 лидеров сдаются перед авторитетом и волей Господа.

**The Bible Meets Life**
Everybody leads in some capacity—everybody. And as leaders, we must always be prepared to lead well. As one who had been called to leadership, Joshua found himself standing on the banks of a body of water with his enemies waiting on the other side. He was full of questions about the role he’d been given and anxious to make the right decisions. We can learn much from Joshua about how to lead well in whatever role we’ve been given.

**The Passage**
Joshua 1:1-19
The Setting
God had led His people through Moses for a lengthy and eventful time—from enslavement in Egypt, through the 10 plagues, out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, and for 40 years in the wilderness. Moses had been at the helm through the giving of the Law, surveying of the promised land, and constructing of the tabernacle. Though some had challenged Moses’ leadership, most of those alive had known no other. Now Joshua had to fill those shoes.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

**Joshua 1:1-9**

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, 2 “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. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites 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. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful 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 courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”
GET INTO THE STUDY

ENGAGE: Begin the session with one or more of the Engage Options on the next page. (This is optional. If you’d rather skip the Engage Options, just begin with the first discussion question.)

SAY: We all lead in some capacity. And as leaders, the weight of that responsibility can feel heavy. The stress may seem overwhelming. We may find ourselves full of doubt about the role we’ve been given and unprepared to make the right decisions. But when we surrender to God’s authority and direction, we will find we have all we need to lead well.

DISCUSS: Have students discuss the question, “When have you made a decision to do something and then thought, ‘Am I ready for this?’”

GUIDE: Call attention to The Point. Explain that this is the key idea to keep in mind throughout the session.

THE POINT

Leaders surrender to God’s authority and direction.

READ: Read and summarize The Bible Meets Life for your group.

On the eve of D-Day, General Dwight D. Eisenhower was about to send thousands of troops across the English Channel into the teeth of the German army. He’d planned and prepared, but uncertainty lay ahead. In fact, Eisenhower was so uncertain about the success of D-Day that he drafted a statement taking full blame should the mission fail. You and I don’t carry that kind of stress, nor do we bear that level of responsibility. Yet there are days when the weight on our shoulders feels heavier than ever—maybe even heavier than we can bear. These are the moments when we must lead well. Joshua was another leader standing on the banks of a body of water with enemies waiting on the other side. He was full of questions about the role he’d been given and anxious to make the right decisions. Much can be learned from Joshua about how to lead in whatever role we’ve been given.

PRAY: Transition into the session by praying that students would see the importance of surrendering to God’s authority and direction in the areas where they are called to lead.
**Engage Options**

**Lead with Action**
Have students take turns doing a trust fall. Ask them to line up facing each other with their arms outstretched and interlaced. Have one student stand with his or her back to the two lines. Ask the group, “Are you ready?” and then give the student a que to fall back onto the interlaced arms. As time allows, repeat this activity with other students. Conclude by saying, “Both the person falling and the ones prepared to catch the fallen had to accept their roles and make sure they were ready before they took action. When you’re faced with taking action on something or making a decision, how can you make sure you’re ready?”

**Lead with Atmosphere**
Display images of famous leaders who were required to step up in the midst of adversity.—Martin Luther King, Anne Frank, Herb Brooks, Nelson Mandela, etc. Talk about what the people shown have in common. Say, “All leaders will face adversity at some point. These leaders are prime examples of that. As believers we can trust that no matter what obstacles we face, God has promised to be ever-present.”

**Lead with Media**
Show a clip from the movie *The Sandlot* in which Benny has to face the Beast and then debrief by explaining, “Benny had to face the fear of ‘the Beast’ in order to retrieve the ball for the team. As the leader of the group, he stepped up. Accepting a leadership role will require us to do difficult or scary things sometimes. But we can trust that God will be with us when we step out in faith, trusting Him for direction.”

**OPTION:** Print “The Man in the Arena” excerpt from the Theodore Roosevelt speech entitled: “Citizenship in a Republic” and discuss what this quote has to do with courage.
STUDY THE BIBLE
The Point: Leaders surrender to God’s authority and direction.

JOSHUA 1:1-6

DISCUSS: Lead students to discuss the question, “Where in your past can you see proof that God can be trusted?”

