



## The Desert's Not Your Home

**Date:** Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September

**Speaker:** Andrew McNeil

**Key Verses:** Joshua 1

### Talk Summary:

- Joshua and his generation had lived through a desert experience and were now on the cusp of a new adventure with God.
  - We've experienced desert times. For so many the last 18 months has taken its toll: physically, spiritually, mentally, and relationally. We need healing from the events of the past season and the Lord is starting to restore us in His presence.
  - In this story (Joshua 1), the desert time was self-imposed because of their fear. As they face the promise land (new opportunities to follow and trust God) we see 5 principles for the way of faith.
1. **Don't Get Stuck (v1-3)** Joshua is called to do what Moses and his generation didn't do 40 years earlier. Fear gripped a generation, and they went nowhere. This generation has now died. God is saying don't get stuck in what is familiar. I want to lead you on.
  2. **Don't Forget I'm with You (v 5)** When they left Egypt, they had a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. This visible sign of God's presence was no more. The sign of His presence and provision has changed but He is saying don't forget I'm still with you.
  3. **Don't Lose Heart (v 6-7)** This command is repeated 3 times in this passage. Maybe for you it's taken courage to walk back into the room. What He's calling us to do will require courage. As a team we believe the Lord is calling us to be strong and courageous. We believe there are many, many more people who will find Jesus and a spiritual home through a more local Vineyard Church. We are actively seeking God about the new things He's doing even as we regather.
  4. **Don't Lose Your Way (v 7-8)** God never changes and human nature never changes. So His word is always relevant.

*“Obey God consistently over time and you become the kind of person that in the deepest part of you you've always wanted to be. A wise person, a kind person, a good person. Obey the word of God. Meditate on God's word and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit in your soul. Don't compromise don't procrastinate do exactly what God says.” Rich Nathan*

**5. Don't Forget Your Family (v 12-15)** We're family and we do the journey of faith together. God speaks to three tribes and says remember your wider community. Don't be indifferent to the challenges of the family (as they cross the Jordan) as we are in this together. We express the value of family through our small groups, communities and Sundays. We share each other's joys and challenges, in prayer and friendship.

- The desert's not your home. God's plans are good. They will require courage.

## **Worship**

*Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.*

*(Small group worship resources can be found at [bvc.so/sgworship](http://bvc.so/sgworship))*

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

*If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:*

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

## **Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)**

- Don't get stuck. What has to "die" in us, for us to move forward in faith (Jesus Matt 10)  
What is the courageous next step Jesus has for you?
  - On Sunday Andrew gave some specific examples: To be honest and get the help you need? To adopt or foster? To volunteer to serve in compassion ministry, to share your faith? To trust Him in a new way with your money? To recognise a call to lead a group or even a site or Church?
  - How might Jesus be speaking to you?
- Don't forget I'm with you: How has God's presence and provision looked different in various seasons of your life and faith?
- Don't lose heart: What are you facing now that require strength and courage? Take time to pray for one another about those situations.
- Don't lose your way: What's the most helpful thing God has said to you through his word recently?
- Don't forget your family: Community has been strained in the last year. What can I do to value and invest in our sense of being "God's family" this term?

**Witness** - *How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?*

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?