INTRODUCTION:
   A. It opens with God’s speech to Joshua concerning the conquest of the Promised Land.
   B. The text contains the repetition of a formula of faith and encouragement that would play an important role in Joshua’s service as the new leader of the nation of Israel.
      1. That phrase being, “be strong and of a good courage,” is found in verses 6, 9, 18.
      2. It is connected with other admonitions of not being afraid or dismayed, and the reminder that the Lord was with him.
2. Backing up just a little in time, a new crisis was before the nation of Israel.
   A. Moses’ life was coming to an end, and a new leader was needed.
      1. A leader who would need to lead the people out of slavery and into a new land.
   B. Moses was not allowed to cross the Jordan River nor enter the Promised Land due to his misdeeds.
      1. As the people of Israel were informed of this God gave them a message of hope found in Deuteronomy 31:6.
      A. God then summoned Joshua, and in the presence of the people encouraged him with the words of Deuteronomy 31:7, 8.
3. The opening few verses of the book of Joshua sets the standard of leadership which involved courage on Joshua’s behalf to possess the land.
   A. Israel needed a leader who was “strong and courageous.”
4. Today, the church needs a leadership which possesses those same qualities.
   A. With all that is before the church today, there may have never been a time wherein these qualities were needed more.
      1. In the time allotted, we want to examine these things in more detail.

BODY:
1. LEADERS CHOSEN BY GOD
   A. If the work of the church is to be accomplished there must be a proper leadership to direct it.
   B. God has provided directions as to how leaders are to be chosen for the church by giving the qualifications which must be adhered to.
      1. These qualifications are set forth in no uncertain terms in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
      2. The word “must,” found within both texts, implies a moral obligation or responsibility that men who seek the “office” of an elder “must” possess the qualifications prior to their having been ordained to the office - 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7.
   C. Once qualified men are in place within a congregation then it behooves the congregation to follow their direction in so far as that direction is consistent with the scriptures.
      1. When we fail to do so, we reject their authority and, thereby, commit sin.
A. This is so due to Hebrews 13:17.

D. It is imperative for us to comprehend that scriptural elders are “made” “overseers” by the Holy Spirit as they comply with the qualifications given by Him - Acts 20:28.
   1. Congregations which consider putting men into the “office” should take this matter very seriously.

2. STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE
   A. This idea is found in Joshua 1:2 where Joshua is told by the Lord to “arise.”
      1. Action is seen here.
      2. Joshua was told to get up and get ready to go into the Promised Land.
         A. Enough time had past to properly mourn the death of Moses.
            1. It was time to move on.
   B. Joshua was to step up, take charge, and the lead the people into a new land.
      1. We need leaders today who will step up, take charge, and lead.
   C. Seven words of a dying church are, “We’ve never done it that way before.”
      1. So what?
         A. Our lives are filled with things we have never done before.
            1. And yet that does not stop us.
   D. The church needs to “arise,” step out in faith, trust its leaders, and focus our eyes on the Lord and His will for us.

3. LEADERS MUST BE OBEDIENT
   A. God expects leaders to obey!
      1. Joshua wasn’t just told to “arise,” he was told to “arise” and “go over…the Jordan…” - Jos. 1:2.
   B. God expects us to reach out to a lost and dying world - Mt. 28:18-20.
      1. God gave Israel 300,000 square miles but they only claimed about 30,000 square miles of it because of their cowardice, laziness, and disobedience to God.
      2. God has given us the world, how much have we claimed?
   C. “Blessed is the man who finds out which way God is moving and then gets going in the same direction.”
      1. We need to stop just hearing what God says, and start doing it!
         A. And leaders need to be out in the front showing us how.

4. EMPOWERED LEADERS
   A. God promised that He would be with Joshua no matter what situation he found himself in - Josh. 1:5-7.
      1. We have the same promise - Mt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5.
   B. The question is, do we believe these words?
      1. The truth of the matter is, we don’t act like it!
   C. God never gives a job to His people that they cannot do.
      1. He gives them more than just the job, as He empowers them with the necessary tools to do the job He has assigned.
   D. He has said to “go into all the world” (Mk. 16:15).
      1. He did more than assign the task, He gave us the power to perform it, that
power being His Word - Eph. 6:13-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:12.
2. Joshua took “the book of the law” and meditated on it “day and night” - Jos. 1:8.
   A. Timothy was told to “meditate upon” and give “attendance” to the Word of God - 1 Tim. 4:13-15.
   B. Until we do that, we cannot expect to accomplish the things God would have us to do.

5. OBSERVE ALL THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN
   A. To be courageous and strong, knowledge of God’s Word is not enough.
      1. We not only need to know what the Bible says, we must do it - Jos. 1:8.
   B. Recall Ezra 7:10 and Jas. 1:22.

6. STANDING FOR THAT WHICH IS RIGHT
   A. When the light is not on, darkness will prevail - Psa. 119:105.
      1. If one is to be a good leader in the church he must be true to the Word of God.
         A. The Word needs to be preached “in season, out of season” - 2 Tim. 4:2.
      2. It doesn’t matter who likes it, or doesn’t like it, “preach the word.”
   B. God has not called leaders to be popular, He has called them to be faithful! (get this point well, even you get nothing else)
      1. Too many have sold out their faithfulness for the praise of men - Jhn. 12:43.

7. THE NEED FOR COURAGE AND STRENGTH
   A. I can feel the “fear” that Joshua may have experienced as he looked out over Israel, the land before him, and the enemy within.
      1. God read his heart, and for the third time encouraged him to be “courageous and strong” - Jos. 1:9.
   B. Suppose Joshua would have given into those fears?
      1. We may in this life never fully understand how it is that God provides for His people when their world is upside down and fear fills their hearts.
         A. We may never answer all the questions concerning His providential watch and care.
      2. But we can take “courage and be strong.”
         A. Remember Philippians 4:6?
   C. As Joshua was given a great work to do, so have we.
      1. We have a “duty to do” - Lk. 17:10.
         A. Can we do it?
            1. Of course we can - Phil. 4:13.
   D. As we often face the challenge of follow our fears or follow our God it is long past time we stop following the fears!

8. TRUTHS TO LIVE BY
   A. It is up to us.
      1. Whether we will be courageous and strong totally depends upon us.
         A. Yes, God will be with us, but He is there doing His part.
   B. We need to “search the scriptures” (Jhn. 5:39), apply them to our lives (Jas. 1:22) and be “courageous and strong.”