

September, October, November 2026
Fall Lessons



Teacher's Guide

A Leadership Resource for Adult Bible Study



Lesson 1— September 6, 2026

DEVOTIONAL READING: Daniel 10:18-21

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Joshua 1

PRINT PASSAGE: Joshua 1:1-11

Key Verse: 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, KJV)

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“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9, NIV)

Renewing Our Commitments



Teacher's Resource Kit

- Townsend Press Targeted Teaching Tips for Sunday School Teachers
- Townsend Press Flashlight Commentary
- Bible Studies for Adults
- Bible Studies for Young Adults

LESSON AIMS

Upon the completion of this lesson, the students will be able to do the following:

1. Understand that God provides for His people.
2. Realize that God develops leaders to guide believers.
3. Live faithfully in covenant with God.



KEY TERMS

Be strong (verse 6)—Hebrew: *châzaq* (khawzak’): to strengthen, prevail, harden, conquer; be courageous.

Commanded (verse 9)—Hebrew: *tsâvâh* (tsawvaw’): to [have] appointed, ordained, laid charge upon; gave orders.

Prosper (verse 7)—Hebrew: *sâkal* (saw-kal’): to be prudent, act wisely, have insight; “be successful” (NIV).

Servant (verse 1)—Hebrew: *‘ebed* (eh’-bed): a slave, subject, worshipper; used in a special sense to refer to prophets and Levites—but in this case, it refers to Moses as the Lord’s servant.

Stand (verse 5)—Hebrew: *yâtsab* (yaw-tsab’): to set, place, or station oneself; to present oneself. The Lord promised the people of Israel that no one would be able to stand against them as He was with them.

*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 4)

Preparing the Lesson

- Refer to the *Townsend Press Targeted Teaching Tips for Sunday School Teachers* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week's student assignments ("Your Life" and "Your World!").
- This guide offers two options for leading your class.
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- See page 7 for how to plan each week's lesson.
- See page 6 for a student *Personal Growth Plan*.

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

God provides for His people by developing leaders to guide them so that they may live faithfully in covenant with the Lord.

THE LESSON IN FOCUS

Joshua 1 opens with loss and uncertainty. The death of Moses leaves Israel facing the future without the leader who guided them through liberation and wilderness. God's first words to Joshua do not focus on strategy or conquest, but on promise, presence, and obedience.

The repeated command to be strong and courageous frames leadership as a response to God rather than a display of confidence. Courage is required because obedience will be tested. Joshua is called to lead decisively while remaining anchored in God's instruction. Faithfulness, not force, will determine the people's success.

This lesson invites teachers to explore how commitment is renewed during times of transition. Joshua does not step forward alone. God's presence accompanies him, and God's word guides him. Leadership is presented as a faithful response rather than personal initiative.

As the class engages this lesson, attention can be given to how God's promises sustain obedience. Renewed commitment begins when God's people trust that God goes with them into unfamiliar territory.

The text presents leadership not as a position to be claimed but as a calling to be answered. God's presence does not eliminate the need for obedience; rather, it makes obedience possible. For teachers preparing this lesson, consider how to help adults see that God's call to faithfulness comes with God's promise of presence.

THE LESSON IN CONTEXT

Joshua 1 follows the conclusion of Deuteronomy and the death of Moses. Deuteronomy provides the theological framework for Joshua, emphasizing covenant loyalty, obedience to God's instruction, and reliance on God's guidance. Joshua 1 focuses on God's commissioning and trust in Joshua to become the new leader and lead the Israelite's across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. Joshua's leadership continues rather than replaces this covenantal vision and permits a victory for the Israelites.

God's promise to be with Joshua echoes the assurance given to Moses, reinforcing continuity in divine leadership. The land promise rests on earlier covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, situating Israel's future within God's long-term faithfulness.

The book of Joshua reflects Israel's attempt to understand its identity as a settled people after generations of wandering. The narrative emphasizes theological meaning over military detail. Success in the land is consistently tied to obedience and trust in God.

This context helps frame Joshua 1 as a passage about covenant faithfulness rather than conquest. It also highlights the importance of following God's command and the value of being ready to move in the direction that God leads. Leadership is portrayed as responsibility under God's authority, sustained by God's presence and shaped by obedience to God's word.

