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GOD'S FORMULA FOR SUCCESS Part 4

Joshua 1:1-19

***INTRODUCTION :**

Mission Report by Tony

Joshua 1:¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying:² "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. ⁵ No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe 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. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Pray

I. GOD'S PERSON FOR SUCCESS Joshua 1:1-2

***II. GOD'S PREPARATION FOR SUCCESS**

III. GOD'S PROMISE OF SUCCESS Joshua 1:2-5

The Promise of God

1. God has prepared something great for you.

:² "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

2. God who is great is with you.

Look :

⁵ No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

Last week : I've told you that God had to emphasize to Joshua that "Moses is dead."

And Moses was everything to the Israelite's life. He led the people out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea. Through him, the Israelites witness a lot of miracles and now "Moses is dead."

And at this point, He says, "*as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.*"

Quote : When you feel like a midget taking the place of a giant, you appreciate all the encouragements God sends your way. What a new leader needs is not advice but encouragement. – Warren Wiersbe

Let's look further how God is encouraging Joshua through those words :

Illustration : There was this great violinist who was really good at playing violin but when he is performing, the auditorium would be only full of people who knows him. But in one concert, the auditorium was unusually full with all kinds of people. He was ecstatic. He talked with the producer of the concert, why is that so? The producer told him that tonight is going to be a special night, the Stradivarius violin is in town and you are the one who's going to play with it. (A Stradivarius is a very special violin made in the 1800s that was made by "Stradivarius"...it is said that there are only 500 violins in existence. A Stradivarius can cost millions). So obviously, the violinist knew that the people came to hear him play the Stradivarius and not necessarily because of his great musical talent. So he obliged and played the Stradivarius. But after the first piece, the people applauded and he was hearing the compliments of the people from the audience. They were saying, "Doesn't the Stradivarius sound great?" The people were praising this million dollar violin and yet he never heard someone praising him. So the violinist was so disappointed during the intermission. After the intermission, the violinist played a wonderful piece, it was one of the best musical piece that the people has ever heard in their life. A lot of people were touched by the sheer beauty of the music.

But after the piece, people started praising again the Stradivarius. What the violinist did is he stood up, got the violin by its neck and smashed it on the floor. The people were shocked and some even became furious. They told him, "How can you do that? Don't you know that a Stradivarius costs at least a million dollars?" The man said, "Yes, I know." Then he pulled out something from the back of his chair and said, "And here it is." And the one I smashed is only a \$50 violin.

Note : God was encouraging Joshua, the reason Moses was able to do what he was able to do is because he is an instrument in His hands. And now He is saying, as I used Moses mightily, I will use you mightily too.

Look, God will not share His glory with anyone or to anything.

Isaiah 42 : 8 “I am the LORD; that is my name!

*I will not give my glory to another
or my praise to idols.*

Note : Usually, we do this, even in the spiritual realm. We act as if someone was saved because of us. It's a great privilege to be used by God.

Do you know why God was able to use Moses mightily?

Numbers 12 : ³ (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)

IV. GOD'S PROCESS FOR SUCCESS Joshua 1:6-9

⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe 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. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Before anything else : We have been talking about success for the past four weeks and I've already talked to you about what a successful man is,

Show : “One who has the greatest possession and enjoys it.”

And the greatest possession a man can have is

“Christ in you, the hope of glory” Colossians 1:27.

As Christians, you already have “Christ in you”, the thing is how do we now enjoy the truth that our Lord is in us.

How can we enjoy a gift that was given to us?

1. We take it or possess it.
2. But after possessing it, we must use it.

Illustration : You remember my story before when I borrowed Tony's sports car? I've been admiring it. But the only time I enjoyed it is when I took it, drove it and felt its speed and power.

Note : Just like the Christian life, God in Christ has already given us the power to live the Christian life, we just have to practice it and then you will feel the pleasure of it.

Example : Forgiveness. The Bible says to “forgive”, you will only feel the power and pleasure of forgiveness, if you forgive! And it’s such a wonderful feeling.

