



MEADOWDALE

## A Purpose Driven Life, Introduction

### Discussion Guide

This week we begin a new adventure as we start 42 Days of Purpose as a church. When any new venture challenges us, we can ignore it and hope it goes away, decide that it is not worth doing and try to stop it, or move forward and accomplish it.

Jeremy reminded us that the success of any new venture depends on the start. For many of us even just starting can be an adventure. We are reluctant to take that step. There can be lots of reasons why but whatever the reason that holds us back, it can be conquered by faith. A simple answer but not always a simple thing to do.

*Describe a time in your life when you were afraid of taking on a challenge.*

*What helped you get through that rough time?*

*When facing a challenge, how do you know when you're acting in faith and when you're acting foolishly?*

#### **Into the Word:**

##### **Read Joshua 1:1–5.**

The task before Joshua was impossible. Forty years earlier, he had been a spy in the land of Canaan. Strong and warlike people defended the land. Their very appearance had caused the 10 other spies sent by Moses to cringe with fear. They felt as small as grasshoppers.

The Hebrews were outmanned and outnumbered by a scary opposition. Living in the desert for 40 years, they were in no condition to take on a major military campaign. Taking the land looked about as probable as Britain winning against the mighty Germans in World War II. If the truth were known, many of the Hebrews would rather evacuate than mount a charge.

But God reminded Joshua that he would not fight alone. God said, "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you." Just as God had been with Moses, He would be with Joshua.

So God will also be with us. In the darkest night, He is there. In the severest battle, He is present. In the most difficult task, He will not abandon us. By His very nature, God will not desert His people when He gives them an order, a task, or leads them to accomplish something. Even if the situation seems impossible, God's presence will be strongly apparent. God is the great equalizer. His presence makes the difference in helping people accomplish impossible tasks.

*Describe how you would react if you were in Joshua's shoes.*

*Do you view God as your ally or your enemy? How does it feel to know he is present and watching?*

*With which statement do you find yourself agreeing most:*

- 1) God expects more of me than I can handle.*
- 2) I can't wait to find out what God has planned next for me.*
- 3) I am more prepared today than I was in the past for whatever comes my way.*
- 4) I am fearful of attempting things beyond my ability.*

*Why did you choose the statement you did? Do you find yourself agreeing with more than one statement? What is the difference between the four positions? What is at stake in each position?*

*When has knowing God is present changed the way you view your circumstances?*

### **Apply the Word**

Inadequate as Joshua felt, he took action. In spite of the dangers ahead, he was a faith walker. He moved forward and received the blessings that awaited him. A poem by Patrick Overton says it best:

When you walk to the edge of all the light you have  
And take that step into the darkness of the unknown  
You must believe that one of two things will happen:  
Either there will be something solid for you to stand on  
Or God will teach you how to fly.

As the story of Joshua unfolds, we discover that Joshua and the Hebrews took that step forward. They were faith walkers. It was their finest hour.

*List some examples of ways our church needs to take action: in ministry, stewardship, outreach, building, and so on.*

*List how participating in the Purpose Driven Life study can help you take personal action in improving your walk as a Christ follower.*

*Commitment to move ahead in our Christian life takes time and effort. What are you willing to give up to obey God and follow through in participating in this study?*

*In what ways may your view of God need to change to find the strength and courage you need to complete the next 6 weeks?*