

Question 6

- a) We need to keep reminding ourselves of the promises of God; for we easily forget: *"Have I not commanded you?"*
- b) As we meditate more on God's word we understand more about the things happening around us that might otherwise cause us dismay: e.g. evil, persecution, suffering, rejection of the gospel etc. (see Mark 13:5-13 as an example of this).
- c) The word of God must be at the centre of every aspect of our lives as the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth. It is God's revelation to us and therefore we cannot manage without it.

GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 5

Read: Joshua 1:1-5

Question 1

Challenges

- Joshua was probably wondering how he could possibly follow a great man like Moses; someone he had always relied on.
- Would the people accept him as God's appointed leader and follow him?
- Would he be up to the job?

Assurances

- God had promised Joshua in verse 5 that *"Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you"*.
- The Promised Land had already been given to them. Their task was to take possession.
- In verse 5 Joshua is told that although he felt inadequate, no-one would be able to stand against him.
- Whatever happened, God would never leave him or forsake him.

Read: Joshua 1:6-9

Question 2

- a) Often when themes are repeated in scripture it is to express particular emphasis on the importance of them.
- b) When God told Joshua to be strong He was speaking to someone who felt weak. When God told Joshua to be courageous He was speaking to one who did not feel very brave.
- c) God is not rebuking Joshua with these words. Notice that on each of the three occasions we are referring to, there follows the promise of God's presence and resources in order to carry out the task.
- d) The exhortation and the promise go together; because our strength and courage is not to be found in our own ability but in the Lord (cf. **Eph 6:10; 2 Tim 4:17-18**).

Question 3

- a) The fact that God would 'give' the land to the Israelites did not preclude the need for action.
- b) In verses 6-7 we find the twin responses required in response to God's promises: Trust and Obedience.
- c) In order to carry these out they must follow God's word as it was given to Moses in the Law.

Question 4

The law of God should be the preoccupation of:

- a) The mouth (declaring it). In **Deut 18:18** God had told Moses that Joshua would exercise a prophetic role among the people. We should talk about it if it is that important! It expresses belief.
- b) The mind (meditating on it). He was not just to read it but absorb it and chew over it. There are a number of references in the

Psalms to meditating on God's word and works e.g. **Psalm 1:1-2; 77:12**.

- c) The will (being careful to carry it out). This is the purpose of the law; that it be lived by: **Rom 2:13**. The danger is that we can so easily pigeon hole our spiritual life rather than make it our true identity.

God is showing that His word should be an integral part of who we are and what we do all the time.

Question 5

- a) Verse 7 implies that the source of strength and courage comes from a careful obedience to the word of God. So often we plough our own furrow and end up struggling.
- b) Verse 7 also encourages us to be careful in obeying the word. It is easy to make the scriptures say what we want them to say; or by ignoring the context make them say something different to what God is revealing in the text. We mustn't turn from it either to the left or to the right.
- c) In verse 8 the word must occupy our heart so that it is something we refer to throughout our lives; not just during times of personal devotion or in teaching services in the church.
- d) We must look for the practical application of the word (*that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it*). Charles Price wrote: "*The specific will of God in any particular situation is never outside of his general will for all situations*". The scripture might not always be as specific as we would like on some matters, but we should ensure that our actions are always consistent with the general sweep of God's word.