Important : Do you know the other word for forgive? It’s “release”. It’s releasing the grudge, the hatred, the bitterness in your heart.

And of course : After forgiving, we choose instead to “love”.

Illustration : I remember the time in the Philippines I really hated this person. It was eating me up. Before going to sleep, I’m thinking about his face, what he did to me, the lies and the slander and I kept on replaying the words and the things that he did to me. I was so disappointed with God that he was letting this man get away with what he’s doing. Many times, I tried to take matters into my own hands to “punish” him by also tarnishing his reputation. I was so obsessed with this person that one day I learned that one of his sons is saying that, he can hire somebody to “take care of me”. This son of his I know was staying illegally in the U.S. and I already planned to call the U.S. Immigration to tell their names and address. But something inside of me was saying not to do it. But, oh how I wanted to do it! But I know the Holy Spirit is saying, “Don’t!” It was such a struggle with God until when I went home, I closed the room and cried out to God and asked Him for help. That’s the time I decided to release my grudges, my pain and decided to forgive. Oh, it was like a refreshing shower! It can only be possible because Christ is in me, I just have to take hold of Him and use His power!

And you know what? After I have forgiven, that’s the time that even material blessings started to flow in our lives!!!

This is the reason : The book of Joshua is called the book of Ephesians in the Old Testament. We have been studying the book of Ephesians for almost two years already and just like the book of Joshua, God has already “saved” His people from the hold of Egypt, just like our Lord has already “saved” us from the hold of sin and of Satan in our lives. Now God is asking them to “take possession” and “enjoy” His blessings, just like what the book of Ephesians is teaching.

Now remember God has given these blessings already to His people :

Genesis 17: ⁸ The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”

Joshua 1: ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you,

Important : God is now just asking them to take possession of it and enjoy it!

Illustration : Some of you have heard some preachers or in some seminars that we are called the “Joshua Generation”, it’s not just for the youth. We are called the Joshua Generation because God has already given us Christ, the greatest blessing that we can have and He is just asking us to take it and live lives that are different from the world!!! We are called to live Christ-like lives because Christ is in us.

Now, how do we take possession of these blessings? What’s the process?

1. Be strong and courageous!

*⁶ **Be strong and of good courage**, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.*

*⁷ **Only be strong and very courageous**, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe 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. ⁹ **Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage**; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”*

Observe : God did not instruct them “how to” defeat the enemies inside the promised land. What he emphasized three times is, “Be strong and of good courage or be strong and very courageous.”

He even emphasized two things :

1. *“very” courageous*

Note: the Hebrew word for very means “overflowing” so it means, you must have an abundance of courage

2. *Have I not commanded you?*

Note : It’s not only this time that God told Joshua to “be strong and courageous” *Deuteronomy 31: ²³ The LORD gave this command to Joshua son of Nun: “Be strong and courageous, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised them on oath, and I myself will be with you.”*

Context : God was already taking Moses and He told this to Joshua.

So why would God emphasize to Joshua, “Be strong and courageous?”

IMPORTANT : It is because God knows our greatest enemy is not the one that’s outside of us. OUR GREATEST ENEMY IS HERE INSIDE OF US.

Note : As “humans”, our natural reaction when there’s a problem that’s bigger than us or a trial that is too much to bear is to be discouraged and to be afraid.

This is the reason even as young children, we have many fears.

There’s this story of 6 year old kid who was already upstairs and was about to sleep. But he got thirsty. So he asked his mom to get him a glass of water. But the mom said, “You’re big already, you can get it yourself.” But the lights downstairs were already closed and it was dark and he’s going to be alone. So he went back to his mom again, to get him a glass of water. The mom said, “Don’t be afraid honey, Jesus is going to be there with you.” So what the boy did is he shouted from the top of the stairs, saying “Jesus, please get me a glass of water.”

Note : Our tendency as humans when we face something that seems bigger than us is that we become discouraged and afraid.

This is the reason God has to emphasize to Joshua.

IMPORTANT : God is saying : Don’t worry about the problem, I have already taken care of that! What you have to do is don’t be discouraged and run away from your problem. Be strong and courageous.

