

**Monday, September 21, 2020**  
**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, 'Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. 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: 1-2, 9*

Joshua was chosen to take the place of Moses. Moses had been the leader of the Israelites for 40 years. They were used to him. They came to know his style. Most of them came to trust and respect him. But his time ended. He would not be the one to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. He was the "pre-Promised Land" leader; Joshua was the "Promised Land" leader. Even Joshua himself had gotten used to having Moses as his leader. Joshua was used to the "pre-Promised Land" way of life. This is why God had to say to him, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed." Why? Because "the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

We are looking forward to things getting back to "normal." And it's not that "normal" was perfect or carefree. It's just that compared to what is going on now, the life we were used to seems so good and easy compared to the life we are trying to get used to right now. We don't want to get too used to this life, though. We want this life to just be a temporary road bump. Even the Israelites' wanderings in the desert before they entered the Promised Land was a temporary road bump. Although that road bump did last for 40 years and only two of the original Israelites who left Egypt got to go into the Promised Land. It was their children who got to go into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua.

I guess we don't really know for sure where life is going in our world and especially in our country. Will there be an effective vaccine? Will the time of mask-wearing and social-distancing come to an end? Will the social upheaval and violence calm down? Will our nation become more unified? We don't know the answer to these questions. It was the same for Joshua and the Israelites who were about to enter the Promised Land. What would life look like in this new land? Would they be able to stand up against the nations that were already there?

God's answer to us is the same as His answer to them: "Be strong and courageous ... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." That's the difference-maker! Better to be on a bumpy road with God in your life than a smooth road with God nowhere to be seen! If God is with us wherever we go, then wherever we go will not defeat us or beat us down. God will see us through.

We know what we want. We know what we are hoping for. We don't know if what we are hoping for will become reality. But what we do know for sure is that God has promised to be with us wherever we go. This is true in our personal lives as well. No matter what is happening in your life, God is with you, and He will bless you with peace and security. He has said, "Be still and know that I am God!"

God's Peace!  
Pastor Jim