

**Monday, March 23, 2020**

**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"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."**

*(Joshua 1:9)*

This was the instruction that God gave to Joshua just before he was about to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. Yes, the Promised Land was their dream. It had been on their minds ever since they had left Egypt 40 years prior. It would be the place where God was going to complete His plan of making them into His very own people. But the Promised Land was not a place that was void of challenges. There were obstacles to be overcome, namely, nations to be defeated. God would be using this new place and the people of Israel to be the vehicle through which the Savior, Jesus Christ, would come.

You can imagine why Joshua and the Israelites would need to be told not to be afraid. It was an "Unknown"! It was, at least to them, an "uncertainty." It would be a place where battles would be fought.

I find it very interesting that God doesn't just "invite" Joshua and the Israelites not to be frightened; but rather, He "commands" them not to be frightened. Trusting in God during times of "uncertainties" is not just a matter of faith. It is a matter of obedience as well. In fact, it's kind of like keeping the First Commandment: "You shall have no other gods before Me." In other words, don't place the thing that you are fearing on a higher place than God. The thing that you are fearing IS NOT GOD. It is in submission to God!

God promised Joshua and the Israelites that He would be with them. That was the very reason that they should "not be frightened." Where we go, He goes! And where He goes, all things fall into submission to Him.

It's hard to say if we have already crossed over into "unfamiliar territory" due to the coronavirus crisis, or if we are still "waiting to cross over into unfamiliar territory." In other words, even though many things have changed already due to this crisis, it is possible that many more things will continue to change. As humans we do not know where this will go, but God knows! He always knows. And He is always going with us into "uncharted" territory. But as we do this, He is always God, and He is always with us, and He always loves us, and He promises that "in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose!"

God's peace!  
Pastor Jim