altar of Witness (22:1–34) / Joshua's Farewell and the Covenant at Shechem (23:1–24:33)	One Lord and one people; choosing whom we serve; the rest Joshua could not give

WEEK 1 OF 8

WEEK 1 SESSION GUIDE · JOSHUA 1:1–3:17

Week 1: Be Strong and Courageous

Scripture Scope: Joshua 1:1–3:17 (ESV) • Focal Passages: Joshua 1:1–9; 2:8–14; 3:9–17 • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

Section 1.1

Opening: Be Strong and Courageous (Joshua 1:1–3:17)

Passage **Joshua 1:1–3:17**

Opening

Moses is dead. For forty years he led Israel through the wilderness, and now he lies buried on the far side of the Jordan. The people are camped on the plains of Moab, and the river, swollen with spring floods, stands between them and the land God promised to Abraham. The LORD speaks to Joshua, Moses' assistant, and gives him a command and a promise: be strong and courageous, for I will be with you.

Over these first three chapters, Joshua takes up the leadership, two spies meet an unlikely woman of faith in Jericho, and the whole nation steps into the Jordan behind the ark of the covenant.

Week 1 At a Glance

Scripture Scope	Joshua 1:1–3:17 (the commission, Rahab, and the crossing of the Jordan)
Focal Passages	Joshua 1:1–9; 2:8–14; 3:9–17
Literary & Structural Anchor	Chapter 1 is built on the repeated charge chazaq ve'emats (חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ), "be strong and courageous" (1:6, 7, 9, and from the people in 1:18). The phrase frames the whole chapter and ties Joshua's courage to God's presence and God's word. Chapters 1–3 then move toward one great act of 'avar (עָבַר), "passing over": the word appears again and again in chapter 3 as the people cross the Jordan, so the week's story moves from the command to cross (1:2) to the crossing completed (3:17).
Big Idea	The LORD who was with Moses is with Joshua; his people can step forward in courage because God is present, his word is sure, and his mercy reaches even an outsider like Rahab.

Week 1 Learning Objectives (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD **Know the Story of the Handoff:** Understand how Joshua continues Deuteronomy, what God's commission to Joshua includes, and how the Jordan crossing echoes the Red Sea.

HEART **Trust the God Who Goes Before:** Receive the promise "I will not leave you or forsake you" (1:5) as a source of courage, not a demand to feel brave.

HANDS **Step Forward on God's Word:** Identify one step of obedience that requires courage this week and take it, trusting God's presence.

Opening Frame: After the Death of Moses

Deuteronomy ended on Mount Nebo. Moses looked across the Jordan at the land he would not enter, died there, and was buried by God, and Scripture noted that no prophet like him had arisen since (Deuteronomy 34). Joshua begins in the very next moment: "After the death of Moses." The great leader is gone, the river is in flood, and the promise is still unfulfilled. What happens to God's people when the one they relied on is no longer there? Joshua's answer begins not with Joshua's ability but with God's presence: "Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you" (1:5). The question for this week: where does real courage come from when we step into something new? Before we read together, take a moment to share with the group:

Opening Entry Question (Icebreaker)

1.1 Q1 (Opening Entry Question): Think of a time you stepped into a role, a job, or a responsibility after someone you respected. What helped you take that first step?

Section 1.2

Historical & Literary Context: After the Death of Moses (Joshua 1:1–3:17)

Passage Joshua 1:1–3:17

Entering the World of the Jordan Crossing

1. Historical Background

Israel is on the plains of Moab at the end of the forty years in the wilderness. Joshua son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, has been Moses' assistant and was commissioned as his successor (Numbers 27:18–23; Deuteronomy 31). The book does not name its author. Jewish tradition (Talmud, Bava Batra 14b–15a) credits Joshua with most of it, with later additions such as the account of his death. Phrases such as "to this day" (for example 4:9; 5:9) show that the book was completed some time after the events.

2. Dating the Events

There are two main views. An early date places the entry into Canaan around 1406 BC, based on the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1. A later date places it in the thirteenth century BC. The Merneptah Stele (about 1208 BC) is the earliest text outside the Bible to name a people called Israel living in Canaan.

3. Cultural Setting

In the fourteenth century BC the Amarna Letters show Canaan as a patchwork of small city-states, each with its own king, loosely under Egyptian control, and troubled by unsettled groups called the 'Apiru. Jericho (Tell es-Sultan) is one of the oldest known cities, set near springs in the Jordan Valley.