SAY: Do you see yourself as a leader? You are. In fact, everyone leads. Even if your influence only touches the life of one person—that’s leadership. And that’s why the Book of Joshua is for you. Its message for us is that God is in control as we stand on the shore of leadership.

GUIDE: Lead students to understand that no matter who or how many we lead, God goes ahead of us to prepare the way.

1 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. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.”

—JOSHUA 1:1-6

READ: Ask a volunteer to read the following:

When I drive, I like to be one or two turns ahead in my thinking. If someone is with me, giving me directions, I’ll ask, “What’s ahead? What’s the next turn?” If I’m using my GPS, I like to scroll ahead in see what’s coming. Many people approach leadership the same way. They want to know what’s next—every potential challenge—so they can be prepared. But we aren’t in control, God is. And we must trust Him for what lies ahead. He’ll reveal what we need in His perfect time.
Commentary

JOSHUA 1:1-6

[Verses 1-2] The Book of Joshua begins with a somber reminder that Moses had died. The phrase after the death of Moses and the statement “Moses My servant is dead” remind us that God’s work goes on even after we experience the loss of a great leader. But who fills the leadership void? The first part of the answer is found in the title used of Moses: the Lord’s servant. Leadership voids are filled by people who are willing to serve. The second part of the answer is to realize that God selects another person to undertake the leadership position before the current leader is off the scene. Joshua son of Nun aided Moses during the exodus from Egypt, having been mentioned as early as Exodus 17:9-14 in reference to the defeat of Amalek. Appropriately, the leader God chose to replace Moses was himself a servant; Joshua was described as the one who had served Moses.

[Verse 3] The Lord guaranteed Joshua and the Israelites every place where the sole of your foot treads. The word your is a plural pronoun and includes all the people. The Hebrew verb given indicates an accomplished action, even though God was declaring the action before Joshua and the Israelites had taken their first steps into the promised land. This assurance corresponded with the phrase just as I promised Moses. Joshua and the Israelites could trust God precisely because He was good for His word. Everyone called by God to lead can have this assurance.

[Verses 4-5] The Lord mentioned specific boundaries for the promised land. He had a plan in place. What’s more, the phrase just as I was with Moses reminded Joshua of everything Moses had accomplished through God’s power—and reminded him that Moses’ true greatness was bound up in his relationship with God. The promise that no one would be able to stand against Joshua was not a guarantee of no opposition. In fact, Joshua faced many adversaries. The Lord’s promise referred to the ultimate failure of all such opponents.

[Verse 6] The Lord had commanded Joshua and the people to prepare to cross over the Jordan (see Josh. 1:2). Obeying the command would involve crossing a flooded river (see 3:15-16; 4:16) and facing many hostile kingdoms. Such natural and human obstacles could dissuade anyone. Therefore, God commanded Joshua to be strong and courageous. Earlier, the Lord through Moses had given the command to be strong and courageous three times—once to Joshua and the people (see Deut. 31:6) and twice to Joshua in particular (see vv. 7,23). So also in Joshua 1:6-9, the Lord thrice commanded Joshua to be strong and courageous. Even the people got in on the act, promising to obey Joshua and commanding him to be strong and courageous (see Josh. 1:18). The best way for Joshua to demonstrate godly leadership was to be strong in the conviction of God’s presence and guidance and be courageous in implementing His prescribed actions.

TIP: Remind your students that trusting God is in control means they must fist surrender their control.
STUDY THE BIBLE
The Point: Leaders surrender to God’s authority and direction.

JOSHUA 1:7-8

SAY: God has spoken to us through the Bible. When God spoke to Joshua the night before moving into the land they had been promised, He reminded Joshua that it was His Word that would guide Joshua in carrying out his leadership role.

GUIDE: Help students understand that it is God’s Word that gives us direction in how we are to lead.

How was Joshua to stay centered on God’s Word? The same way we are to stay focused on God’s Word — meditate (think) on the Scriptures constantly. Meditating on God’s Word clears your mind of your own thoughts and desires. It means you center your thoughts on what God has said and then declare it out loud so that you remember it and obey it. Joshua did this very thing to prepare to lead. Obeying the Scriptures would enable Joshua to “prosper and succeed” (v. 8) in his mission. We can hold to this promise as well. We all lead in some capacity, and with God’s Word as our guide, we can stay focused on the end goal.