This is the reason God said,

⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

In short : He’s saying, I have taken care of the problem. Just be strong and courageous.

So now :: HOW CAN WE BE STRONG?

Etymology : strong, “chazaq” which means “to tie”, “to bind”, “to hold”

Illustration : There’s this movie about scientists whose passion is to study “tornados”. You know tornados, it just sucks up everything in its path. I remember this scene that the tornado they were studying changed paths and they saw an abandoned farm house to take shelter. As the tornado was approaching, they found a water pipe that they know the pipes really went deep into the ground. They got a strong rope and tied their waste to the pipe. The tornado came eating up the farmhouse, the tractors and everything and they were holding on to this pipe. But the tornado was so strong that they lost grip on the pipe and their feet was high up in the air already and the tornado was trying to pull them to their death. But the only thing that saved them is the strong rope and pipe that was deep in the ground.

In short : God is the strong pipe and our Lord Jesus is the strong rope!!! Even if we lose our grip, just as long as we are “tied” to Jesus, we will never fall, we will be strong.

Philippians 4: ¹³I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Etymology : “do” “ischyo” “overcome”

So based on the original language and the context, we can interpret this as, “I can overcome or endure all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Look :

2 Chronicles 16:9 ⁹ For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.

Imagine : God is looking at us right now and encouraging us to hold on to Him, to bind ourselves, to tie ourselves to Him. This is where we will get our strength.

Now : How can we BE COURAGEOUS?

Etymology : courageous “amats” (it’s imperative)...it’s a neutral word, so the word use can be negative or positive so it will depend on the context

Two word pictures in the Hebrew :

1. harden the heart
2. “to be alert” (used for horses, nimble, to be fast on your feet to avoid)

Let’s talk about the negative connotation first:

People “harden their hearts” and are “fast on their feet to avoid” when they hear something that they don’t agree with even if it’s true or correct and can be helpful to them. In short, this people don’t agree or take “good advise” even if it’s good for them because it’s not what they want to hear. In short, this people are those who want to be “corrected”

I love what Pastor Ed once shared to us : You want to have more people in church just teach about “prosperity”, “good health” and etc etc.. and more people will go the church BUT when you preach about sin and hell, and when your topics are rebuking and correcting, then people wouldn’t want to hear that.

Look at how Paul describes what the Word of God is :

2 Timothy 3 : ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

Now the positive connotation of the word “amats’

To harden the heart means, not to allow discouraging words or situations to affect you. You make no room for them. You do not let it enter your heart.

To be nimble, fast on your feet means to avoid people or situations that will discourage you.

THAT'S HOW WE BECOME COURAGEOUS

Remember : Sometimes, when you are facing big trials or problems or sufferings some people without knowing it can be discouraging.

Difference : Encouraging is you put “in” courage to another person; Discouraging is taking “out” the courage from another person.

Illustration : I remember one time when Chicay was in the middle of fighting cancer and she was undergoing “chemo”. One well-meaning person approached me and said, “You know what, my aunt also had that type of cancer this year and she did not make it.”

Remember : Courage is hardening your hearts or avoiding “words” or “situations” that might discourage you specially when you’re going to face problems.

Look : During times of impending trials, we look onto God’s Word for ENCOURAGEMENT!!!

One of the most encouraging promises in the Bible when I’m undergoing impending trials or already inside the battle is this (I love this whenever Chicay and my sister-in-law sings this in our church in the Philippines)

Isaiah 43:1 But now, this is what the LORD says—

he who created you, Jacob,

he who formed you, Israel:

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

² When you pass through the waters,

I will be with you;

and when you pass through the rivers,

they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through the fire,

you will not be burned;

the flames will not set you ablaze.

³ For I am the LORD your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;

Note : We should always look at God’s Word when facing challenges in your life.
THIS IS THE REASON WHY THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CALLED THE COMFORTER

You will find comfort In His Words!!!

Next week : We will study why the Word of God is important in your spiritual life.

S.D.G.