4. Literary Structure of Joshua 1:1–3:17

- **God's commission to Joshua** (1:1–9)
- **Joshua's orders to the officers and to the eastern tribes** (1:10–18)
- **The spies and Rahab** (2:1–24)
- **Preparation and crossing** (3:1–17), continued into chapter 4

5. Key Themes

God's presence; courage tied to the Book of the Law; unity of all twelve tribes, including those already settled east of the Jordan; an outsider who confesses the LORD; and the crossing as a new exodus.

6. Theological Considerations

The book presents the land as the LORD's gift, promised to Abraham, and the conquest as God's judgment on Canaan's long wickedness (Genesis 15:16). It also shows from the start that the line between "inside" and "outside" God's people is crossed by faith, as Rahab shows.

7. Relevant Scholarly Insights

Many critical scholars read Joshua as part of a larger history from Deuteronomy through Kings, shaped in the time of the kings or the exile. Evangelical scholars generally see the book as rooted in early sources close to the events, with later editorial notes. Both views take the book's close ties to Deuteronomy seriously.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.2)

1.2 Q1: Joshua begins "after the death of Moses," exactly where Deuteronomy ended. Why might it matter that God's story does not stop when a great leader dies?

1.2 Q2: Joshua tells the eastern tribes, who already have their land, to cross and fight alongside the others (1:12–15). What does this say about how God's people are meant to share one another's burdens?

1.2 Q3: The land is described as a gift God promised long before (1:2–6). How does seeing something as a gift, rather than an achievement, change the way you receive it?

Section 1.3

Movement 1: The Commission and the Scarlet Cord (Joshua 1:1–2:24)

Passage **Joshua 1:1–2:24**

Guided Scripture Reading

Open your Bible to **Joshua 1**. Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: Joshua 1:1–9** (focal passage) — The LORD commissions Joshua: cross the Jordan, every place your foot treads, I will be with you, be strong and courageous, meditate on the Book of the Law.
- **Summary of Joshua 1:10–18** — Joshua orders the people to prepare provisions; the eastern tribes promise to cross with their brothers and answer Joshua with their own "be strong and courageous."
- **Reader 2: Joshua 2:1–7** — Two spies go to Jericho and lodge at the house of Rahab; she hides them on the roof under stalks of flax and sends the king's men away.
- **Reader 3: Joshua 2:8–14** (focal passage) — Rahab's confession of the LORD and her request for kindness; the spies' oath.

- **Summary of Joshua 2:15–24** — Rahab lets them down by a rope; the scarlet cord is the sign; the spies hide three days and report, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands."

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **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. I will not leave you or forsake you.
>
> **Joshua 1:7–9:** 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. 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. 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."
>
> **Joshua 2:9–11:** and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.
>
> **Joshua 2:18:** Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household.

Teaching Narrative: Courage, a Confession, and a Cord

1. "Moses My Servant Is Dead" (Joshua 1:1–2)

God names the loss plainly and then gives a command: arise, go over this Jordan. Grief does not cancel God's purpose; the promise passes to a new generation.

2. The Promise of Presence (Joshua 1:3–6)

Every place their feet tread, God has given, as he promised Moses. No one will be able to stand before Joshua. The center of the promise is relationship, not territory: "I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you" (1:5).

3. Courage Rooted in the Word (Joshua 1:7–9)

The second "be strong" is tied to the law. Joshua's success depends on keeping the Book of the Law in his mouth and meditating on it day and night (compare Psalm 1:2). "Good success" here means acting wisely and carrying out God's purpose, not wealth or comfort.

4. One People (Joshua 1:10–18)

Joshua calls the eastern tribes to keep their promise. They answer with obedience and with God's own words back to Joshua: "Only be strong and courageous" (1:18). Courage is given and received within the community.

5. An Unlikely House (Joshua 2:1–7)

The spies come to the house of Rahab, a prostitute, whose home was built into Jericho's wall. She hides them and misleads the king's men. The text records her actions without praising her deception; the New Testament later commends her faith and her welcome of the spies.

6. Rahab's Confession (Joshua 2:8–14)

Rahab knows what the LORD has done at the Red Sea and to Sihon and Og, and she confesses, "the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath." Her words echo Deuteronomy 4:39. A Canaanite outsider says what Israel was taught to say. She asks for chesed (חֶסֶד), steadfast kindness (2:12), the same loyal covenant love the LORD shows his own people, and she asks for a sure sign.

7. The Scarlet Cord (Joshua 2:15–24)

The cord in the window marks her house for rescue, as the blood on the doorposts marked Israel's houses at Passover. The spies return with a report of faith, the opposite of the ten spies forty years earlier (Numbers 13–14).

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.3)

1.3 Q1: Three times the LORD tells Joshua to be strong and courageous, and each time he gives a reason (1:6, 7, 9). What do those reasons say about where real courage comes from?