DISCUSS: Lead students to discuss the question, “What gets in the way of you reflecting on God’s Word?”

DO: Direct students to complete the Action Point, “Your Fears.”

Your Fears
At some point—today or sometime in our future—God will call you to step up and lead. And leadership can create tension in our hearts. We become responsible for others when we step up to lead. List the top three fears you have about stepping into a position of leadership.
Commentary

JOSHUA 1:7-8

[Verse 7] For the second time in two verses, the Lord commanded Joshua to be strong and very courageous. The adverb very renders the Hebrew term for “exceedingly”; it intensifies the command. The command is further clarified by linking it to faithful obedience of God’s teaching. To be an effective leader, Joshua had to carefully observe the whole instruction God gave to Moses. God would equip Joshua with His Word. The phrase carefully observe renders two Hebrew verbs indicating ongoing action. Carefully meant “to guard” or “to keep.” The word implies showing great attentiveness to the Lord’s instruction and knowing it thoroughly. The second term, observe, renders the Hebrew word meaning “to do.” It is never enough merely to learn about God’s instruction; we must obey it. We fall short when the study of God’s Word has no impact inside our hearts or outside our churches.

The phrase whole instruction included all the ordinances, commands, and injunctions God provided for Israel through Moses. In fact, the term translated instruction is actually the Hebrew word torah, which is associated with the first five books of the Old Testament. We cannot pick and choose what aspects of God’s Word fit our self-chosen lifestyles and then ignore the rest. The initial phrase above all emphasizes the importance of Joshua’s keeping the whole instruction.

The command for Joshua to not turn from God’s instruction renders a Hebrew verb meaning “to turn aside” from something in an attempt to evade it. Rather than avoiding God’s guidance, Joshua was to seek it out. No turning was acceptable, whether to the right or the left. The command is couched in positive terms. Keeping God’s whole instruction would lead to success wherever Joshua went. In this context, success refers to victory in conquering the promised land.

[Verse 8] Joshua was to consistently think and talk about God’s instructions. When Joshua spoke words of instruction to Israel, his mouth was to declare advice from God’s book of instruction. Joshua was also instructed to recite the book day and night. The Hebrew verb translated recite indicates thoughtful deliberation, or going back and forth over God’s written instructions with a view toward becoming well versed in what He wants, how He leads, and what He expects of His people. Why rehearse God’s Word? The goal was for Joshua’s words and thoughts to reflect God’s wisdom.

The purpose of God’s prescription is indicated by the words so that. By thoroughly rehearsing God’s Word, Joshua could carefully observe everything written therein, just as the Lord had commanded him (see Josh. 1:7). Reading and meditating on God’s Word is the prerequisite for obeying His instruction. As a result, God promised Joshua would prosper and succeed with regard to God’s enterprise of leading His people into the promised land.
STUDY THE BIBLE

The Point: Leaders surrender to God’s authority and direction.

JOSHUA 1:9

READ: Ask for a volunteer to read the following:

Everything God says is important, but in this passage God said something of incredible importance to Joshua, and we know that because He said it again and again. In verse 5, God comforted Joshua with the promise that He would be with him and would not leave or forsake him. God then added in verse 9 that He would be with Joshua wherever he went. As a result, Joshua did not have to “be afraid or discouraged” (v. 9), and so God commanded him three times to “be strong and courageous” (vv. 6, 7, 9).

SAY: Fear and discouragement are natural feelings, but we can overcome those feelings through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

GUIDE: Lead students to understand that we have what is required to overcome our fears and doubts because God promised He would never leave us.

DISCUSS: Ask students to answer the question, “What does it look like for a Christian to be strong and courageous in today’s culture?”

1. Be strong and courageous when you consider the great task in front of you. God understands that when we consider our responsibilities as leaders, we’ll sometimes feel overwhelmed. So He says to us, “Be strong and courageous; I will be with you.”

2. Be strong and courageous so you can respond carefully to God’s Word. At times the Bible calls us to step outside our comfort zone. The Bible may call us to lead in a direction that’s not very popular. If we are to “prosper and succeed” (v. 8) in our leadership, we must be courageous.

3. Be strong and courageous as you move forward. At times we feel ready to move forward. Other times we are ready to give up, overcome by fears. This is when we need to hold onto the comforting promise: “The Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (v. 9).