OPENING INQUIRY (Choose from the questions below.)

1. Can you recall a time when you stepped into a new responsibility and felt uncertain about what lay ahead?
2. Why do you think God emphasizes courage before outlining action?

3. What helps sustain commitment during seasons of transition?
4. Why is courage important in obedience to God?
5. How can God's authority be used to guide us in the right direction?
6. What are two examples of God's faithfulness to you?
7. What is an example of a "Jordan River" experience that you have had with God?
8. Why do you think obedience is important in faithfulness to God?

INSIGHTS

Joshua 1:9 anchors the lesson in divine assurance. Courage is commanded, but it is grounded in God's promise of presence. Fear and discouragement are addressed not by denying difficulty, but by trusting that God goes with God's people. Courage becomes an expression of faith rather than emotional confidence. The passage reveals that courage is not the absence of fear but the choice to move forward despite fear. Joshua's commission shows that God addresses our anxiety not by removing challenges but by assuring us of divine presence. It is the divine presence that led Joshua to be intentional in trusting and relying on God to direct him as a new leader of the Israelites.

EXPLORATION

This lesson encourages reflection on how renewed commitment shapes leadership and discipleship. What happens when courage is rooted in trust rather than self-reliance? How does obedience guide decision-making during uncertainty? The passage invites faithful action grounded in God's presence. It challenges today's understandings of leadership that prioritize charisma, confidence, or control. Joshua's example suggests that faithful leadership emerges from listening to God's instruction and trusting God's promises. Joshua is a faithful example of the kind of leader that God requires of us when we are offered opportunities to serve in these roles. Being effective in serving also requires obedience to God.

ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

Commentary on Joshua 1:1-4

KJV

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,

2 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.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

NIV

AFTER THE death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide:

2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.

3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

God's opening words to Joshua acknowledge loss while moving toward promise. The death of Moses marks the end of an era. Moses led Israel from slavery to the edge of the Promised Land, mediating God's law and interceding for the people through wilderness wanderings. His passing leaves a vacuum

that no ordinary successor could fill. Yet God does not dwell on Moses' absence. Instead, God immediately calls Joshua forward: "Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River."

The command is urgent and personal. God addresses Joshua directly, naming him as the one who will lead. This is not a committee decision or a democratic election. It is divine appointment. God's initiative establishes Joshua's authority, and God's promise sustains it. The phrase "Moses my servant is dead" is blunt but necessary. Grief must not paralyze the people. In fact, they must move forward in faith with courage, following Joshua's lead. The message of importance is that God's purposes continue beyond any single leader.

God's promise to Joshua is rooted in the covenant made generations earlier. "I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses." The land is gift, not conquest. Israel's success depends not on military strength but on God's faithfulness to ancestral promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The boundaries described paint a vision larger than what Israel would actually occupy. This points to the expansive nature of God's covenant faithfulness and the importance of obedience to God.

For teachers, this section emphasizes that leadership transitions do not interrupt God's faithfulness. God remains constant even when human leaders change. Joshua steps into responsibility, but he does not step into Moses' shoes. He walks in his own calling, shaped by God's word and sustained by God's presence. The passage invites reflection on how communities navigate change, how new leaders honor past faithfulness while moving forward, and how God's promises anchor hope when circumstances feel uncertain.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question(s):**

What new assignment or season of change are you facing? How might Joshua's call encourage you to trust God as you step forward in faith?

- **Young Adult Question(s):**

Put yourself in Joshua's shoes. He goes from being Moses' aide to being his successor. Do you think he was ready to meet the moment or overwhelmed by his new responsibilities?

Commentary on Joshua 1:5-9

KJV

5 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.

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

7 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.

8 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.

9 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.

NIV

5 No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

6 Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

7 "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do

not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

8 Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

God’s promise to Joshua is both personal and communal: “No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life.” This assurance does not promise ease, but it does promise God’s sustaining presence. The phrase “as I was with Moses, so I will be with you” establishes continuity between generations of leadership. Joshua is not starting from scratch; he is continuing what God began through Moses.

Yet God adds a crucial clarification: “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” This is not merely emotional comfort. It is theological anchor. God’s presence is the foundation for courage, the source of strength, and the reason for confidence. Without this promise, Joshua’s commission would be overwhelming. With it, leadership becomes possible.

