

TAKE CHARGE

Joshua 1:1-18; 1 Timothy 4:1-15 / Psalm 35:1-28

I. GOD PROVIDES FOR LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

A. God called Joshua to take up the work of Moses. “Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto **Joshua the son of Nun**, Moses’ minister, saying, Moses ***my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan***, thou, and all this people, ***unto the land which I do give to them***, even to the children of Israel.” (Joshua 1:1-2)

B. God promised to be with Joshua as He had been with Moses. “***There shall not any man be able to stand before thee*** all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: ***I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.***” (Joshua 1:5)

C. Preparing for transition is part of faithful leadership. “And ***the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.***” (2 Timothy 2:2)

D. People do not automatically continue to be faithful. “Thus saith the LORD, ***Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*** But they said, We will not walk *therein.*” (Jeremiah 6:16)

E. The Church of the Elders must remember for others. “***Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.***” (Deuteronomy 32:7)

II. GOD SET THE PATTERN FOR HOLY LEADERSHIP

A. Keep focused on God’s assignment; believers are not self-employed. “***Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.***” (Joshua 1:6)

B. Be courageous and stay the assigned course. “***Only be thou strong and very courageous***, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: ***turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.***” (Joshua 1:7)

C. Follow the directions in the Bible. “This ***book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written*** therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and ***then thou shalt have good success.***” (Joshua 1:8)

D. Do not let threats and fears weaken dedication. “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; ***be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee*** whithersoever thou goest.” (Joshua 1:9)

III. THE PATTERN REMAINS IN FORCE

A. Each age presents problems to entice God’s people from the Kingdom path. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that ***in the latter times some shall depart from the faith***, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; ***Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared*** with a hot iron; ***Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God***

hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.” (1 TIMOTHY 4:1-3)

B. Review the historic doctrines and avoid the clever myths of each new era. “If thou ***put the brethren in remembrance of these things***, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, ***nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine***, whereunto thou hast attained. ***But refuse profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.***” (1 Timothy 4:6-7)

C. Keep the primary message out front. “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. ***These things command and teach.***” (1 Timothy 4:10-11)

D. Practice the constant application of the historic Bible doctrine; institutions change but God’s good news remains firm. “Let no man despise thy youth; but ***be thou an example of the believers***, in word, ***in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity***. Till I come, ***give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine***. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.” (1 Timothy 4:12-14)

E. Meditate on the truth till it dominates life. “***Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them***; that thy profiting may appear to all.” (1 Timothy 4:15)

F. Guard personal doctrine and practice because other people depend on Christian leadership; children learn from observing their parents. “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (1 Timothy 4:16)

+ Dr. Edwin P. Elliott