

MOVING AHEAD TOGETHER WITH  
A WINNING MINDSET

## STUDY TWO

## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

*Good leadership is not about the leader. It's about turning everyone's focus to the Lord and making Him the focus.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**T**HE book of Joshua bears the name of its central character—who is not who you might think. Tucked into the meaning of Joshua's name is the true hero of the book, the top commander who issues all the orders and wins all the battles. *Joshua* means, “the Lord saves.”

The chief figure of the book is the God of Israel, the LORD, *Yahweh*. His saving power is the mighty thematic current that carries the plotline from beginning to end, from the commissioning of Joshua in the opening chapter to the death of Joshua in the final chapter.

In between these bookends is the record of Israel's conquests, their possession of their new homeland, and the nation's culminating vow of loyalty to God alone and His laws. With each victory along the way, the nation exclaims, *Joshua—the Lord saves!*

This *Searching the Scriptures* study highlights Joshua's confidence as a leader, which grew out of his faith in the Lord. By keeping his eyes on God and pointing the nation to Him, Joshua inspired his followers—the highest mark of success for any leader.



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1

## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*



### PREPARE YOUR HEART

In prayer, bind your confidence to your Savior as you open His Word.

*Father, I claim Jeremiah's words, "Blessed are those who trust in the LORD" (Jeremiah 17:7). Renew my hope in You through my study and fortify my confidence. You alone are "my strength and shield" (Psalm 28:7). In Jesus' name, amen.*



### TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In *Joshua 1:1–9*, the text from our previous *Searching the Scriptures* study, the Lord affirmed His commitment to Joshua and, by extension, to the nation.

- 1) **Land:** "Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you" (Joshua 1:3)
- 2) **Presence:** "I will be with you" (1:5)
- 3) **Faithfulness:** "I will not fail you or abandon you" (1:5)
- 4) **Covenant:** "the land I swore to their ancestors" (1:6)

These commitments echo God's covenants with Abraham (*Genesis 12:1–7*) and Moses (*Exodus 3:12; Deuteronomy 11:23–24*). God was accomplishing what He promised them.

In return, the Lord asked His people to . . .

*"Be careful to obey all the commands I am giving you. Show love to the LORD your God by walking in his ways and holding tightly to him." (Deuteronomy 11:22)*

Known as a man who "wholeheartedly followed the LORD" (Numbers 32:12), Joshua modeled the close walk with God that God seeks in all His people. If there was a single key to Joshua's powerful influence and success as a leader, then this was it. Joshua's commitment to God and abiding relationship with Him permeated his leadership style.



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

Out of these deep spiritual roots grew Joshua’s unwavering confidence as a leader. Joshua was dignified, direct, and decisive in his leadership—characteristics we’ll observe in his initial addresses to the people.

### **Observation: The Leader’s Confidence and the People’s Response**

Observation looks at the words, metaphors, contrasts and comparisons, and flow of thought in the biblical passage. The goal is simply to grasp what the text says without exploring its meaning yet. A Bible atlas, such as *Zondervan Essential Atlas of the Bible*, can be helpful in locating cities and regions.

For this study, you’ll need a map illustrating the location of Israel at the time of the conquest. The maps in the back of most Bibles give a broad overview of the regions. For an online reference, open the map, “*Twelve Tribes of Israel after the Conquest of Canaan*.”



### **Searching the Scriptures Study Tools**

You can read Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s list of favorite resources in the online article, “*Basic Bible Study Tools*,” or watch Pastor Chuck in the video, “*How to Use Bible Study Tools*.”

### Instructions to the Leaders—Joshua 1:10–11

What do you observe about Joshua’s first orders in *Joshua 1:10–11*? Whom did he address? What was his tone? What was the focus of his message?



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

### Instructions to Certain Tribes—Joshua 1:12–18

Joshua directed his second address to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. These tribes had asked Moses to grant them land on the east side of the Jordan River. The Israelites had already taken control of this land, and it was spacious enough for their large flocks and herds. Moses agreed to the request on one condition—they must first fight with their brothers and help them conquer the land on the west side of the Jordan (*Numbers 32:1–33*).