The command to “be strong and courageous” appears three times in this passage, each with a different emphasis. The first focuses on possessing the land (verse 6). The second emphasizes obedience to the law (verse 7). The third addresses fear and discouragement (verse 9). Together, these repetitions teach that courage is not a one-time decision but an ongoing practice. Faithfulness requires renewed commitment in different circumstances.

The heart of this section is verse 8: “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it.” Success is not defined by military victory but by obedience to God’s instruction. Meditation on God’s word is not passive reading but active engagement. It shapes

thought, guides decision-making, and forms character. Joshua’s leadership is measured not by conquest but by faithfulness.

How does Scripture function as more than information, becoming instead a source of formation? How does obedience grow from meditation? How does God’s presence transform fear into courage? The passage suggests that faithful leadership emerges not from personal strength but from attentiveness to God’s word and trust in God’s promises.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book’s related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question(s):**

How might God be inviting you to practice courageous obedience? How could regular reading and reflection on Scripture strengthen your determination during moments of uncertainty or fear?

- **Young Adult Question(s):**

Can you remember a time when you had to be strong and courageous? How does God’s presence in our lives help us to be courageous?

Commentary on Joshua 1:10-11

KJV

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.

NIV

10 So Joshua ordered the officers of the people:

11 “Go through the camp and tell the people, ‘Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.’”

Joshua's first act as leader is to translate God's promise into practical preparation. He commands the officers to pass through the camp with clear instructions: "Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own." This demonstrates leadership that moves from promise to practice, from hearing to action.

The three-day time frame is specific and urgent. There is no indefinite waiting, no hesitation, no debate. Joshua has heard from God and now mobilizes the people. His leadership is decisive without being dictatorial. He instructs the officers, who will in turn instruct the people. This shows organizational structure and shared responsibility. Leadership is not one person doing everything but one person guiding many toward a common purpose.

The reference to provisions highlights practical preparation. Faith does not eliminate the need for planning. Trusting God's promise does not mean ignoring human responsibility. The people must prepare for the journey ahead. This balance between divine initiative and human response is central to biblical faith. God provides, and we prepare. God promises, and we act.

Joshua's words also remind the people of God's role: "the LORD your God is giving you." The land is gift, not achievement. Israel's entry into Canaan is not primarily about their military prowess but about God's covenant faithfulness. This distinction matters throughout the book of Joshua and beyond. When success comes, the people must remember that it is God who grants it.

How do we move from promise to practice? How do we balance trust in God with responsible preparation? How does faithful leadership mobilize communities toward God's purposes? Joshua's example suggests that obedience includes both hearing God's word and taking concrete steps forward. This challenges passivity without promoting self-reliance. It frames leadership as faithful response to God's initiative, guided by God's instruction, and sustained by God's presence.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

- **Adult Question(s):**

What practical or spiritual preparations might help you enter the next season of God's purpose in your life, church, or community? What first step could you take this week?

- **Young Adult Question(s):**

Is there an area of your life where God is asking you to move forward before you have all the answers? What would it take for you to step out in obedience?

LIFE APPLICATION

- **Refer to Adult Book**

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

—Reflect on a moment when you sensed God inviting you into a new season. Identify one meaningful step you can take this week toward renewed obedience. Write a short prayer asking God to strengthen your courage and deepen your commitment to follow His guidance faithfully.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

—Think about someone facing uncertainty about a life change. Share how God's presence has strengthened you during transitions. Offer encouragement based on Joshua's story and enthusiastically share your testimony. Your testimony may help them recognize God's faithfulness and explore a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

- **Refer to Young Adult Book**

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

Leaders aren't only defined by their actions in big moments or by significant accomplishments. How they handle the seemingly small things matters greatly, too. Make a list of ways you can be faithful to God in the small things in the upcoming week.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

- Societal understandings of leadership aren't always aligned with what God finds most

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Lord, renew our courage and commitment as You did for Joshua. Help us trust Your presence and obey Your word in times of change. Strengthen us to walk faithfully where You lead, confident that You remain with us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

