

NEXT STARTS NOW

1976—

Be Strong and Courageous (Week 1)

Preacher: **Stephen Scott**

Worship:

Song Suggestions:

- *Same God — Elevation Worship*
- *Firm Foundation — Maverick City Music*

As you worship, pray:

“Lord, as I step into what’s next, strengthen my heart. Give me courage. Speak to me.”

Check-in:

The start of 2026 has been full of God’s activity – Vision Sunday, Prayer & Fasting, By Faith Conference, Consecration.

Share together:

Where have you sensed God preparing you for “next” over the past few weeks?

(Perhaps in faith, clarity, correction, courage, or expectancy.)

Synopsis of Message:

This Sunday marked the beginning of our new series:

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Just like Joshua, we too are in a season of transition, standing on the edge of the promises God has for our church and our lives. Joshua is stepping into leadership after Moses’ death – a 600-year-old promise is finally about to be fulfilled. Yet the people cannot enter the Promised Land with old mindsets, old fears, or wilderness thinking.

THE CALL IS FOR ALL OF US

Whether you’ve been in church 50 years or 5 minutes - every one of us is invited to take steps of faith. Our steps do not just impact our own lives - they shape the future of households, generations, and communities yet to come.

WHAT GOD SAID TO JOSHUA, HE SAYS TO US

Over and over, God commands: “Be strong and courageous.” Joshua 1:6,7,9

But this is not hype or motivational talk. Each time God says it, He gives Joshua a reason.

Our strength and courage flow from:

1. HIS PROMISES

God reminds Joshua: “I have given you the land.” His promises are trustworthy – He has a perfect track record. All of God’s promises are “Yes and Amen” in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20).

2. HIS PRINCIPLES

God tells Joshua to meditate on the Word, day and night (v 7,8) - not because God needs us to study more, but because His Word gives vision for tomorrow and wisdom for today. The Word:

- Anchors us
- Lights our path
- Strengthens us
- Shapes our decisions
- Aligns us with God’s ways

A prescription doesn’t work if you never take it. Transformation requires application.

3. HIS PRESENCE

God bookends the command with His presence: “As I was with Moses, I will be with you.” “I will not fail you or abandon you.” – Joshua 1:5 “The Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

His presence is behind you and before you - in your workplace, your home, your studies, your highs and your lows. Wherever you go, He is with you. Psalm 139:1-12

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BOTTOM LINE

Your NEXT does not start when everything feels ready.

Your NEXT starts when you obey by faith.

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Discussion Questions:

1. Promises

Which promise of God is strengthening you in this season?

What has God said that you need to stand on again?

2. Principles

What step can you take to deepen your relationship with God's Word?

What Scripture has God been reminding you of lately?

3. Presence

Where do you need the reminder:

"God is with you wherever you go"?

4. Old Mindsets

Joshua's generation couldn't enter the promise with a wilderness mindset.

What old mindset, habit, or fear needs to "die" in you so you can step into what's next?

5. Faith Steps

What step of faith is God asking you to take now – not "one day", but now?

Prayer Focus:

Pray for:

- Bold courage based on God's promises
- A renewed hunger for God's Word
- Deep awareness of God's presence
- Old mindsets to fall away
- Strength to take the "next" step by faith
- Families, marriages, singles, and young people to walk in courage

Pray Joshua 1:9 over each other:

"Be strong and courageous... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Check-out:

Complete this sentence:

"My NEXT starts now... and my next step of faith is to _____."