

Intro: Welcome to the first service we share as the united family of God here in this place. We have been looking forward to, planning for, praying for and working for this day and now it has come. As we gather here together today as one church I want you to look with me at a passage of Scripture in which God speaks very directly to a group of people in a situation much like our own. Turn with me in your bibles to **Joshua 1:1-9** **Pg 151**

Like you and I the Children of Israel stand on the brink of a new day...all that they have known for years is passing...God is doing something new and different in their life. They find themselves where we are today...the things they have known, the familiar, the normal, the ordinary, are gone. The desert is behind them...Moses has died...passed from the scene, the old order is gone. But, they have not yet taken the Promised Land...the Jordan has not yet been crossed, Jericho has not yet been taken, the battles have not yet been fought...the Land is not yet theirs. They are in between. No longer in the desert..not yet in the Promised Land.

And there they stand. Looking back over their shoulders at the past...and looking ahead to the future and God's promise. They have to be a little unsure...uncertain. Afraid, hesitant, wondering what God has in store. Will they be able to cross the Jordan? Will they be able to take Jericho...Will they be able to win the battles, carry the day and take the land.

And into their uncertainty...and their hesitancy and yes a little bit of fear as well God speaks. And He tells them 3 Things

- Leave the Past In the Past
- Look Ahead To the Future I have Promised
- Lean On Me For the Strength You Need

1. Leave The Past In The Past. Vs 1-2

Look at how God begins the next chapter in the life of the nation of Israel.

- Moses my servant is dead!
>It doesn't get much for final than that! There is no sugarcoating, no soft, gentle words. (Moses is DEAD)
>Now, that doesn't mean God is uncaring. Deut 34 is a beautiful eulogy to Moses
~Climbed the Mountain, Saw the land, died seeing the promise from afar, buried on mountain
~People wept, mourned, grieved for 30 days...what a memorial service
~God spoke wonderful things about Moses...10-12
- But then, you turn the page, and God says: Moses is dead...Now Then!!!! Get Ready!
You see, God is saying, Leave the Past in the Past, Lay it Down, Let it Go, Leave it behind!
You CANT pursue the promise I have for you if you are living in the past!
You can't take the Promised Land and stay here in the Land Between: Move Forward!
- Now I know, for some people it must have felt uncaring...and unkind...and disrespectful
But God knew that their future was over in the Promised Land, not in the past of desert or Egypt, or stuck on brink
He is saying, Lay it Down, Let it Go, Leave it Behind!
"I HAVE SOMETHING BETTER FOR YOU!"

APPLIC: Listen to me Church: God is saying the SAME thing to US today...for exactly the same reason!
WE need to leave our Past Behind! We Need to Let it Go! We Need to Lay it Down!
For them it was BOTH the Pain of Past...(Desert,Egypt) as well as the Great Blessings (Manna, Red Sea)
Good and Bad...both had to be left behind. You cant receive God's blessing Today when you hands and your heart is full of Yesterday!

- RTBC: Leave the Past Behind: Wonderful Days of what "used to be" 5, 10, 15 years ago. It's gone, let it go
Leave the Past Pain behind: Yes 2 years ago we walked through a tough time: Let it go, Lay it down
- FBCE: You probably have the hardest job. Leaving 60 years of wonderful ministry...many incredible victories and some painful times as well. With all the love I have...Let it go. Lay it down
- VN: You need to do the same. Many, if not most of you are coming to a new life in Christ. You have past that is full as well, some wonderful things, some not so good. Lay it down. Let it Go...Leave it behind

Today we stand at the brink of a new day. In order for us to go forward we have to release the past. I don't know what you are looking over your shoulder at. Maybe it is a failure...or a betrayal...or some other hurt or pain or loss. Perhaps today you are remembering the wonderful days of the past. Victories...successes...ministry impact that was amazing
Here is God's WORD to you today. Moses my servant is Dead: The Past is DEAD! Let it Go...Lay it Down...Leave it Behind!

2. Look Forward To the Future God Has Promised. Vs 2-5

God uses two small words...But they are amazingly full of impact! Rise Up...Go Over!

Moses my servant is dead: The Past is Past: Rise Up! Go Over!

God is saying to Joshua and to you and I...Rise Up...Go Over! Leave the past behind you, Look to The Future!

- Rise Up! Lit = *Stand up; Stir up; Get up* on your feet and get ready to move forward
The time of grieving the Past is over; Now is the time to Look to the Future!

Phil 3:13 Paul said it, "*Forgetting those things that lay behind I press on...to take hold of the future God has...*"

- **Cross Over!** *Go from this side...the Past...to the Other Side...the Future!* Leave the Desert...Go to Prom Land
Listen to me Church: You can't stay where you ARE and receive the Blessing, when the Blessing is over in the Promised Land! You have to cross over.
>There is something BETTER on the other Side
>What God has for you there is better than what you have for you here!
~Promise of God's Blessing Over there Land Flowing with Milk and Honey
~Promise of God's Presence Over there I will be w you like I was w Moses
~Promise of God's Power Over there No one will stand against you!

Listen to me Church: You can't get what He has for you HERE...You MUST GO OVER THERE>...So GET UP GO OVER

APPLIC:

- **RTBC: FBCE IBVN** I have a word from the Lord for you this morning.
Is 43: Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past! See, I am doing a NEW thing!
Do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland!

Listen up Church: You have a CHOICE to make today! WE have a choice to make today:
Which way are you going to look? Over your shoulder at the past...or over the river to the Promised Land?
I don't know about you...But I'm ready to Rise Up...And Cross Over.
No more looking at the past No more living in the past No more longing for the past
I want the future God has for us and nothing less! I'm not willing to settle for the glory or the pain of the past
When God offers us the Promise of the future! I WANT His Blessing, I want His Presence, I WANT His Power
So, I'm Crossing Over! Come on, it is time to go!

3. Lean On God For The Power You Need! Vs 6-9

Listen to what God Told Joshua:

- **Be Strong & Courageous** *To fasten yourself to something; to sieze it and hold on!* (To God)
So that you can lead people (to Jesus)
- **Be Careful to obey** *To look and act carefully, to be observant, to pay close attention to something (Word)*
So you can be successful in Kingdom work!
- **Be Faithful to the word:** *So that you will maintain His presence with you!*

The ONLY way we can have those results...is if we FOLLOW the plan of God!
We DESIRE those things...Leading People to Jesus, Success in Kingdom work, God's presence...We ONLY get it His way!

CONCL: Leaving the Past behind and Looking toward the Future is not easy!
We will not be successful in our own strength
The ONLY way to do that is to lean on God and His word.

Are you doing that today?
Standing Strong? Carefully Obeying? Faithful to the Word?

Today we stand in between. The Past is Behind Us...The Promise is Ahead of Us...The Power is ONLY from God
I want to lead us in a prayer of commitment today...Would you stand with me? I'm going to pray...and at 2 or three different times during my prayer I'm going to pause...and give you the opportunity to speak to God directly.

Father, today I want to Leave The Past Behind...Good or bad, victory or failure, success or defeat, shame or sin...I want to Lay it down, Let it Go, Leave it behind. (Take a moment..tell God WHAT you want to let go)

Father today I commit myself to the Future YOU have for me...Help me see it..and pursue it with all my heart. Speak to me today...Give me a vision for what YOU want my future to look like...Show me your Path you want OUR church to take
(Pause and give people opportunity to listen)

Lord Jesus..Today I need your help and your strength. Make me strong...give me courage. Help me obey and be faithful, and Lord Jesus help me hold on to YOUR Word! Today I surrender my heart...my future...my hopes and dreams to you.

Amen