MONDAY , September 7	"Hold Fast to the Traditions"	(2 Thessalonians 2:13-17)
TUESDAY , September 8	"Victory at the Sea"	(Exodus 14:21-31)
WEDNESDAY , September 9	"The Lord Goes Before Us"	(Numbers 10:29-36)
THURSDAY , September 10	""Do Not Be Afraid""	(John 6:15-21)
FRIDAY , September 11	"Remember God's Mighty Deeds"	(Psalm 77:11-20)
SATURDAY , September 12	"Remember Jesus' Saving Work"	(1 Corinthians 11:23-27)
SUNDAY , September 13	"Crossing into the Promised Land"	(Joshua 4:14-24)

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INTERACTIVE LEARNING APPROACH

YOUNG ADULT FOCUS

This lesson plan provides tools to support an interactive teaching approach for today's lesson. The focus is on student-teacher involvement. Teachers may formulate the lesson plan for use with the *Bible Studies for Young Adults* quarterly.

Materials Needed:

- Blank paper and colored markers
- Bibles
- Sticky notes
- Giant sticky tabletop easel pad

Interaction—Introducing the Lesson (10 minutes)

- Introduce today's topic: "Renewing Our Commitments."
- Have someone read aloud the "Life Happens" section on page 5 and then, as a class, discuss the related questions.
- Share the Unifying Principle: "God provides for His people by developing leaders to guide them so that they may live faithfully in covenant with the Lord."

Exploring the Word (25-30 minutes)

- Begin with a prayer, asking for guidance and understanding.
- Have students read Joshua 1:1-6 and Joshua 1:7-11 aloud, with different people reading different verses.
- Briefly discuss the historical and cultural context of these passages.
- Divide into small groups (3-4 people) and give

each group a different focus question, from the Insight section or any of your choosing.

- After 5 minutes, have groups share their insights with the class.
- In those same groups, provide each student with sticky notes and markers. Ask them to write down what they think are Joshua's leadership qualities. Have them place their sticky notes on a giant sticky pad.
- On a separate giant sticky pad, create a résumé for Joshua based off of the students' sticky notes.
- Allow participants to share any final thoughts or questions.

Life Application (5 minutes)

- Read aloud the "Your Life" section on page 9.
- Ask the group to help you come up with a definition of courage. How does God's presence in our lives help us to be courageous? Use the sticky notes for this exercise.

Life Response (5 minutes)

- Read aloud the "Your World!" section on page 9.
- Encourage the students to share their testimony of how they have used God's Word to gain courage in a particular life circumstance.
- Close in prayer and remind the students to prepare for next week's lesson.

Lesson 2—September 13, 2026

DEVOTIONAL READING: Luke 8:35-39

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Joshua 4

PRINT PASSAGE: Joshua 4:14-24

Key Verses: When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. (Joshua 4: 21b-22, KJV)

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“In the future when your descendants ask their parents, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.’” (Joshua 4:21b-22, NIV)

Family Legacies



Teacher's Resource Kit

- Townsend Press Targeted Teaching Tips for Sunday School Teachers
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LESSON AIMS

Upon the completion of this lesson, students should be able to do the following:

1. Adhere to the instruction to remember God's saving actions.
2. Recognize memorials and rituals established to commemorate God's goodness.
3. Fully understand God's steadfast love for us.



KEY TERMS:

Camped (verse 19)—Hebrew: *chânâh* (khawnaw'): pitched tents, dwelled, rested; “encamped” (KJV).

Command (verse 16)—Hebrew: *tsâvâh* (tsawvaw'): to charge, appoint, ordain, give charge over, set in order.

Covenant (verse 18)—Hebrew: *berîyth* (bereeth'): a treaty, alliance, league, ordinance, pledge. God's covenant with the Israelites included making Israel God's treasured possession.

Stones (verse 20)—Hebrew: *'eben* (eh'-ben): weights; sacred objects (as memorials); plummets. Twelve stones were taken from the Jordan to be used as a reminder to the Israelites of how they crossed the river on dry land.

Waters (verse 18)—Hebrew: *mayim* (mah'-yim): water-courses; streams of water.

*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 4)

Preparing the Lesson

- Refer to the *Townsend Press Targeted Teaching Tips for Sunday*

School Teachers for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.

- Review last week’s student assignments (“Your Life” and “Your World!”).
- This guide offers two options for leading your class.
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- See page 7 for how to plan each week’s lesson.
- See page 6 for a student *Personal Growth Plan*.