1.3 Q2: Joshua's courage is tied to keeping God's word in his mouth and meditating on it day and night (1:8). What does meditating on Scripture look like in an ordinary week, and how might it make someone braver?

1.3 Q3: The eastern tribes answer Joshua with "Only be strong and courageous" (1:18). When has someone else's encouragement given you courage you did not have on your own?

1.3 Q4: Rahab, a Canaanite and a prostitute, confesses that "the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath" (2:11). What does it say about God that one of the first people of faith in Joshua comes from outside Israel?

1.3 Q5: The scarlet cord in the window was the sign that Rahab's household would be saved (2:18). What does this sign remind you of from Israel's earlier story, and why might God give his people visible signs of his promises?

Section 1.4

Movement 2: Crossing the Jordan (Joshua 3:1–17)

Passage Joshua 3:1–17

Guided Scripture Reading

Open your Bible to **Joshua 3**. Read aloud in this order:

- **Reader 1: Joshua 3:1–6** — The people camp by the Jordan; the officers command them to follow the ark at a distance; Joshua tells them to consecrate themselves.
- **Summary of Joshua 3:7–8** — The LORD promises to exalt Joshua so that Israel will know he is with Joshua as he was with Moses; the priests are told to stand still in the river.
- **Reader 2: Joshua 3:9–17** (focal passage) — "The living God is among you": the ark of the Lord of all the earth goes ahead; the waters stop at the town of Adam, far upstream; the priests stand on dry ground; all Israel crosses.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Joshua 3:5:** Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.”
>
> **Joshua 3:10–11:** And Joshua said, “Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan.
>
> **Joshua 3:17:** 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.

Teaching Narrative: The Living God Goes Before

1. Waiting by the River (Joshua 3:1–4)

After three days by the Jordan, the officers tell the people to watch for the ark and follow it, keeping a distance of about 2,000 cubits (about half a mile), "that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before" (paraphrase of 3:4). God's presence leads; the people follow on a road they have never walked.

2. "Consecrate Yourselves" (Joshua 3:5)

Before the wonder, the people prepare their hearts. God's coming "wonders" call for readiness and holiness, as at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:10–11).

3. Joshua Exalted (Joshua 3:7–8)

God promises to confirm Joshua before all Israel, not for Joshua's glory, but so that the people will know God is with him as he was with Moses (fulfilled in 4:14).

4. The Living God and the Lord of All the Earth (Joshua 3:9–13)

The crossing will be the sign that the living God is among them and will drive out the nations. The ark is the ark of "the Lord of all the earth": the God of Israel rules the whole world, including the river and the land.

5. The Waters Stand (Joshua 3:14–16)

The Jordan is overflowing its banks at harvest time. As soon as the priests' feet touch the water, the river stops far upstream at Adam and is cut off.

6. On Dry Ground (Joshua 3:17)

The priests stand firm in the middle of the riverbed while the whole nation passes over. The crossing echoes the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21–22), and the next chapter will make the link explicit (4:23).

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.4)

1.4 Q1: The people were to follow the ark "for you have not passed this way before" (3:4). What new road are you facing right now, and what would it look like to follow God's lead on it?

1.4 Q2: Joshua told the people to consecrate themselves because "tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you" (3:5). How might preparing your heart change the way you experience what God does?

1.4 Q3: Joshua says the crossing will show "that the living God is among you" (3:10). What difference does it make to believe that God is living and present, not distant?

1.4 Q4: The waters did not stop until the priests' feet touched the river (3:13–15). Why might God ask his people to step forward before they see the way open?

1.4 Q5: The priests stood firm on dry ground until "all the nation finished passing over" (3:17). What does this picture suggest about the role of leaders and of those who stay until everyone else is safely through?

Section 1.5

Canonical Horizon: The Greater Joshua, Rahab's Faith, and the God Who Will Not Leave

Passage Joshua 1:9

Tracing the Thread Across Scripture

Joshua's name, Rahab's faith, and God's promise never to leave all reach forward to Jesus Christ and to the people he gathers. Turn to each passage as the connections are traced.

1. The Greater Joshua (Matthew 1:21; Hebrews 4:8–11)

Jesus bears Joshua's name, "the LORD saves." The angel tells Joseph to call him Jesus "for he will save his people from their sins." Hebrews says that if Joshua had given Israel rest, God would not have spoken of another day; a Sabbath rest still remains for God's people, and Jesus leads them into it.

2. A Greater Successor Than Joshua (Hebrews 3:1–6)

Moses was faithful as a servant in God's house; Christ is faithful as the Son over it. Joshua carried on Moses' work; Jesus brings it to completion.

