

Covenant Life

- Our next in-person Community Gathering is **TODAY** at 4pm in the MSMCS gym.
- Covid has resurged so we are asking that those not fully vaccinated wear a face covering and practice social distancing. Even those who are fully vaccinated are encouraged to be extra cautious at this time.
- If you were not able to attend our last Gathering, you can listen to the audio [here](#), review the Word Gift summary [here](#), and read the transcript [here](#).
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222.

Reflection - The first reading from Joshua ([Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b](#)) is one of my favorites because it speaks of courage. We all know that courage, like fortitude, is the strength to persevere when faced with danger or difficulties. I have always admired those who not only know the right answer but put it into practice.

We have all attended hundreds of talks about the many things that we should do. There is no end to so called experts that will tell you their version of what is right, wise, and beneficial. As I think back to those that I have most identified with however, it is those who taught by the witness of their lives. Hearing someone at a conference give testimony of how they evangelized by love. Being willing to pray for the stranger, spread the gospel in a prison, take a meal to someone who is sick, open their home to a bible study...these are the heroes who not only know what is right but have the courage to put it into practice.

Our Community was built by such courageous people. Our Community is sustained by courageous people.

Chapter 24 of Joshua begins by Joshua reminding the people of his day of the divine goodness of God. How God called them as a people, cared for them, protected them, provided for them...and then Joshua lays the choice before them: "*decide today whom you will serve*". He was courageous and ended his exhortation with the well-known pronouncement that: "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*" Joshua had the courage to say this despite not knowing whether

anyone would accompany him. Fortunately, God was at work in the Israelites and they responded affirmatively that they would also serve the Lord.

Each week when we meditate on the readings, we are invited by the Holy Spirit to see how He might be speaking to us, today, through these anointed words. I invite you to join me in seeing the connection of our circumstance to those that faced the people in Joshua's time. We too are being asked to stand up and be counted as courageous individuals who will put our Lord first. What is important in our response is not just our immediate verbal Yes but what happens next.

While reflecting on this point a few minutes, the Spirit brought back the memory of Bobbie's teachings on Haggai (1:2-4) where he issues his prophetic call to work on the temple. Despite the people not wanting to do it he proclaimed, *"Is it time for you to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies in ruins?"*

Sisters and Brothers, God's house, the people of God in our day lie in ruin and so many do not know Him, love Him, or serve Him. He is asking us if we will respond. He wants not only our Yes, but to put our Yes into practice. To turn our attention away from whatever is our 'paneled house' and really ask Him what He is asking us to do. How do we join Joshua in saying and living...**for me and my house we will serve the Lord**. Maybe we are not all called to witness on street corners, volunteer for prison ministry but there are many ways we can live our calling, live our covenant, if we have the courage to say Yes in an active and real way today.

Let's do it. Let's take courage from the example of Joshua and Haggai. Let's resolve to re-read our covenant today take a step. Maybe we call someone and ask them to be our prayer partner. Maybe we call a couple sisters or brothers and suggest we start a bible study or small group. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you something specific. Bring the idea to your pastoral care person for discernment. The key point is that our response is active, that we witness and build His Kingdom. Covenant Community is the best vehicle I know for responding to this call so everything in our covenant can be viewed as a step in responding and helping our sisters and brothers to respond. May we all take a courageous step today.

Let us pray *"Heavenly Father, I thank You for the call you have placed on my life and the call into this covenant family. I am so blessed to be alive at this exciting time. I want to be courageous for You. Today I leave my paneled house behind and commit to doing something real and specific to build my relationship with You, with my covenant brothers and sisters, and to improving my witness by my purposeful active effort. Bless my Yes. Amen."*

God bless,

David