

Courage Like a Mustard Seed

Joshua 2: 1-14

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Every Christian is called to courage. Joshua 2 is a detour (it adds little to Joshua's conquest; you could jump straight to Joshua 3 from Joshua 1 and you wouldn't feel like you missed much). Detours remind us that life is not in our control. How do we face them? 3 Instructions:

Instruction #1. Don't Ignore the War

God called Joshua to take the Promised Land. Joshua sent spies to check out the land, especially Jericho, which would be their first major battle. To Joshua, this was not a detour - but a calculated investment. But God had ordained for it to become a detour. The spies strategically take refuge in a brothel, only to be discovered by the King of Jericho. He wanted to use the spies to destroy Israel (Eve's offspring). The war had already begun between the King of Jericho (Satan's offspring) and the King of Israel (Yahweh).

In the same way, *the war has already begun and we must not overlook our Enemy*. We are on a battlefield. God has purposes for our detours - but Satan is all about infiltrating, sabotaging, and destroying God's work and God's purposes. We do not respond to the enemy with fear - but with courage (Eph. 6:10-11). Just as God delivered Israel from Pharaoh, and the 2 spies from the King of Jericho, God can deliver us. There are two ways to stand against the schemes of Satan (Eph 6:17-18). We need to be praying God's word daily. The way God's word becomes a sword - is when we pray it. Praying God's word is our weapon in the Spirit against our Enemy. We need to pray God's word over our church and our church's vision.

Instruction #2. Let God Choose Our Allies

The attention turns to a prostitute called Rahab. When the King demanded Rahab to hand over the spies, she deceived the Jericho police by hiding the spies on the roof. Rahab and her family could be sentenced to death for treason. But God was about to turn her calculated investment into the biggest detour of her life.

Even though Rahab was a prostitute and a deceiver, she is celebrated in the New Testament. Why? 3 thoughts to make sense of Rahab's untruths:

Firstly, Rahab was not a worshipper of Yahweh at that time and lying may have been a way of life for her. Secondly in her culture, loyalty was valued over truth. Rahab's deceptions reveal her newfound loyalty to Israel and Yahweh! Thirdly, this was war. Rahab's answers would either save or condemn the spies' lives. The bottom line is that the Bible doesn't condemn Rahab for her deceptions - so neither should we. Instead, the Bible celebrates that because of Rahab's (an unlikely sinner) courage, this detour didn't become a dead-end.

God supplies our desperate detours in the most unexpected ways, through the most unexpected people. They are God's timely blessing to us. God has placed "Rahab's everywhere His kingdom is expanding, who may not be Christians. God uses them, in order to humble us and help us find security in Him. Let God choose our allies.

Instruction #3. Muster that Mustard-Seed Courage

Rahab proclaims 3 truths to the spies (vv. 9-13). First truth: Yahweh is unstoppable (v. 9, 11). Rahab realized that God is above all other gods. No deity in heaven, no man on earth could save Jericho from God's wrath. Second truth: Yahweh is undeniable. She claims everyone knew what Yahweh had done through Israel (vv. 10-11). Third truth: Yahweh is the only answer. Rahab realised that God alone could save her from His anger and destruction. She pleads for His mercy over her life and her family's.

True courage doesn't come from believing that God is powerful and unstoppable, but from concluding and confessing that God alone is Savior. When our hearts not only tremble before His power but are also lifted to His grace, only then, can we experience true strength. *Courage blooms like a mustard seed when we realize there is no greater fear than God, and yet no brighter hope than Him.* God alone has the power to destroy body and soul, yet God alone has the power to give life in abundance. When we trust in God, courage blooms because we realise (like Rahab) that God is merciful, compassionate, and good. He doesn't despise the weak and wavering.

We have no idea what detours we are going to experience in our lives, but the truth is God is pursuing us. He is the God who put a whole military campaign on hold, just to save one pagan prostitute and her family. He is the God who leaves the 99 sheep to seek out the 1 that got lost. Jesus made the ultimate detour when He came to earth in human flesh, to die in our place. And He rose to life so that we might enjoy His life. Be strong in the Lord. Take up the sword of the Spirit. Pray His word with boldness. Look for His mercy. Trust in His goodness.