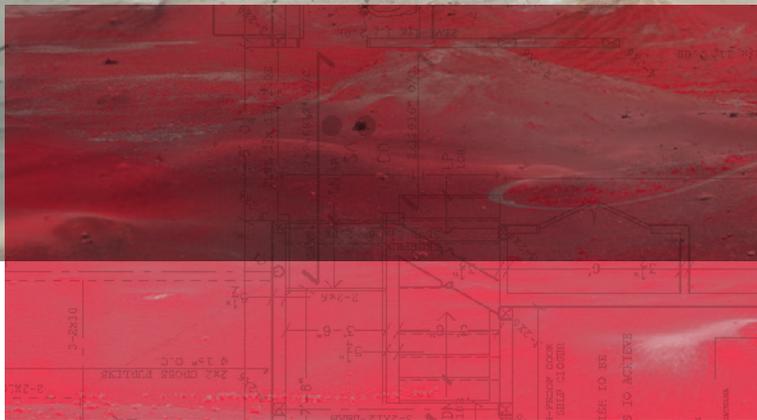




COURAGE



Prayer Guide
WEEK 3

Single-Minded Devotion

Week 3
Day 1

Prayer Guide

Two-faced. Half-hearted. Double-minded. No matter what you call it, scripture repeatedly warns against having divided loyalties. Jesus tells us we can't play both sides—a divided house will not stand (Mark 3:25).

Before the Israelites could claim the Promised Land, Joshua told them to consecrate themselves. This consecration included an outward washing and purification symbolic of the inward heart and mind. The Israelites were to be single-minded in their dedication and loyalty to God, their hearts fully devoted to God and his purposes.

As with the Israelites, if we want to claim God's promise tomorrow and see his amazing work in our lives and in the life of our church, we must follow the teaching of scripture to be single-minded in our devotion to God. We can't have one foot in Egypt and one foot in the Promised Land. We can't divide our love between the world and the kingdom of God.

God is ready to do amazing things among us. All he demands is our single-minded devotion.

Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you."

JOSHUA 3:5

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

JAMES 4:8

Are your loyalties divided between God and the things of this world? Are you living as a half-hearted follower of Jesus? Ask God to forgive you and to replace your double-minded nature with single-minded devotion to him and his kingdom.

PRAYER TIME

Parting the Waters

Week 3
Day 2

Prayer Guide

The new generation of Israelites had heard their parents recount the crossing of the Red Sea. For their parents and grandparents, it was one of the most defining moments of their lives. Walking between huge walls of water on dry ground; watching the water collapse on Pharaoh's army—what a miracle!

Now it was time for the current generation to take a great step of faith, to believe God would part the waters just as he had done for their parents and grandparents.

It's not easy to step out in faith when surrounded by raging waters. The relative safety of dry ground is appealing when faced with an alternative of danger and uncertainty.

But God is calling us out into the water. There's a future full of promise on the other side, something better than what we have today, and we have to take a step of faith to claim it. Yes, it's dangerous but it's worth the risk. God wants great things for us and for his church and he is faithful to provide. He is willing to part the waters for us, just as he did at the Red Sea and the Jordan River. Are we willing to get our feet wet?

Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: "When you reach the edge of the Jordan's waters, go and stand in the river"... And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the Lord—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap.

JOSHUA 3:8,13

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

ISAIAH 43:2-3A

How might the relative safety of your current circumstances be keeping you from pursuing God's dreams for your life? Is there a bold step of faith right in front of you that you're hesitant to take? How might God be calling our church to step into the waters? Seek the answers to these questions in prayer today.

PRAYER TIME

Get Your Feet Wet

Week 3
Day 3

Prayer Guide

God's promise was in place. The instructions were delivered. Their old familiar leader was gone, but their new leader was in place. The two spies had returned with a positive report. The Jordan River was overflowing, but Joshua told them God would do a miracle as he did at the Red Sea, and they would be able to cross over easily.

Only one obstacle remained...taking the first step. So much unknown. Would they win their first battle? How many battles would there be? How long would the fighting go on? How many would be killed? Would it be me? My son? And where would we live? And what would we do? And more and more questions, and only one answer, God's answer: take the first step, and I will go with you!

The paths God's people walk often are hindered by overflowing rivers, blocked by walled cities, and threatened by Canaanites—in all their modern varieties. His promise to us is victory, but not without hindrances. His instructions to us are much the same as they were to Israel: take the first step, and I will go with you!

Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away,

JOSHUA 3:15-16

at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

Ask God to make clear to you what your first step is, then to give you the willingness to take it. Pray that all his people cross boldly together.

PRAYER TIME

Watch, Jericho!

Week 3
Day 4

Prayer Guide

Is it coincidence that Israel crosses the Jordan River near Jericho where they would have their first battle in the Promised Land? Joshua could have chosen a spot farther away where Israel could cross in secret and sneak up on the city, but, no, God chooses a place near Jericho where they could not avoid being seen. What was he thinking?

God has always used his people to show all the nations of the world who he is so they will stand in awe of him and know that he is God. Forty years earlier, Egypt had learned the hard way who God was, and the Canaanites heard about it. Remember how Rahab's confession of faith was based on all the stories of what God had done through Israel with other nations.

When God's people claim his promises and follow him into a hostile world, we want to imitate Israel and have the courage to be seen. Did Jesus not tell his disciples that they were a city set on a hill? We must live in such a way, walk in such a way, talk in such a way that whoever hears us, sees us, or talks with us comes to know better what an awesome God we serve.

So the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

JOSHUA 3:16B

The Lord will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the Lord your God and walk in obedience to him. Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they will fear you.

DEUTERONOMY 28:9-10

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

MATTHEW 5:14-16

Pray for the courage and boldness to be seen and heard. Pray that God's church will be a light to the world, not for our glory but for his.

PRAYER TIME

