

**Sermon Notes of  
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on July 4, 2021:**

**"Be Strong and Courageous – Regathering  
(Joshua 1:1-9)"**

**[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman on Zoom shows us that it is through spiritual strength and being courageous that we will be able to have services together again at the YMCA.]**

Introduction:

- As believers who dwell in unity with each other and our Triune God, we wish everyone a happy Inter-dependence Day!
- After Pastor Craig's short message, we're going to have an opportunity to discuss our regathering together options with input from our members.
- Many heads are better than one and Pastor Craig is going to appreciate our input.
  
- We going to start with short message based on Joshua the first 9 verses.
- Joshua takes over the leadership at the death of Moses.
- And one of the key statements in these verses to encourage us is to "Be strong and courageous."
- Now for the nation of Israel at that time, it was a time of transition and a time of change.
  
- Now we all know that change is constant.
- But humanly speaking, change isn't something we always enjoy.
- Now, there's positive, good change that we're happy for and then there are other changes that we're not happy for.
  
- But, as believes, we can always say, "It's through change and it's through transition that leads to our transformation."
- So, transformation doesn't happen without going through some changes.
- Now, as we face the prospect of returning to the Monrovia Y, for most of us that's a good thing because we long for the time when we can talk to each other face to face and connect with people.
  
- This passage has some important meaning for Pastor Craig.
- After he had graduated from Ambassador College, he needed to find a new job at a time when jobs were not so plentiful.
- It was somewhat intimidating for him.
- But, he remembers writing this passage down in his folio and reading it often as well pray it and ask God that angels would go before him and open any doors of opportunity for him.
- So, this passage gave him much encouragement and confidence 30 years ago.

**Joshua 1:1 (NASB), Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, 2) "Moses My servant is dead; so now arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel.**

- Now today we're being told "Arise, cross out of the land of Zoom and into the land of Monrovia."

**3) Every place on which the sole of your footsteps, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. 4) From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. 5) No one will be able to oppose you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not desert you nor abandon you. 6) Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.**

- So, today, we can rely on this passage as we focus on change of location, we can be strong and we can be courageous.
- And the concerns we might have, we can work through, because we are doing it together.
- And God promises us that He will never abandon us nor forsake us.
- And this will also give us the opportunity to be the church we are to be and to re-establish ourselves to be able to reach out into the community, to share the Gospel and create relationships.
- Moving back to Monrovia will help us to live up to the purpose of the church, to be a light of love to the community that will help attract them to the Triune God.
- That's our purpose for rejoining back to Monrovia.

**7) Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the Law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may achieve success wherever you go. 8) This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it;**

- These verses should remind us to harken back to the spiritual disciplines of study, meditation and prayer that Ed Stonick reminded us about last week.

**for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will achieve success. 9) Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be terrified nor dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."**

- That's where we are today as we face transition, as we face regathering – God is with us; God loves us.
- The reason why the church exists and the reason why what we are called to do is to share the Gospel and the light of love with others.

Regathering - Open discussion about crossing from Zoom into the land of Monrovia:

- The issues we will be discussing will include:
  - What will it take?
  - What are the concerns?
  - Will we be strong and courageous about this and support each other?

- Yes, we are going to meet in the Multipurpose Room just as we did before.
- And the contract remains the same, we will have access to the Y from 8:30 to 11:30 AM on Sundays.
- The question about having coffee and donuts before services is good.
- When we first come back, we won't be serving them.
- But Pastor Craig still needs clarification about serving food and beverages with the Y.
- The Y has relaxed the standards of face masks and social distancing within their facility.
- They also said, that those who haven't been vaccinated continue to wear masks in the building.
- But, LA County might go back on their releases and require masks because of the COVID Delta variant.
- There is also a general liability release form that all of us will sign ahead of time.
- There will also be an I-pad registration to sign at the front desk for guests and visitors.
- Those are the parameters for returning.
- We are looking into doing a Zoom on our church services in the Multipurpose Room to make services available for those unable to attend church for various health reasons.
- Hopefully, we could begin attending services at the Y sometime in July.
- Yes, we will include singing of hymns for full worship when we return. But it's fluid – it could change later.
- Concerning handshakes and hugs – it's up to each individual what they do and how they respond. There is no mandate.
- We could probably use the sanitized wipes on the chairs and lecterns after services, but the Y would provide custodial cleaning services.
- Pastor then asked for a show of hands of those who would be willing to return to the Y under these conditions which we've discussed.
- A majority of hands went up.
- So, now Pastor Craig is going to work with our ministry leadership team and the Y and work toward setting a date for returning.
- Once that is established, Pastor Craig will let everyone know.

#### Communion: Ed Stonick:

- The Lord's Supper is a meal that we receive.
- Just as we take the elements and receive them into our bodies, we have taken Jesus Christ and received him into our lives, which has made all the difference.
- But the Lord's Supper is more than a meal. It is a memorial.
- When we share in the bread and cup, we have not only the responsibility of receiving but also remembering.
- When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper it was his way of saying "never forget what has been done for you on the cross. Never forget the pain, the suffering, the sacrifice."
- Through the broken bread, he reminds us of his body that was broken to meet our hunger for salvation.
- In his brokenness, Jesus received our sin.

- Through the poured wine, he reminds of his blood that was spilled out to meet our thirst for life.
- Through his blood, Jesus erased our sins. Through Jesus' broken body and spilled blood, he became the perfect sacrifice.
- He atoned for our sins. He redeemed us for all eternity.
  
- The Lord's Supper, also, reminds us of Christ's grand invitation to us, and what our response needs to be.
- When we come to celebrate the Lord's Supper, we must be mindful of Jesus' offer.
- He still says, "I love you."
- He proved the extent of his love by dying on a cross for our sins.
  
- He says to us, "I offer you my life. Will you be my bride?"
- The taking of the cup is a solemn moment, a sentimental memento, for it is in that moment that one looks to the Heavenly Father and says, "Yes, I accept your offer, and I give you my life in response."
  
- Prayer
- (The partaking of the bread and wine or grape juice.)