Open your Bible maps and find the location of twelve tribes after the conquest. Notice the location of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The other half of Manasseh inhabited land on the west of the Jordan. What do you observe on the maps?

What instructions did Joshua give these tribes, according to *Joshua 1:12–15*?



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

What do you observe about the people's response to Joshua in *Joshua 1:16–18*? What qualities stand out?

*The leadership responsibility fell on Joshua. The people must now get used to a new voice, see a new style of leadership, move into a new territory, and take on new challenges. They must now be led by a man they've only known as Moses' assistant.*  
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



### Interpretation: Lessons from Joshua's Confidence, Israel's Response

The meaning of a passage emerges in interpretation. The Israelites had never fought the kind of battles that awaited them on the other side of the Jordan. Unlike the nomadic tribes the Hebrews had encountered in the wilderness, the Canaanites lived in fortified cities and brandished well-equipped and experienced armies. What was the underlying message Joshua communicated to his officers in *Joshua 1:11*?



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

Joshua exuded confidence in the Lord, not in the vastness of the Israelites' numbers or the strength of their swords. What lesson in leadership was Joshua modeling?

*Joshua was saying to them, "The Lord is the one who goes before us. It is His land, and He is giving it to us." —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

When Joshua addressed the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, he repeated the name of the Lord:

*"The LORD your God is giving you a place of rest."* (Joshua 1:13)

*". . . until the LORD gives them rest."* (1:15)

*". . . possess the land the LORD your God is giving them."* (1:15)

What underlying message was Joshua communicating to these tribes . . . and to the reader?



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

Notice that the people respond to Joshua in kind: “May the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses” (Joshua 1:17). Also, notice the vows the people make:

“We will do . . .” (1:16)

“We will go . . .” (1:16)

“We will obey . . .” (1:17)

What lesson do you glean about the proper response to godly leadership?

*Leaders, people want you to lead them in strength and courage. They don't want fear to grip your heart. They want you to be led by the living God. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



### Correlation: The Name of Jesus

The meaning of the names, *Joshua*, and its Greek form, *Jesus*, links the two men with a tight thematic bond. *Jesus*, or *Yeshua* in Hebrew, means, “the Lord saves.” The angel of the Lord told Joseph to name the baby conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary’s womb *Jesus*, because “he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

What thematic comparisons can you make between Jesus and Joshua regarding their roles and their missions?

Joshua's life goal was to lead wanderers out of the wilderness into a place of rest, in fulfillment of God's covenant. The Hebrews conquered the land, but not completely. They never entered the rest God had prepared for them. What did the writer to the Hebrews say about their failure and God's plan to complete His covenant of rest in Jesus, according to [Hebrews 4:8–11](#)?

What Joshua set out to do physically, Jesus accomplished spiritually. How does this truth inspire you to follow Jesus as your Joshua?





## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

### Application: Five Responses

Joshua's confidence in the Lord inspired five responses from the nation.

1. They were completely open to the Lord's plan. A willing attitude characterized their mind-set.
2. They had no hidden agenda and didn't try to work a "deal" to get something in return.
3. They transferred allegiance from Moses to Joshua.
4. They blessed their new leader, "May the LORD your God be with you" (Joshua 1:17).
5. They encouraged Joshua to obey God's Word. "Be strong and courageous!" (1:18).

What can you do to follow their example regarding your spiritual leader?

Which of these responses can you apply to your relationship with Jesus, your Savior?



## Confident Leadership . . . Ideal Response

*Joshua 1:10–18*

How can you settle into His rest today?

We can encourage our spiritual leaders to place their confidence solely in the Lord as Joshua did and pray for them. Our confidence solidly rests in Jesus, the Savior who defeated the enemy on our behalf and who provides a spiritual rest that no power on earth or in heaven can take away. Praise God for our *Yeshua!*



### A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, thank You for a new beginning and a new spiritual homeland for me through the saving work of Jesus Christ. You have ushered me out of my wandering into a place of rest, where I enjoy the security of Your salvation now and forever. In Jesus' name, amen.*