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

We are instructed to remember God’s saving actions through memorials and rituals so that we can fully understand His steadfast love for us.

THE LESSON IN FOCUS

Joshua 4 centers on remembrance at a critical moment. Israel has crossed the Jordan on dry ground and stands ready to move forward into the land. Instead of pressing ahead, God commands the people to stop, gather stones, and build a memorial.

As persons of faith, memory shapes faith. The stones are not sacred objects; they are prompts for testimony. God anticipates that children will ask questions, and those questions will become opportunities to tell the story of God’s deliverance. Faith is formed not only through experience, but through interpretation.

As we lean into interpretation, we can reflect on how families and communities preserve faith. Through stories, rituals, and symbols people come to understand who God is and what God has done. Without intentional remembrance, faith becomes disconnected from God’s actions.

You can help students recognize their role in shaping spiritual memory. The lesson challenges communities to consider what stories they tell, what memories they preserve, and how faith is passed on intentionally rather than assumed. The memorial stones become a teaching tool, designed to prompt questions from future generations. When children ask, ‘What do these stones mean?’ parents have the

opportunity to tell the story of God’s faithfulness. This pattern of inter generational testimony strengthens community identity and keeps faith alive across generations.

THE LESSON IN CONTEXT

Joshua 4 follows Israel’s crossing of the Jordan River, a moment that parallels the crossing of the Red Sea. The repetition reinforces God’s consistent pattern of deliverance. Just as God made a way out of Egypt, God now makes a way into the Promised Land.

The memorial at Gilgal represents all twelve tribes, emphasizing communal identity. Faith is not individualistic; it is shared and sustained together. The passage reflects an oral culture where storytelling served as a primary means of teaching and preserving identity.

Historically, memorials played a vital role in Israel’s worship life. They helped interpret present circumstances through God’s past faithfulness. The circumstances were sometimes articulate in the context of remembrance which is itself is a theological act.

The context highlights that faith must be intentionally taught. It is important to remember that faith is a key aspect of following God’s instructions as exhibit by Joshua. Each generation must hear the story for itself. Without remembrance, trust erodes and identity weakens.

The crossing of the Jordan echoes the crossing of the Red Sea, creating a pattern of deliverance that shapes Israel’s identity. Both crossings involve God’s intervention, both require faith from the people, and both become moments that must be remembered.

OPENING INQUIRY (Choose from the questions below.)

1. What family stories or traditions have shaped who you are today?
2. Why do you think God commanded Israel to stop and remember instead of moving forward immediately?
3. How do communities today preserve meaningful memories of faith?
4. Are you a part of a family that uses remembrance to teach faith?

5. Remembrance sometimes occurs in the form of oral history. Have you experienced oral history in your family as a part of learning about faith?
6. How can you use the example of Joshua's leadership as a model for curating a leadership legacy in your life?

INSIGHTS

Joshua 4:21-22 reveals that remembrance is purposeful. God creates space for questions so that faith can be taught through story that hinges on remembrance. Memory becomes a bridge between generations, connecting experience with belief and serving as an opportunity to expand one's faith. Faith grows when God's work is named and shared.

The stones serve as physical reminders of a spiritual reality: God makes a way when there seems to be no way. This principle applies across Scripture and throughout Christian experience. When we face insurmountable obstacles, remembering God's past faithfulness strengthens present trust.

EXPLORATION

This lesson encourages reflection on how remembrance functions in faith communities. Remembrance is a tool of faith that is to be used to guide us in developing our faith walk and building spiritual muscles that will enhance our spiritual growth. What practices help preserve God's story? How does remembering God's faithfulness shape courage in new seasons? The passage invites intentional cultivation of memory as a spiritual discipline.

This lesson invites adults to consider: What practices help us remember God's work? How do we share faith stories with younger generations? What 'stones' mark significant moments of God's faithfulness in our lives? Remembering is active discipleship.

ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY FOR THE TEACHER

Commentary on Joshua 4:14-18

KJV

14 On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

16 Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.

17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.

18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.

NIV

14 That day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they stood in awe of him all the days of his life, just as they had stood in awe of Moses.

15 Then the LORD said to Joshua,

16 "Command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant law to come up out of the Jordan."