DISCUSS: Lead students to discuss the question, “In what area of your life do you need to step up and lead?”

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.”

—JOSHUA 1:9
Commentary

JOSHUA 1:9

[Verse 9] Our final verse provides another reminder that Joshua needed to be strong and courageous, here presented in a rhetorical question demanding an affirmative answer. Notably, God repeatedly told Joshua to be strong and courageous. But why did God tell him so frequently? The answer might be revealed in the additional command, “Do not be afraid or discouraged.”

We reasonably can assume Joshua was afraid of the task before him. Fear often makes people retreat to the safety of anonymity. Individuals usually prefer situations with little stress or risk. That wasn’t the case in this passage. Leading a band of former slaves against fortified cities and trained armies constituted a daunting task for Joshua. How could the Lord expect him to step out of Moses’ shadow and lead the people in so difficult an undertaking?

Yet, it was for a good reason that God commanded Joshua to be strong and courageous and to avoid being afraid or discouraged. Namely, Joshua could be brave, courageous, unafraid, and encouraged because of this promise: “The Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” This assurance demonstrated the power of God’s presence in His peoples’ lives.

In Joshua 1:5, the Lord promised to be with Joshua as He was with Moses. When we consider Moses delivering the Hebrews from Pharaoh, the parting of the Red Sea, the provisions in the wilderness, and the divinely-wrought military victories, we understand the full potential of the words the Lord your God is with you. The final phrase wherever you go assured Joshua that God’s presence would be with him, precisely what (and who) he needed to succeed in claiming the promised land.

What about you? Are you ready to accept your leadership role? A commitment to lead means submitting to God’s authority and direction. As you consider the leadership principles gleaned from Joshua 1:1-6, ask yourself whether God has called you to be a leader. Ask the Lord to renew your faith in the reliability of His Word, trusting Him to equip you with His Word (see Josh. 1:7-8). Commit to studying His Word day and night, and to implementing its teachings in your daily life. As you enter the leadership enterprise, be assured of God’s abiding presence (see v. 9).

Just as He was with Moses and Joshua, He will be with you also. Providing godly leadership is a great way to tell God, “I love You.”
APPLY IT

**SAY:** Everybody leads in some capacity—everybody. So how will you apply the truths from this passage to your life?

**READ:** Ask for a volunteer to read aloud a few ways students can take what they have learned and **Apply It.**

- **Own your role.** Spend some time writing down the different areas of life in which you lead others or influence people. Own your role as a leader.
- **Memorize.** Memorize Joshua 1:8 and allow its truth to strengthen and encourage you.
- **Connect.** Connect with others who lead in the same places and ways you do—school, home, church. You’re not alone in your journey. God is with you, and He provides others to encourage and help you grow as a leader.

**GUIDE:** Lead students to consider which of the three suggested responses to the Bible study most closely applies to them and their current circumstances.

**ASK:** Which of these responses do you personally need to focus on most as you live this session out? Allow time for responses.

WRAP UP

**PRAY:** Close in prayer, asking God to help students see that leadership within the body of Christ is a gift and that He calls us to lead to His church for His kingdom purposes.

**ASK:** Ask students about last week’s **Live It Out** options. Discuss any responses and encourage students as they choose to apply the Bible to their lives.

**GUIDE:** Encourage students to complete one or both of the **Live It Out** activities for the week. Let them know you will discuss them the next time you meet.

For **free online training** on how to lead a group visit
MinistryGrid.com/web/BibleStudiesForLife
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THE POINT: Leaders surrender to God’s authority and direction.

- In what ways do you see yourself as a leader?
- Discuss with your student characteristics of leaders who lead well.

Discuss the following quote: “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.” —John C. Maxwell


LIVE IT OUT: Your student has been encouraged to do one or both Live It Out activities in the Personal Study Guide. Here are some suggested ways to help your student:

If he or she plans to complete A Personal Statement:
- Give your student an opportunity to explain to you the mission statement he or she wrote.

If he or she plans to complete Lead Well:
- Share with your student someone you look up to and how this person has been a positive influence in your life.
- Talk about the people who have been positive influences in your student’s life, and help your student see how he or she can in turn impact the lives of others.