



“Read the Bible With All of You”

Thoughts from Pastor Scott

Some promises in the Bible are just as sobering as the commands and warnings. What God promises to be for us — protection from evil, deliverance from temptation, refuge in suffering —exposes some threatening shadow of reality, the kind of shadows we often try to ignore and avoid, the kind of shadows we all inevitably face. If God promises to protect and deliver us, there must be something evil that He’s protecting us from.

When Joshua was standing at the edge of the Promised Land, trying to prepare his heart for the hostility and uncertainty he would meet, God said to him, “**Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.**” (Joshua 1:9). But, being strong and courageous can be difficult when the dangers are real and the stakes are high – even life or death.

As I write this month’s newsletter, I have an eye on the Internet and an ear to my phone – following the events from my hometown of Minneapolis. The part of the city that has exploded in flames and protests is where I lived as a child and where my wife, Carla, and I lived while I attended seminary while studying to become a pastor. Relatives of mine still live in that part of the city, fearing for their lives and safety. These are troubling times.

God says, “Be strong and courageous,” but he says more than that. He leads Joshua, and us, into a sure shelter from our fears, into a spiritual arsenal stronger than the opposition and resistance we face, even in trials. He prepares us for the battles of faith, the everyday and the extraordinary, by training us to read his word **well**. We won’t find strength and courage for suffering without learning to read, **really** read, the Bible. Unfortunately, there are many Christians who don’t even open a Bible but expect God to still do great things.

Read the Bible with Your Mind

God says to Joshua, “Only be strong and very courageous, *being careful* to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. *Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left*” (Joshua 1:7). Then, in the next verse, “*This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth . . . so that you may be careful* to do according to all that is written in it” (Joshua 1:8). Not just faithful, but *careful*, discerning traps and errors on the left *and* the right. This kind of reading requires more patience, attention, and thinking than many of us are used to giving the Bible.

Read the Bible with Your Heart

The words of God were never meant to just stay in our minds. We can read and read and read, and never *feel* the message of God. Some of us think we are strong and courageous because we know the Bible says we should be, but we haven’t really *experienced* what God

has promised. So, we pretend. We fight to suppress our fears, instead of facing them with God. So, don't just read the Bible carefully but let its words work their way into your heart until you feel its reality that God is truly with you and you can be courageous. We need to *feel* the words of Scripture.

Read the Bible with Your Hands

Some of us feel loved, inspired, or even convicted when we read, but then we do nothing. We read and read and read, and never *change*.

God says to Joshua “do”. We are called to be obedient to allowing God to use our lives and “do” His will. We won't find real courage in God without taking real steps toward him. The people of Israel had to follow Joshua and trust in God as they entered the Promised Land in the Old Testament. If they wanted to be delivered, healed, made whole, they had to go through the challenges ahead of them — with God. We shouldn't expect to have courage or strength from God — or peace, or joy, or real life — if we're not willing to carefully do what God says.

Read with Your Mouth

When you read the Bible, read with your mouth. This one may be the most surprising, but only until we chew on the idea for a moment. God says, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from *your mouth*” (Joshua 1:8). Part of finding fresh courage, and persevering in courage, is reminding someone else to be courageous. Who might need to hear something you read in the Bible this week that strengthened your hope, deepened your joy, and caused you to continue in obedience to Christ?

Read with Your God

Finally, and most importantly, read the Bible with your God. All our reading, and feeling, and speaking, and even obeying will be a waste of time if God is not with us. God reminded Joshua that He was with him wherever he went.

The ultimate source of any real strength, the deepest and strongest well of sincere courage, is not in words, phrases, pages, or spiritual disciplines, but in God. When we become fearful and trials in life appear, when our friends and loved ones abandon us or have little hope to offer us, God says that He is with us...

*Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you. (Isaiah 43:1-2)*

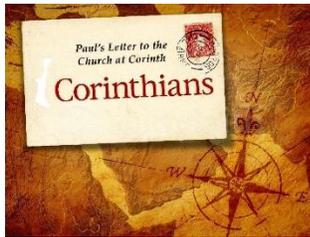
Now is a good time to read the Bible with all our heart, soul and mind rather than distract ourselves to get our minds off of these challenging times. God has some great opportunities ahead for us if we allow His Word to change us and work through us.