3. The Commission Renewed (Matthew 28:18–20)

Jesus sends his disciples into all nations with a promise that echoes Joshua 1:5, 9: "I am with you always, to the end of the age." Courage for the mission rests on the presence of the one who sends.

4. Passing Through the Waters (1 Corinthians 10:1–2; Matthew 3)

Paul speaks of Israel being "baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea," and Jesus is baptized in the Jordan, the same river Israel crossed. These are resonances, not direct claims in Joshua: God's people pass through water into new life under his leading.

5. Rahab's Faith (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25)

Hebrews names Rahab in the hall of faith: by faith she did not perish with the disobedient, because she had welcomed the spies. James points to her as one whose faith showed itself in action.

6. Rahab in the Family of Jesus (Matthew 1:5)

Rahab becomes the mother of Boaz and an ancestor of David and of Jesus. The outsider rescued by a scarlet cord becomes part of the Messiah's family line.

7. "I Will Not Leave You or Forsake You" (Hebrews 13:5–6; Psalm 118:6)

Hebrews takes God's promise to Joshua and gives it to every believer: "I will never leave you nor forsake you," so we can say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear." Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

8. Be Strong in Grace (2 Timothy 2:1)

Paul tells Timothy, his successor, to be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, echoing the handoff from Moses to Joshua.

Anchor Verse (ESV)

> **Joshua 1:9:** 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.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.5)

1.5 Q1: Joshua and Jesus share the same name, "the LORD saves." What did Joshua's leadership accomplish, and what does Jesus accomplish that Joshua could not (Hebrews 4:8–11)?

1.5 Q2: Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, is named in the hall of faith (Hebrews 11:31) and in the family line of Jesus (Matthew 1:5). What hope does her story give to people who think their past puts them beyond God's reach?

1.5 Q3: Hebrews 13:5–6 gives God's promise to Joshua, "I will never leave you nor forsake you," to every believer. Where do you most need that promise this week, and how might it change what you are afraid of?

Personal & Group Application (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	God's commission to Joshua rests on God's presence and God's word, and the crossing shows the living God at work among his people.
HEART	Courage is not the absence of fear but trust in the God who says, "I will be with you," a promise that reaches even an outsider like Rahab.
HANDS	Faith takes a step on God's word, keeps that word close day and night, and encourages others to be strong and courageous.

Section 1.6

Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer

Application

Take a few minutes to move this week's study into everyday life. Discuss these three questions together and write down what you want to remember:

1.6 Q1: Where is God asking you to "be strong and courageous" right now, and which of his promises can you hold on to as you do?

1.6 Q2: What is one practical way you could keep God's word "in your mouth" this week, such as memorizing a verse, reading aloud, or praying through a passage?

1.6 Q3: Who is someone outside your usual circle who may be closer to faith than you think, as Rahab was, and how could you welcome them this week?

Looking Ahead to Next Week

Recap: In Week 1, God commissioned Joshua with a promise of his presence and a call to courage rooted in his word; Rahab confessed the LORD and was promised rescue by a scarlet cord; and Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground behind the ark.

Transition: The crossing is not yet finished. Next week twelve stones are taken from the riverbed so that future children will ask, "What do those stones mean?"

Week 2 Overview — Stones of Remembrance, Walls of Jericho (Joshua 4:1–6:27): Movement 1, Memorial, Circumcision, and the Commander (4:1–5:15), covers the twelve memorial stones, the new generation circumcised at Gilgal, the first Passover in the land, the end of the manna, and Joshua's meeting with the commander of the LORD's army. Movement 2, The Walls Fall (6:1–27), covers the seven days of marching, the fall of Jericho, the ban on the city, and Rahab's rescue. The Canonical Horizon traces remembering God's acts, the heart circumcised in Christ, and the faith that brought the walls down.

Focal Readings to Preview

- Joshua 4:1–9
- Joshua 4:19–24
- Joshua 5:13–15
- Joshua 6:1–5
- Joshua 6:20–25

My One Concrete Step for the Week Ahead

Write down or name aloud the specific rhythm, boundary, or conversation you want to practice before next week's gathering:

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by inviting each person to share a one-sentence takeaway or prayer request, then pray together along these lines:

Closing Group Prayer

LORD our God, you were with Moses, and you are with your people still. We confess the fears that keep us standing on the riverbank when you have told us to go forward. Give us hearts that keep your word in our mouths and meditate on it day and night, so that our courage rests on your promises and not on ourselves. Thank you for Rahab, who heard what you had done and trusted you, and for the mercy that welcomed an outsider into your people. Thank you most of all for Jesus, the greater Joshua, who will never leave us or forsake us. Make us strong and courageous to follow wherever you lead this week. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.