

Joshua & Peter: The Sufficiency of God

Lesson 1: The Sufficiency of God's Presence

Reading a stranger's journal allows you to get to know and understand the person who wrote the journal. More than detailing life, a journal reveals the author's motivations, raw emotions, and hard truths in the midst of circumstances. Once read, the reader has a deeper, personal understanding of the author, and may even know what it would feel like to enjoy a relationship with one another. Much more than a fallible human's journal, **the Bible** infallibly reveals God; His Love of all His Creation; and the cost He paid to live with, and in, relationship with His people as **Immanuel**. *God, teach us about You. Enliven this lesson through the work of Your Holy Spirit in us, Your presence with us and in us. Help us understand Your Word, the Bible, and help us believe. Amen.*

Anchor Verses:

Joshua 1.9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

With this exhortation, Joshua begins leading God's people into fulfilling a promise God made 400 years prior. There was no uncertainty about God's "call" or responsibility to Joshua ("Have I not commanded you?"). Nor is there any hesitancy from Joshua to assume the responsibility God has given him. Joshua's lessons of obedience to God were taught from Moses himself, beginning in Joshua's youth (more about Joshua's upbringing coming in Lesson 2). You are likewise called to obey God in the responsibilities He has given you.

1. Identify some of the responsibilities God has given you. This isn't a complicated answer. It may help to consider some of the roles you have:
 2. In which God-given responsibility do you need to hear, "Be strong and courageous"?
 - a. In which responsibility do you need to hear, "Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed"?
3. Consider all your listed responsibilities in light of God's promise, "for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." How does this give you hope, or strengthen you, in your obedience to God in one of responsibilities He has called you to?
 - a. If applicable, in which responsibility are you struggling to believe this promise?

1 Peter 5.10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Jesus, God's Son, gave Peter a responsibility: "feed my sheep" (John 21.17). While a bit more nebulous than the clear-cut responsibility God gave to Joshua, Peter's call was to lead God's people into uniting as Jesus' beautiful Bride, The Church. This required living counter-culturally, as Messiah's life, death, resurrection, and ascension (or return) to heaven (Hebrews 1.1-4, 8.1-2, 10.11-23, 12.1-2) radically challenged cosmopolitan cultures, upended established economic systems, and destroyed societal caste-like structures.

4. In light of this information, why do you think Peter addresses "suffering" with the comfort of God's grace? It may be helpful to look at the elements of God's grace found "in Christ": "His eternal glory", "Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."

5. Peter's exhortation applies to you today, though we must remember Peter is speaking to, and of, Christ's Bride, The Church (all God's people. See Revelation 7.9, 19.6-9; Ephesians 2.11-22). What is the role of the Church in your life?
6. How do you witness, or experience, "the God of all grace...restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you" through His Bride, The Church?

Deity: Immanuel¹~"God is with us" This is not a personal name (Matthew 1.21-23). In Isaiah 7.14 it is seen as fulfilled, not in the naming of Jesus, but in the whole account of His origin and naming. It is not that Jesus ever bore the name Immanuel but that it indicates His role of bringing God's presence to man.

Matthew explains to his readers what this phrase means. It is actually a transliteration of the Hebrew into Greek making a new Greek word from the sound of the Hebrew phrase "God is with us." Matthew's use of this term may be understood in one of two ways.

First, the phrase "God is with us" describes the nature of Jesus. He is God who has become a human. Second, Matthew wanted to show that the virgin conception was not something new, but that it had been predicted by the prophet Isaiah. God is now with the people to save them as the prophets have predicted.

Therefore "God is with us" would not so much describe the exact nature of Jesus, but rather that God has been gracious to His people by sending His Messiah.

Diamonds:

7. What phrases in each of the "anchor verses" identify or help define God as Immanuel?
8. Using any information from either/both this definition and the anchor verses, how is God with YOU today?

Doctrine: The Bible~The Bible is a collection of 66 writings by more than 40 human authors. It is God's special and unique written revelation of Himself to human beings and, as such, its words are not only the words of the human authors, but also the very words of God (2 Timothy 3.15-17; 2 Peter 1.20-21).

The Bible is without error (in the original manuscripts) because God cannot err or lie (Numbers 23.19; 2 Samuel 22.31; Proverbs 30.5; John 17.17). Therefore, the Bible never affirms anything that is contrary to fact. It is consistent, meaning it tells one great story, the story of redemption, and it does not contradict itself. God promises to work through the Bible to accomplish His purposes, including the salvation of the lost (Isaiah 55.10-11; 1 Peter 1.23-25; Psalm 119).

Four themes capture the flow of the Bible's message and are an important backdrop for studying God's Word. First, the earth is God's creation. He created the earth in perfection. Second, sin entered through Adam and Eve's disobedience to God's command. This is commonly referred to as "The Fall". Third, God always had a

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>

plan to redeem His people and His creation. The life, death, and resurrection of His Son Jesus accomplished “Redemption”. Fourth, God’s future promise of “Restoration” or “Consummation” of His Church (all of God’s people) and His creation can be trusted.

The Bible is divided into two testaments, or covenants: The Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament covers the time period prior to Messiah’s arrival on earth, while the New Testament covers Messiah’s birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, the arrival of the Holy Spirit (John 14.15-18, 26; Acts 2.1-11), and God’s instructions to His Bride, The Church.

Diamonds:

9. It is often thought that God is different in the Old Testament than He is in the New Testament. Joshua 1.9 is from the Old Testament, while 1 Peter 5.10 is in the New Testament. What phrases in these verses help you understand God as the same and/or different?

10. What do you hope to learn about God through this year’s study of Joshua and 1 & 2 Peter?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer: LORD God, Immanuel, only You have the authority to “command” any responsibility of us! You have given me the following responsibilities (see question 1):

God, I am struggling to believe that you are with me in this responsibility (see question 3a):

However, I read that you are with me “wherever [I] go” in service to You (Joshua 1.9), and that You are aware of my suffering in this responsibility You gave me. LORD God, I beg of You to “restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish [me]” (1 Peter 5.10) as I obey You in this responsibility. Help me understand You. I especially want to know (see question 10):

Thank You, LORD, for the reminder that as we serve You as You have tasked us, You are our source of strength, courage, and the God who banishes our fears, and holds us up when we are dismayed because indeed, Immanuel, You are with us eternally (Joshua 1.9; 1 Peter 5.10). Amen.

Lecture Outline

Aim: God is enough.

- I. God With Us (Joshua 1.9) **T1:** God's divine sufficiency is enough because His extraordinary power is always with His people.
 - a. Which insurmountable means problem or challenge is weighing you down with anxiety right now?
 - b. Do you have enough strength, enough courage, or enough faith to stand firm or endure what you are struggling with right now?
- II. God For Us (1 Peter 5.10) **T2:** God's divine sufficiency always works for our good and His glory.
 - a. How are you suffering right now? What is causing your suffering?
 - b. Is it your work for the Kingdom of God? Is it because you are a "Bethlehem"?
- III. God IN Us **T3:** God's divine sufficiency accompanies the Holy Spirit's presence dwelling IN you.
 - a. How are you embracing the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit of God?
 - b. Are you a Bethlehem that is open for business? Or a shuttered ghost town?
- IV. Closing: *"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you."*~1 Corinthians 3.16

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