***9****Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

Joshua 1:9

So many people around the world today are living in fear.

Sometimes when we are afraid, we try to hide it because we’ve heard this verse in Joshua where God tells us not to be afraid. So now along with fear, we feel guilty for being afraid.

“Commanded…”

“Be strong and courageous”

“Don’t be afraid”

When you are afraid, this verse can feel like a parent yelling “stop crying”.

But the command is to “be strong and courageous.”

Courage isn’t the absence of fear -- it’s doing the right thing even when you do feel afraid. Strength isn’t something you just magically conjure up. Strength comes from training, patience, and practice.

Strength in the Lord comes from training and practice in His Word.

The truth is, we all are afraid sometimes. And when God tells us to not be afraid – it’s not a word of command, it’s a word of comfort.

Not “make yourself stop being afraid”

But “Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy”

“Fear not – You are looking for the body of Jesus, but He is alive”

“Fear not – for the Lord your God will be with you”

In these unprecedented times, **be strong in the Lord** – keep training in His Word and connecting with others around His Word. **Be courageous** – keep going even when you are afraid. And **fear not for the Lord [our] God is with [us].**