17 So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan."

18 And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before.

The text begins by noting that "on that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel." This is not Joshua promoting himself but God confirming his leadership. The Hebrew word translated "exalted" suggests making great or magnifying. God's action establishes Joshua's authority so that the people recognize him as Moses' legitimate successor.

The comparison to Moses is deliberate and significant. "They stood in awe of him all the days of his life, just as they had stood in awe of Moses." The word "awe" (Hebrew: *yare*) carries weight beyond mere respect. It suggests reverence, honor, and a recognition that God works through this leader. The people's response to Joshua reflects their recognition of God's presence with him.

Yet the passage quickly shifts from Joshua's

confirmation to God's instruction. God tells Joshua to command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant to come up out of the Jordan. This sequence is important: God speaks to Joshua, and Joshua speaks to the priests. Leadership functions through obedience and delegation. Joshua does not act independently; he follows God's direction and communicates it clearly to those he leads.

When the priests step onto dry ground, "the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before." The timing is precise. As long as the priests remained in the riverbed, the water stayed back. Once they emerged, the river returned to its natural state. This demonstrates that God's intervention was real, specific, and unmistakable. The miracle was not coincidence or natural phenomenon but divine action on behalf of Israel.

The crossing is not about Joshua's leadership skill or the priests' courage. It is about God's faithfulness. When God calls people to step forward, God provides what is needed. This pattern appears throughout Scripture: God commands, people obey, and God acts. The passage invites reflection on how we respond when God's call seems to require more than we possess.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

- **Adult Question(s):**
How have you seen God affirm a leader in your life or community? What qualities helped you recognize God's presence working through them?
- **Young Adult Question(s):**
Is there a time in your life where God made a way out of no way?

Commentary on Joshua 4:19-22

KJV

19 And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.

20 And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.

21 And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones?

22 Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

NIV

19 On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho.

20 And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan.

21 He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean?'

22 "tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.'"

The people emerge from the Jordan on "the tenth day of the first month," a date with theological significance. This is the same date when Israel took the Passover lamb before the exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:3). In verse 7, God also instructed them to "take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs." The connection is deliberate. Just as God delivered Israel from slavery through the Red Sea, God now brings them into the Promised Land through the Jordan. To commemorate their deliverance, they are guided to collect twelve stones. The memorial stones mark continuity in God's saving work.

Joshua sets up the twelve stones at Gilgal, creating a permanent witness to what happened. The number twelve represents the twelve tribes, reminding the people that this is a communal experience. All of Israel crossed together. All of Israel received the land as gift. The stones are not decorative but functional to demonstrate to all nations that the Lord is God. The stones were also a memorial to God symbolizing to the Israelites the power of God to offer deliverance and new beginnings.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

- **Adult Question(s):**

What are specific situations in your life that have led you to pause and remember God's faithfulness in your life? Share it with someone as encouragement today.

- **Young Adult Question(s):**

Look around your room or home. Are there objects in your possession that help remind you of God's love for you?

Commentary on Joshua 4:23-24

KJV

23 For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over:

24 That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.

NIV

23 “For the LORD your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The LORD your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over.

24 “He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is powerful and so that you might always fear the LORD your God.”

Joshua concludes by explaining why God dried up the Jordan: “so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is powerful.” The miracle was not private or exclusive. It was meant to reveal God’s character to everyone, not just Israel. God’s faithfulness to Israel serves a larger purpose—to demonstrate to all nations that the Lord is God.

The connection to the Red Sea crossing is explicit in verse 23. This parallel teaches that God’s character remains consistent. What God did then, God does now. What God began with the exodus, God continues through the entrance into Canaan. The pattern of deliverance reveals God’s ongoing faithfulness.

The second purpose is internal, as seen in verse 24. The word “fear” here is not terror but reverence—deep respect rooted in understanding who God is. To fear the Lord means to live with awareness of God’s power, to worship with gratitude, and to obey with trust. The crossing is meant to shape how Israel relates to God for generations to come.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

- **Adult Question(s):**

Who in your life needs to hear how God has worked for you? How could sharing your story strengthen their faith or spark hope?

- **Young Adult Question(s):**

What stories of God’s faithfulness have been passed down in your family or your faith community? How have those stories shaped the way you trust God today?

LIFE APPLICATION

- **Refer to Adult Book**

(See student lesson’s “Your Life” section.)

