

Let's talk about: **Courage to Move On!**

Look at **Joshua 1:9** **"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."**

God told Joshua three times in three verses 6,7,& 9....to be strong and very courageous.

Why...because it takes strength and courage to move on. Joshua was leaving his best friend and mentor behind, he was leaving friends who he buried in the desert, he was leaving a familiar place of 40 years.... There would be no more manna, no more water pouring from a rock, no Moses on a Mountain, no cloud by day, no pillar of fire by night.... Joshua was 80 years old when God gave him this command. He is no spring chicken... This may seem like no big deal to you....but it is a big deal. Weeks ago I sensed God speaking to me through his Word and saying....your getting ready to cross over into your prophesied land..

Even this morning at 5:09 a friend who I haven't seen or talked to since Jan texted me and said.. "this is a new day. It was predestined. I thank God for what we have been through and I thank God for what we're stepping into, a new day."

And we rejoice over that.... And rightly so....but the truth is going forward is not always easy..... God has to break us down in order to build us up.....

To go forward meant...editing my understanding on the nature of God. It meant editing my thinking on what prayer really is.... It meant editing my beliefs on what makes me valuable.... It meant editing my thoughts on money and editing my thoughts on my identity and what being a husband is and what getting emotionally healthy means.

It means being willing to be in something but not of it. Jesus came unto his own but his own received him not. John 1:11

Jesus often offended his own. Why? because He had a totally different perspective on life.

And the Pharisee's refused to edit their beliefs, they would not pivot.... I have learned you can have growth or you can have control....but you can't have both.

The Pharisees were adamant about control...

They were not willing to change....for them Life was all about rules and regulations, policies and performance.

For Jesus life was all about love and relationships. Jesus didn't play by their rules and they didn't like it.

Dave Ramsey has used the analogy of a toddler in a messy diaper to illustrate the human tendency to resist change. He said, "We're like a toddler sitting in a poopy diaper. 'Yeah, I know it smells bad. But it's warm, and it's mine.'"

We get defensive of our mess even if it's not working.

Me and Janet are not here to hurt you, we love people and we love to help people....if you want to stay in your messy situation you can.....but also know.... you are one choice away from your crossing the Jordan and walking into your destiny.

So what I want to do today is two things. First, how do we deal with the traits of toxic faith? Second, how to deal with toxic people in our life. The Bible says there's certain things we need to do about it.

First, let's deal with toxic faith. What is toxic faith... it's called legalism....

Let me state very clearlywe believe in morals and modestyand we teach morals and modesty.

But I also know the greater the relationship the greater the trust. When we first got married we had rules, now we have trust.

Legalism is when people are more concerned about rules than they are about helping people.

Did you know the entire book of Galatians is about being set free from Legalism...

The Apostle Paul told us in Galatians that people are made right with God (justified) not by their works under the Law (such as circumcision or following the Mosaic Law), but solely through faith in Jesus Christ.

Legalism says we've got to earn our way to heaven, which we can't. Legalism says that God only smiles on us when we're keeping certain restrictions.

Ladies and Gentlemen....Jesus died for us and paid a debt we couldn't pay and gave us a righteousness we couldn't earn. We are saved by grace, and we are rewarded for our works. But our work doesn't save us.

If we think that Jesus' payment for sin wasn't enough—and we have to add to what Jesus has done—that might be the greatest sin of all!

Did God need our help in Creation?

In fact, God asked Job this question..... In the book of Job chapter 38:4 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth. Where were you at when I laid the cornerstone, where were you at when the morning stars sang together? And all the sons of God shouted for joy....for two chapters God asked Jobs questions...

In Job 40:3 Job answered the Lord and said.... Behold, I am vile....If God didn't need anyone's help with Creation why would God need our help in salvation?

Jesus either paid *for* it all, or He paid for *nothing* at all! It's not Jesus *plus* you; it's Jesus *or* you! It's not you doing the best you can and then Jesus making up the difference with grace and mercy.

