



So, as we begin to wrap up, let's consider two different children of God. One lives with the words of God, *do not be afraid; do not be discouraged*, not only resonating in his or her heart, but driving his or her attitude and choices. The other lives without them. Let's let the first be represented by Tigger and let's let the second be represented by Eeyore. Using the following chart, brainstorm as many traits as possible regarding each. At the bottom, record your first name on the line most appropriate for you. Below the chart, write a short note regarding what you would like to do for yourself in light of your findings.

	
<i>Tigger</i> - _____	<i>Eeyore</i> - _____

Note to self:

WESTSOUND.ORG

BE COURAGEOUS



How To Regain Your Courage
After You Fall: Part Two
Joshua 8

We are going to pick up where Pastor Rainer left off last week...

Israel disobeyed the Lord, puffed themselves up, attacked the city-state of Ai, and, as a result, were defeated and suffered the only losses that would be recorded in the Book of Joshua. Mixed into this failure was the equally infamous sin of Achan. Joshua 7, then, was a classic bit of "in your face" teaching about the terrible tragedies of over-estimating ourselves and sinning directly against our God.

Chapter 8 brings us back full circle. Israel dealt with the sin in their camp. Joshua listened to the Lord, received both his comfort and directions, and then walked in that comfort and obeyed those directions as he led Israel into the victory that God promised.

The main part of the chapter (3-29) gives us details on the battle plans for defeating Ai and the description of that victory. The end of the chapter (30-35) describes the worship celebration that followed.

We will leave all of this for you to explore later. For now, we want to zero in on just the first few words of chapter eight: The Call to Battle. In the opening words of this section, the Lord delivers timeless truth to Joshua, Israel and, by extension, to every one who places his or her faith in the Commander of the Lord's Host—the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, let's get busy...

The Call to Battle from the Lord provided comfort (vs. 1a)

First we read these simple words...*Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."*

Question: Why were these words necessary?

Hint: What was just recorded in Joshua 7? What had Joshua experienced regarding his countrymen throughout the wilderness journey?

Read Deuteronomy 31:1-8

Question: Considering what Joshua had experienced, how do you suppose he might have felt when he learned the leadership of Israel was to fall upon his shoulders?

Read Deuteronomy 1:21 and Joshua 1:9

Question: Why is it important for us to see that God delivered (both personally and through his servants) these very specific words of encouragement in different settings, under different circumstances, and at different periods of time?

Questions:

How is it true for a follower of Jesus Christ that he or she need not be “*afraid*” or “*discouraged*?”

However, how often is it true that each of us is afraid and/or discouraged?

What does this look like in our lives? Anyone care to share?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:14-18

Question: Let’s get very specific...what will this look like when we really put it all into practice?

Question: What happens when we do not allow God’s word, strength and encouragement to build us up?

Hint: Read Numbers 13:26-33; Numbers 20:1-13

Question: What do we cause those who do not know God to think when we fail to live according to his word, strength and encouragement?

Hint: Read Joshua 8:5,6

Look at this passage from John 17:

20 “*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*”

Notice how Jesus prayed: he wanted believers to demonstrate a unity of glory that would look like that unity shared between himself and his Father.

Question: How does this passage end? If we accomplish what Jesus prays for on our behalf, what can “the world” know?

Question: With this in mind, what reasonable conclusion (regardless of its accuracy) can an unbeliever make regarding our Lord Jesus when we fail to live according to his word, strength and encouragement?