—The twelve stones at Gilgal remind us that remembering God’s faithfulness is part of living as God’s people. Israel learned to tell the story so future generations would trust God’s power and love. Today we are invited to preserve and share the ways God has worked in our lives, in our families and churches. Memorials, whether large or small, can anchor gratitude, strengthen faith, and encourage others to seek the Lord with hope and confidence.

(See student lesson’s “Your World!” section.)

—Think about a moment when you clearly experienced God’s help or guidance.

Consider writing it down, sharing it with a loved one, or creating a simple reminder that helps you remember God's faithfulness. This week, revisit that memory and thank God for the ways He continues to shape your journey.

- **Refer to Young Adult Book**

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

—Young adults often juggle dreams, expectations, disappointments, and hopes. Looking back over the years and being able to identify God's faithfulness can fortify our faith. Consider what rituals or memorials you could create to mark a significant time in your life when you experienced God's steadfast love.

(See student's lesson "Your World!" section.)

—The words "do this in remembrance of Me," the instructions given by Jesus during the Last Supper can be found etched in the center of the communion table in worship spaces across the world. Take a look around your sanctuary and consider what other symbols or rituals are practiced.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

The lesson topic for Sunday, September 20, 2026, is "Fighting among the Nations." The Devotional Reading is Psalm 108, the Background Scripture is Joshua 6; 8:26; 10:28-43; 11:1-23; Deuteronomy 7, and the Print Passage is Joshua 11:6-9, 16-23.



Closing Prayer

Lord, help us remember Your faithfulness and tell Your story with gratitude and clarity. Teach us to pass on what You have done so that future generations may trust You. Shape our memories into testimonies that strengthen faith and deepen reverence. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY , September 14	"Live as God's Treasured Possession"	(Deuteronomy 7:1-11)
TUESDAY , September 15	"God Will Love, Bless, and Multiply"	(Deuteronomy 7:12-26)
WEDNESDAY , September 16	"Strengthened in Every Circumstance"	(Philippians 4:10-19)
THURSDAY , September 17	"Armed for Spiritual Warfare"	(2 Corinthians 10:1-5, 15-18)
FRIDAY , September 18	"Christ Has Conquered the World"	(John 16:23-33)
SATURDAY , September 19	"God Fights for God's People"	(Joshua 10:40-11:5)
SUNDAY , September 20	"God Brings Victory"	(Joshua 11:6-9, 16-23)

INTERACTIVE LEARNING APPROACH

YOUNG ADULT FOCUS

This lesson plan provides tools to support an interactive teaching approach for today's lesson. The focus is on student-teacher involvement. Teachers may formulate the lesson plan for use with the *Bible Studies for Young Adults* quarterly.

Materials Needed:

- Blank paper and colored markers
- Bibles
- Smartphone

Interaction—Introducing the Lesson (10 minutes)

- Introduce today's topic: "Family Legacies."
- Have someone read aloud the "Life Happens" section on page 11 and then, as a class, discuss the related questions.
- Share the Unifying Principle: "We are instructed to remember God's saving actions through memorials and rituals so that we can fully understand His steadfast love for us."

Exploring the Word (25-30 minutes)

- Begin with a prayer, asking for guidance and understanding.
- Have students read Joshua 4:14-18 and Joshua 4:19-24 aloud, with different people reading different verses.
- Briefly discuss the historical and cultural context of these passages.
- Divide into small groups (3-4 people) and give

each group a different focus question: What specific words does Psalm 19 use to describe God's Word? What benefits/effects does Scripture have according to these passages? What does 2 Timothy tell us about the purpose of Scripture?

- After 5 minutes, have groups share their insights with the class.
- Summarize the key points from the lesson.
- Allow participants to share any final thoughts or questions.

Life Application (5 minutes)

- Read aloud the "Your Life" section on page 15.
- Ask students to create a digital hymnbook (a.k.a. music playlist) of songs that remind them of God's saving actions in their lives on a streaming platform of their choice. If they don't have a streaming account, ask them to write it on paper or in their Notes app.

Life Response (5 minutes)

- Read aloud the "Your World!" section on page 15.
- Encourage the students to share their testimony of how they have seen God's provision play out in someone else's life this week.
- Close in prayer and remind the students to prepare for next week's lesson.