If you try to mix the two, you have totally polluted what Jesus has done. It's either faith righteousness or your righteousness, but not a combination of the two that's what (Rom 11:6) is all about.

Romans 11:6 states, "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace," meaning that if God's choice is by grace, it's not based on human merit, and if it were, grace would cease to be grace.

Ladies and Gentlemen....the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation so move away from legalism. Don't move away from morals and modesty....move away from earning your salvation based on what you do...

I want you to think about this.... Joshua had to leave people he buried in the desert to move into his prophesied land. Jesus was not received by his own....Paul preached to the Jews but they rejected the message....So Paul preached the very same message to the gentiles and they received it...Paul didn't stop loving the Jews but He had to move on....

There are some people that you need to move on from.

Romans 12:13: NIV *"If it is possible as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*

I don't know if you've learned this yet but it's not always possible to live at peace with everyone.

There are some people no matter what you do they're going to still poke you in the eye. There are some people you just can't get along with.

Paul did not create the Jews toxic behavior.

You didn't create their behavior....So you don't have to feel guilty about it.

They might want to blame you for it but you're not responsible. It's their choice. You can't control it.

You can't control anybody else's behavior.

God does not expect you to control it. This is the myth of parenting. The parenting myth is "If I am the perfect parent my kids will turn out perfectly."

There's only been one perfect parent in life – God. God created Adam and Eve. A perfect Father, He put them in a perfect environment and they still messed it up. Are you going to do better than God? If God can have kids go bad, guess what?

Some of you are carrying a lot of false guilt. If I had just done something differently! Every kid makes his choice.

You are as close to God as you want to be. If I'm not close to God, it's my fault. If you're not close to God, guess who moved? God didn't.

You didn't create their behavior and you won't control their behavior so don't feel guilty and don't worry about it.

You won't change their behavior.

You don't have that ability. Don't even try to attempt it. When you've got a toxic person in your life, it's a waste of time to try to change them. Why? Because nobody changes until *they* decide to change.

You can't change anybody. You can only change yourself. **People only change when the fear of change is exceeded by the pain.**

If you don't hate it, you will tolerate it!!!

The amazing thing is a lot of toxic people have an amazingly high pain tolerance.

It's like the baby and his dirty diaper.... "I know it stinks, but it's warm and it's mine."

People are more afraid of changing than dealing with the pain...and they live in misery.

So you didn't create it, you can't control it, and you're not going to change it. So realize it's not about you.

If you can, if it's possible, disconnect and let them go.

I'm not talking about marriage in this message. When you got married you made a promise to God till death do us part. I'm not talking about marriage.

I'm talking about people in your life who are causing you pain that you don't have to be around.

You made no commitment to them. You could withdraw. I'm going to give you a solution from the only perfect person who ever lived, Jesus Christ.

How did He handle toxic people in His life who wanted to hurt Him?

"The Pharisees went out and they plotted [by the way have you noticed how bitter people like to get together in groups? They all hang out together and they support each other in their toxicity.

The Pharisees went out and they plotted how they might kill Jesus. Aware of this Jesus withdrew from that place." Matthew 12:14-16

Jesus said I don't think I'll go there.

If you've got somebody in your life that keeps calling you, change your number. If you've got somebody that keeps emailing you, get a spam blocker. You've got somebody that shows up at a restaurant every time you're there, choose a new restaurant.

Over years people have walked out of our lives....and when we were younger we took it personally. Then we realized the people that God wants in our life will be there.

It really comes down to: Do you trust God?

Let me ask you in a very personal way. Who is it in your life – I'm not talking about marriage – but who is it in your life you need to stop trying to get back.

Someone walked out of your life and you're wasting an enormous amount of energy and effort trying to get them back in your life or trying to get their approval.

You need to let them walk. You need to let it go.

Some of you are still trying to get the approval of your parents and they're dead! Or you're always trying to prove yourself to some brother or sister or somebody else.

Let me tell you something. If you haven't got their approval by now, I hate to tell you this but in all likelihood you're not ever going to get it.

