

**Scripture Reference:** Joshua 1:1-7

**Date:** December 14, 2014

**Title:** "Now What?"

**Focus:** Though people come and go, God remains.

It is said the only consistent thing in life is change. What a paradox! But yet, because of the nature of life and eternity, it is true.

As sad or distressing as my departure from QVBC may be, Since God is God and QVBC is His bride, nothing really changes. We are not the first to experience this. Nor will be we the last.

## **vv. 1-2; The Passing of Moses didn't Mean the Passing of the Lord**

Moses was the only leader many of the Israelites had ever known. He was there in momentous times (the departure from Egypt), extraordinary times (the crossing of the Red Sea) and crucial events (the water from the rock, Manna, and quail). Being relational creature, Moses had come to possess a special place in the lives of the people.

The danger in this is that such people become so personally important that during times of perceived loss people are shocked and tend to cease their activities.

To meet the challenge Joshua reminds the people of two things:

a. Moses was God's "*servant*." He wasn't God.

b. They were following God. As a result, God called His people to arise and seize the Promised Land.

Being the Israelites were God's people, they were to now follow Joshua like they had followed Moses, who himself followed God.

People are important. But, they are not the central element of one's relationship. That would be God.

Paul wrote of the need for disciples to follow a shepherd only so far as he follows God.

1 Cor 11:1; *"Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."*

### **vv. 3-4; Though Moses was dead, the promises of God remained.**

Moses' passing did not change the promises and provision God had given.

Joshua reminds them of YHWH's promise and command He gave in Deuteronomy 11:24.

*"The Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. No one shall be able to stand against you. The Lord your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you."*

The purposes and Kingdom of God transcends those who are a part of it. It is greater than they.

Therefore, the absence of a particular person does not change God's workings.

As important as people may be, the disciples cannot allow affections for others to detract them from following God.

## **vv. 5-7; People Will Come and Go, Only God Remains**

In this passage, Joshua twice calls on the people to "*be strong and courageous*" (v. 6 & 7).

If Israel's confidence in following God and seizing the Promised Land had rested in Moses, then the task would end before it ever begin.

However, though Moses was gone, God remained. In essence, nothing had changed.

It was YHWH Who brought them out of bondage. He had delivered them through the Red sea and led them in the desert. God had faithfully provided for their food, water and survival during the 40 years in the wilderness.

While Moses had been the visible extension of this, It had been YHWH who was their initiator and provider. Moses was gone, but YHWH remained.

It is timeless for followers of God to remember. Quoting Isaiah 40:6, Peter would remind his readers of this fact.

1 Peter 1:24; "*All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, But*

*the word of the Lord endures forever.' And this is the word which was preached to you."*

## **The Last 18 Inches**

Because of the finiteness of man and the infiniteness of God, people come and go but God remains.

When people lose sight of this life turns to a series of stops and starts, beginning and ends as we experience the loss of a person, stop, regroup, reorient ourselves, and begin again.

For disciples of Jesus, the goal exceeds the person they follow. The practical manifestation of this being that the removal of a person does not derail the continuing work of God.