God is with us..... Pastor Scott

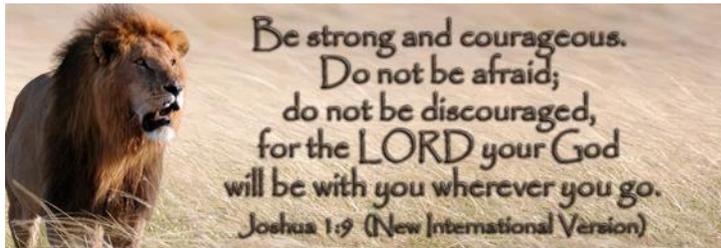


Even though we've had to change how we gather together as a church, our mission as a church is still the same – we still gather, empower and send all people as disciples of the living Christ. Remember that **all** of our church worship gatherings on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. plus any other meetings can be accessed by clicking on this one online link

<https://zoom.us/j/8780165113>



THIS SUMMER, JOIN US DURING SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP AT 9:30 A.M. AS PASTOR SCOTT WALKS US THROUGH THE APOSTLE PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS. INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN US ONLINE AS WE LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO 'BE THE CHURCH' IN THIS PRESENT TIME.



PLANNING MEETING FOR THE CERESCO AREA COMMUNITY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

Monday, June 15th at 7 p.m.

Location: At Immanuel. We will also offer online access to the meeting if you choose not to attend our 'in person' meeting at the church building.

Just as COVID-19 has changed our lives, so it has with Vacation Bible School (VBS). Later, this summer, we will offer a "drive by" VBS by having displays of Bible stories in the front yards of some families in Ceresco.

Our theme this year has been changed to one of "courage and strength" in times of trouble. Several families have offered the use of their front yards for the "drive by" VBS tour that will be offered on one evening, later this summer.

Please contact Suzy Fredrickson (402.499.3211) or Pastor Scott (402.499.4444) if you would like to help with constructing the displays or make your yard available for this year's "drive by" VBS tour.

We'd **LOVE** to have you join in the planning and excitement. Please invite your friends from the community to join us for VBS planning, too.



**Remembering
Our Homebound Members**

Please remember Immanuel's homebound members in your prayers:

Barb Basel (please note Barb's new address change as of January 31st)

Hooper Care Center – 400 E. Birchwood Dr., Hooper NE 68031
402.654.3362 (Care Center) 402.480.2582 (Cell)

John Christiansen

1509 County Rd. B – Ceresco, NE 68017
402.429.6475

Marie Johnson

2425 Folkways Blvd, #336 – Lincoln NE 68521
402.438.5618 (home) 402.417.9537 (cell)

Rose Nelson

Saunders Medical Center Long Term Care, Room 114
1760 County Road J – Wahoo NE 68066

Dale Rexilius

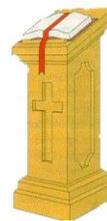
c/o Tabitha GracePointe
4620 Randolph St, #203 – Lincoln NE 68510 402.484.9318

June 2020 Immanuel Calendar

All Immanuel worship and meetings are online at Zoom.com unless otherwise noted. The online link is <https://zoom.us/j/8780165113>

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tues</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thurs</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
7 9:30 am Online Worship with Communion. Virtual Coffee time afterwards	8 7:00pm Church Council meeting (online on Zoom) NOTE THE DATE CHANGE	9	10	11	12	13
14 9:30 am Online Worship with Communion. Virtual Coffee time afterwards	15 7pm Vacation Bible School planning meeting AT IMMANUEL	16	17	18	19	20
21 9:30 am Online Worship with Communion. Virtual Coffee time afterwards	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 9:30 am Online Worship with Communion. Virtual Coffee time afterwards	29	30	July 1	July 2	July 3	July 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY

Christie Bevington (Health – member)
 Barb Basel (Broke hip – member)
 Justin Badberg (Surgery on knee – member)
 Bill Bohling (Health)
 Andrea Christensen (Health – J Christensen)
 Rob Bonow (Health – throat cancer)
 Heather Lucht (Health – Hanson)
 Ron Weltruski (Bone cancer -Hedges)
 Mike Pethound (EMT - K. Sherwood)
 Kim Pearson (Health – L Pearson)
 Kelly Hamilton (Health – Bevington)
 Lora Robinson (Health – Freeman)
 David Sinn (cancer – Larson)
 Shelly Hanneman (Health – Rudeen)
 Mary Tvrdy (Health – Otto)
 Eastmont residents (health & protection from covid – 19)
 Sydney Kenning (Strength & comfort for Sydney’s family)



JUNE USHERS

June 7- Ray & Jane Otto
 June 14 - Fran Freeman
 June 21 – Jon & Janis Bible
 June 28 Doug & Shawn Rudeen

JUNE LECTORS

June 7 – Ray Otto
 June 14 - Fran Freeman
 June 21 – Janis Bible
 June 28 - Shawn Rudeen

June Food Pantry
 CANNED FRUITS
 &
 FRUIT ROLLUPS