But here's the good news: you don't need it. You don't need anybody's approval to be happy. **If you need somebody else's approval to be happy, they are running your life. The Bible calls that an idol.**

God says "Have no idols before Me. God is the only one who should run your life because He made you." Jesus had been out speaking to a crowd and He said some very tough things...

"The disciples came to Jesus and they asked, 'Do You realize that You offended the Pharisees by what You just said?' Jesus said 'Ignore them. They're blind guides leading the blind.'" Matthew 15:14 NLT

That's the kind of Jesus I serve. He says some people are just unpleasable. He said "Ignore them. Get on with your life.

Refuse to play their game.

One of the Pharisees' favorite games was to try to trick Jesus with questions. They really don't care about the answer. They're just trying to get Jesus riled up. He would not play their game.

Here's an example: *"Then the Pharisees met together to think of a way to trap Jesus into saying something for which they could accuse Him. But Jesus knew their evil motives. 'You hypocrites!' He said. 'Who are you trying to fool with your trick questions?'"* Matt 22:18 TLB

Whenever they tried to get Jesus in a corner He refused to debate the Pharisees. What He would do is He'd ask them a question back and keep on walking.

The Pharisees come to Jesus and say "Lord, why do Your disciples break the traditions of the elders?" And Jesus said, "Why do you break the commands of God in order to fulfill your traditions?" Next question? He did not go into any defense.

They came to Jesus one time and said, "Lord, the law says that anybody caught in adultery should be stoned to death. What do You say?" He could have gotten into a real debate on that one. He goes "Fine, whoever is without sin gets to cast the first stone."

Next question!

They came to Him one time and said "Lord, why don't You prove You are who You say You are? Prove that You're telling the truth." And Jesus said, "I don't have to do that. I know who I am. I know where I came from. I know where I'm going." Next question!

He would never back down.

People think being meek means to be weak. You smile, you grin and bear it and you let people keep poking you in the eye. No. It's not that.

The word "meek" literally means strength under control.

When a wild stallion has been tamed – it's broken.

What does that mean? It still has as much energy as it always had. He could still trample over you. He could still run a mile or two. But now it's strength under control.

God doesn't want you running up going, "I have my rights!" and you're demanding. And you're offensive and self-centered and you're saying, "I deserve this." God doesn't want you to be aggressive.

On the other hand God doesn't want you being passive. "Poor me. Keep poking me in the eye..

Healthy people are neither "bullies nor wimps." They speak the truth in love.

In the Bible, there are only two people who are called meek. Jesus and Moses. Neither of them ever backed down in the face of a bully.

Moses went toe to toe with Pharaoh, the most powerful man in the world and said, "Let my people go!" He had the courage of his convictions. He was loving. He was not aggressive. He was not passive. He was meek.

We want to create a church of meek people. Not wimps. Not bullies. But people who know how to handle people the way Jesus did.

Instead of offering you legalism Jesus says "You are free from the law." That's what the book of Galatians says.

Instead of offering you hypocrisy and saying you've got to wear a mask as a Christian, He says "I am the truth."

Instead of offering you guilt trips He says "There is now therefore no condemnation in Jesus Christ."

Instead of nitpicking, He says, "You are complete in Jesus Christ."

Instead of criticizing your motives He says, “I know your heart and I still love you unconditionally.”

Instead of guilt by association, He says, “Come in and join My family. The family of God.”

Instead of belittling you and ridiculing you – Jesus says this, “You are worthy of dying for.

Instead of flattery, He says “I know everything about you – the good, the bad and the ugly – and I still love you.”

Instead of pressure He says “Come to Me if you’re burdened and pressured and I will give you rest.”

Instead of gossip He says “The truth will make you free.”

Here’s your choice. Do you want to live your life with a toxic religion? Or do you want to live your life with a healthy relationship with God and People?

It’s your choice.

Prayer:

God set me free from toxic religion and give me the strength and courage to deal with the toxic people in my life.

I pray this in Your name. Amen.”