

The High Call of God: Characteristics of Faith from the life of Joshua

This Bible study is written by Marleen Bahr who coordinates the women's ministries at West Vancouver Baptist. She has give permission to *Women in Focus* to make this material available to our churches for their use. We are very grateful for her willingness to share this material and her gifts with us. Thanks so much!

Any questions you may have can be directed to Marleen at bobrmar@shaw.ca by email.

- Lesson #1** **An Introduction to Joshua as a leader among the Israelites**
Numbers 11: 10 – 30
- Lesson #2** **Faith Sees the Potential and Challenges Doubt and Fear**
Numbers 13: 16 – 25
- Lesson #3** **Faith Faces the Unknown and Accepts the Challenge**
Numbers 13: 26 – 14: 30
- Lesson #4** **Faith Stands of the Promises of God**
Deuteronomy 34: 9 – 12 and Joshua 1
- Lesson #5** **Faith Looks for God to Work in the Unexpected**
Joshua 2: 1 – 24, Hebrews 11:31, James 1: 2 – 8
- Lesson #6** **Faith Sees the Impossible, Hears the Unbelievable and Obeys**
Joshua 4 &5
- Lesson #7** **Faith Encounters a Holy God**
Joshua 5: 13 – 6:27
- Lesson #8** **Faith Remains True**
- To the Word of God in the Face of discouragement and sin
Joshua 7: 1 – 21, 8: 30 – 35,

The High Call of God:
Characteristics of Faith from the Life of Joshua

LESSON 1 – Introduction to the character of Joshua and his calling.

- I. **Open Discussion:** Share any information you know about the Israelites and their journey to this point. What has Moses faces as he has led the people out of Egypt and their desert wanderings. Pool any knowledge you have of Joshua as a leader of Israel and how he came to that position.

- II. **Read Numbers 11: 10 – 30**

- III. **Discussion Questions:**
 1. Why was Moses upset? How upset was he?

 2. How did Moses respond when God told him He would give them plenty of meat? Was his faith strong? Did he question?

 3. When God gives us a challenge or impresses on our hearts and minds something He would like us to do, how do we respond?

 4. To what New Testament incident could the calling of the 70 elders be compared? What needed to happen before these elders were ready to assist Moses in leading the people?

 5. How Was Joshua’s response similar to John’s response in Mark 9: 38 – 41?

 6. What lessons of faith can we learn from this portion of scripture?

In closing, thank God together for the challenges that lie before us in the coming days and pray for each other so our faith will be strong.

LESSON 2: “Faith Faces the Unknown and Accepts the Challenge”

- I. Opening Discussion:** Review what was discussed about Joshua last week. Moses and God’s people are at the edge of the land of Canaan which God has promised to the Israelites as their inheritance. Let’s visualize the setting. What do we know about the journey thus far?

- II. Read Numbers 13: 16 – 25**

- III. Discussion Questions:**
 1. What type of men did Moses choose to go on this fact finding mission?

 2. Moses renamed one of the men. Who was it and why do you think he did this?

 3. What directions did he give them and what kind of information were they to gather?

 4. What did they bring back?

 5. What other Biblical stories involve 40 days? To what New Testament story could this compare and how was it similar?

 6. These men stepped out in faith not knowing what their adventure would bring. Share a time when you have felt God asking you to step out in faith. What happened and how did God lead you?

 7. What are some challenges before us at this time and how can we best face these challenges?

In closing thank God together for the challenges that lie before us in the coming year and pray for each other so our faith will be strong.

LESSON #3 “Faith Sees the Potential and Challenges Doubt and Fear”

I. Open Discussion: The twelve leaders Moses sent out to investigate the Promise Land returned with their report. Visualize the scene: The people are excited to hear from these leaders who have been traveling from place to place for forty days. The momentum & excitement builds as they see the fruit of the land and listen to the report.

II. Read Numbers 13: 26 – 33

III. Discussion Questions

1. List the positive aspects of the report and then the negatives. The little word “but” changes the whole tone of the report. What emotions can you identify? What conversations can you hear beginning to build?
2. How did the people respond to Caleb’s challenge to go and take possession of the land?
3. What hindered the people from moving ahead? Who gets blamed?
4. Are you able to share a dream or a vision you have shared only to have it pulled apart or put down by someone’s negative, faithless comments? What is your response?

Now Read Numbers 14: 1 - 31

5. What did Moses do when God wanted to destroy the people?
6. What do we learn about God from His words to Moses?
7. How do you think Joshua and Caleb responded to God’s Wrath?

In closing thank God together for the faithfulness He shows and the encouragement He gives when we step out in faith.

LESSON 4: “Faith Stands on the Promises of God”

I. Open Discussion: Today we want to look at the qualifications of a wise leader and how Joshua became the leader of the Israelites. A wise leader of faith communicates with God and obeys God even when he does not understand the outcome. Share other Bible characters that followed this principle.

