



Big Shoes to Fill.

Here is a somewhat interesting fact about me, I wear size 15 shoes. Now, to most of you that might not sound so interesting but when your “in my shoes” it certainly can make for some curious conversation. I have been the heel of many big shoe remarks like, “at least you don’t need water skis”, or “wow, you have your own flippers for swimming”. While I inherited my larger than average foot size from my father who was a size 16, I do wonder how this will play out for any one of my three daughters.

We often use the expression they have some “big shoes to fill” when a person takes over a job that the person before them performed particularly well. It typically means that it is going to be hard to do the job as well as they did.

Recently as I began reading through the book of Joshua I was thinking about the “shoes” that Joshua was filling. The leadership role that Moses provided in the deliverance of the nation of Israel out of Egypt and the giving of the law would have been a tough act to follow. Joshua had some big shoes to fill but he was not alone.

Standing on the shores of the Jordan River the Lord gave direction to Joshua to move forward in the promise that he would provide for them all that they needed. His words to Joshua read like this, “*As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.*” What incredible words these would have been for Joshua to hear from the Lord as he stepped into his new role as the nation’s leader.

As followers of Jesus, we all have some big shoes to fill as we are called to carry on his mission. Jesus clearly lays out his mission for us, “*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*”

These words in Matthew chapter 28 are as real for us today as the day they were spoken by Christ himself to his disciples. Just as Joshua had a mission from God to continue leading the nation of Israel, we too have a God given mission to continue as his disciples. The mission is clear and might sound simple enough yet in our eyes there are seemingly unmoveable barriers in front of us. We might feel like Joshua standing at the shore of the Jordan River wondering how the impossible might happen.

The incredible words spoken to Joshua by God as he stepped into his role as leader are echoed in Christ words to his disciples and to us following the command to go and make disciples of all nations, Jesus reminds us of an incredible promise that we see and hear all throughout the pages of scripture, “*And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*”

Yes, we may have some big shoes to fill in carrying on the mission Jesus started but he continues to live in us through his Spirit today. We are not alone in our own shoes. As Christ followers, we carry within us the same power of the living God who parted the waters of the Jordan River for Joshua and the people of Israel. How many steps have you tried to take on your own in carrying out the mission given to us? Remember this, God is with you always, to the very end of the age, you are not alone.