

## **Be Strong and Courageous Small Group Guide**

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. If you could be an Olympic champion in any event, which event would you choose?
2. What is one common fear (e.g. heights, snakes, spiders, the dark, storms) you have?

**Read the following passage:** Joshua 1:1-9.

The Israelites were oppressed by the Egyptians for generations. Their deliverance out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses was a truly miraculous event and subsequently became the defining act of salvation for the people of Israel before the coming of Christ. The journey to the promised land, however, did not go as planned. The people rebelled. An entire generation died in the wilderness. The book of Joshua tells the story of a new generation embracing the promises of God and entering into the land God prepared for them. Their experiences can help us take steps to embrace the purposes God has for us in our own generation.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. In the book of Joshua, the first recorded words spoken by the Lord to Joshua are, "Moses my servant is dead." Why is it often so difficult for us to accept reality? Are there any areas of your life in which you are prone to ignore reality (e.g. your physical health, your spiritual health, your finances, your relationships, etc.)? Explain. Do you have anyone in your life who pushes you to acknowledge reality when you are in denial?
2. What did the Lord do to fill Joshua with hope? Overall, how hopeful are you in your life right now?
3. God's spoken words and the Law of Moses were central elements of God's instructions to Joshua. What role should the Scriptures play in our lives? In what ways and with what frequency are you currently engaging the Scriptures?
4. Which of the following promises of God are most significant to you right now?
  - The promise of eternal life (for those who follow Jesus) (John 3:16)
  - The promise of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-17; Acts 1:8)
  - The promise of spiritual family (see, for example, Mark 10:29-30)
  - The promise of fruitfulness (John 15:5, 8)
  - The promise of answered prayer (John 15:7)

- The promise of provision for those who are generous (2 Corinthians 9:10-11)
5. Why do you think God told Joshua to be strong and courageous so many times in the span of a few verses? What are some ways living for Jesus requires courage in our present context? Overall, how courageously are you living with respect to the following categories?
- Using your time to connect with God
  - Starting conversations with others about Jesus
  - Giving generously to the church
  - Choosing devotion to God over moral compromise
  - Prioritizing God's kingdom over personal success
  - Choosing love over retaliation

**Pray**