II. Read Deuteronomy 34: 9 – 12

III. Discussion Questions:

1. After the death of Moses, Joshua received the Spirit of Wisdom in order to help him to be the new leader of the Israelites. What steps played a part in Joshua’s preparation for leadership? (See also Numbers 27:15 – 23)
2. How did Joshua’s experience compare with Timothy’s (See II Tim. 1: 6,7)
3. Where should we look for wisdom (James 1:5) According to James 3:17, what are the characteristics of a wise person?

Read Joshua 1: 1 – 9

4. God knew what Joshua was thinking. According to what God said what might have been the questions and the objections in Joshua’s mind. List at least six:
5. The Lord had given permission for two and one half tribes to remain on the east side of Jordan. Who were they and what were the agreements they made before they could settle down? (See also Num. 32: 1 – 27)
6. How did Joshua and the people display their faith in preparation to enter the promised land?

In closing share lessons we could learn from this Scripture to assist us in our journey to our heavenly home.

LESSON #5: “Faith Sees God work in the Unexpected”

- I. Open Discussion:** What is the temperature of our faith? Is it low, high or average? If it is average, it is probably not what it should be. We are God’s children and we need to expect God to delight in doing great things in and through us.

- II. Read Joshua 2: 1 – 24**

- III. Discussion Questions:**
 1. When the two men were sent to spy out the city of Jericho, where did they go and why do you think they went to this place?

 2. Who was Rahab and how did God use her to fulfill the purpose of the spies?

 3. What were the conditions of the oath or covenant agreement she made with the two men? What was the outcome? (See Joshua 6: 22 – 25)

 4. How did faith play a strong role in what Rahab did? Tell of a time in your life when you stepped out in faith and how God honored that step.

 5. Read Hebrews 11: 31: We read Rahab’s name here in the list of faith’s heroes. What made her faith acceptable so she was spared from death? How do we know God honors our small steps of faith?

 6. Read James 1: 2 – 8 What is it that strengthens our faith and what do we need in order to exercise our faith to its highest potential?

In closing share a need to step out in faith so we can pray for you and be praying for you to see our faith grow.

LESSON #6: “ Faith sees the Impossible, Hears the Unbelievable and Obeys’

I. Open Discussion: Review highlights of last week’s lesson. Share how God challenged or strengthened your faith this past week. In preparing for a major move, there are mountains of challenges to our faith and stability. The massive group of Israelites have moved from Shittim and camped at the very edge of the Jordan River.

II. Read Joshua 3 & 4 – Crossing the Jordan

III. Discussion Questions:

1. Describe the preparations and the excitement and apprehension of the people during the three days before the actual crossing. Place yourself in the picture. What do you see, feel, taste, smell and sense?
2. What were the orders given by the leaders and by Joshua and how was their faith put to the test?
3. What instructions did the Lord give Joshua and how did he convey these to the people?
4. Describe the actual crossing of the Jordan. What was the water like before and after they crossed? What was in the middle of the river bed?
5. What was the significance of the 12 men and the 12 stones? What was to be done with the stones? What do we use as memorials or reminders of God’s leading in the past?
6. Discuss the ways in which Joshua stepped out in faith and demonstrated his trust in God to help him lead. How did the people respond to him?

In closing, share concerns you may have that seem impossible. Pray together and listen together to hear what God might be saying.

LESSON #7: “Faith Encounters a Holy God”

- I. **Open Discussion:** In today’s study, Joshua meets the Commander of the Lord’s Army.
- II. **Read Joshua 5: 13 – 6: 27**
- III. **Discussion Questions:**
 1. What do you think Joshua was doing when he encountered this super natural Commander? Who do you think this was?
 2. What did Joshua learn when the Commander responded to his question of, “Are you for us or against us”?
 3. What does his answer of “Neither” tell us about assumptions we might make about who God is for or against?
 4. To what other experience could we compare this holy encounter? (See Exodus 3: 5,6)
 5. **The March:** What did God say to Joshua before he gave him his specific orders?
 6. How could this apply to our situations and to the challenges of faith He gives us?
 7. Let’s imagine: If you were part of the crowd where would you place yourself? What would you be feeling, thinking, seeing, hearing or smelling? If the Commander came along side you, what might he say?

In closing, share some lessons of faith we could learn from this portion of Scripture.

LESSON #8: “Faith Remains True to the Word of God in the face of discouragement and sin.”

Joshua 7: 1 – 26 Joshua’s Fear and Discouragement in light of Achan’s sin

1. Why was the Lord angry with the people of Israel?
2. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai to assess the security of Ai and to determine how many men were needed to capture the city. What was their assessment and what was the outcome?
3. How did Joshua respond to the loss of 36 of his warriors? How did the Lord rebuke him?
4. How do we respond when our plans crumble and fail?
5. How does our response compare with Joshua’s and how is it different? What is my response when I sense the Lord’s rebuke?
6. What hinders us from exercising our faith and having victory over our battles?

Joshua 8: 30 – 35 – Renewal of the Covenant

7. After the city of Ai had been totally destroyed, Joshua built an altar at Mt. Ebal. What was the purpose of this altar and what was Joshua trying to impress upon the people?

In closing share Scripture verses with which we remind ourselves of God’s promises and encourage one another to read and obey God’s Word.

“Sin will keep us from God’s Word and God’s Word will keep us from sin.”