

Season of Change

By Jessica Harris Daum



creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/

There's a wind of change in the air: society's views, church practices, technology, and you. As Joshua stood at the edge of a great unknown, he had to decide what to hold onto and what to let go. Let his story help you navigate seasons of change.

For
Young Adult

Season

Fall

Needed

Bible or Bible app, paper, pen

Activity Plan

1. Pray this prayer to begin:

God, everything is changing, yet your love remains. Help me to make sense of the changes around me. Show me what to hold on to and what to let go. Give me the courage to do both. Amen.

2. From your Bible (or the text below), read about God preparing Joshua to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land—Joshua 3:7-17. Consider:
 - If you were Joshua, what emotions would you be feeling? What would worry you about the crossing into this unknown territory?
 - What other Bible stories or images does this story bring to mind?
3. The story continues with an interesting additional instruction from God. Read Joshua 4:1-7. Think about:
 - Why do you think God told Joshua to set up twelve stones on the riverbank?
 - What might these stones represent?
4. Fold a piece of paper in half and then open it. Write this heading on the left column: "Stones on the Riverbank." Under this heading, list the "stones" that make up the foundation of your faith—the principles of faith you hold onto as true in times of change. (For example: God loves me, Jesus was raised from death, the Bible is God's Word.)
5. Read Joshua 4:8-9. Ponder:
 - Why do you suppose Joshua also placed twelve stones *in* the river?
 - What effect would moving water have on these stones over time?
 - How might the water-changed stones symbolize the Spirit's activity in your life?



6. Return to your paper. Write this heading on the right column: "Stones in the River." Under this heading, list "stones" you might be willing to place in the river in order for them to be changed. (For example: what clothes people should wear to church, who is welcome at the Lord's table, what behavior is sinful.) Are there any things you've listed in the left column that you might be willing to move to the right column? Why or why not?
7. Pray as you reflect on what you've written:
Dear God, the Bible witnesses that even you have changed your mind. Send your Spirit to help me know which stones of faith I should hold onto, and which I can place in the river of your love to be changed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Joshua 3:7-17

⁷ The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. ⁸ And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, 'When you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.'" ⁹ And Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God." ¹⁰ And Joshua said, "Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites. ¹¹ Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan. ¹² Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man. ¹³ And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap."

¹⁴ So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, ¹⁵ and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest), ¹⁶ the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

Joshua 4:1-9

¹ When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, ² "Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, ³ and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'" ⁴ Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. ⁵ And Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, ⁶ that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' ⁷ then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever."

⁸ And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, just as the Lord told Joshua. And they carried them over with them to the place where they lodged and laid them down there. ⁹ And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.

