

You Have Never Been This Way Before

Reading: [Matthew 26:26-29](#)

Text: [Joshua 3:4-5](#)

Introduction:

1. Another calendar yet everything is basically the same.
 - a. Doing the same things.
 - b. Kids going to same school.
 - c. Plans are to keep life the same.
 - d. A New Year offers a starting point for a new beginning.
2. In our text, Joshua affirms that they "have never been this way before"
 - a. Moses had led them for 40 years through the wilderness
 - b. At this point, they were on the border of a new country
3. Like Israel, we are entering upon a new way. A New Year is a New Path!
4. There are new experiences to face; new problems to solve, new trials to endure, new temptations to meet, new sorrows to bear, new opportunities to grasp, new tasks to perform, new blessings to enjoy.
5. Four things characterize this new path:

1. The New Path Will Test Our Faith.

A. Israel faced some new tests.

1. They faced a swollen river Jordan to cross.
2. They faced Jericho's intimidating walls on the other side.
3. There were giants in the land to fight and cities to conquer.

B. We face obstacles in faith, too.

1. [Hebrews 12:1-11](#)—God's discipline
2. [Job 1 & 2](#)—Satan's Attacks
3. Bringing problems upon ourselves.

2. The New Path Will Point To God's Provision

- A. [Isaiah 30:21](#) "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Israel was only successful when they continued in the will of God - which required trusting in his provision.
- B. **God's will for us is always connected with the way to accomplish it.**
 1. When God says 'Go', He will provide a way.
 2. What God says 'Do', He will give opportunity to do it..
 3. [John 10:4](#) "When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice."

3. The New Path Will Offer Certainty.

A. Life is full of earthly uncertainties.

1. Wealth is uncertain.
[Proverbs 23:5](#) "Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle."
2. Friendships are uncertain.

B. God is a certainty!

C. **Jesus Christ is a certainty.** [Hebrews 13:8](#) "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

D. **The church is a certainty.** [Matthew 16:18](#)—"on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell (Hades, death) will not overcome it."

E. Heaven is a certainty.

1. [Philippians 1:21](#)
2. [2 Corinthians 5:1](#) "Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands."

4. The New Path Will Offer New Hope

1. [1 Peter 1:3](#) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to *a living hope* through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead
2. [Romans 8:24-25](#)—For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Conclusion:

1. As we walk into a new year sure to face trials, in need of God's provision, certainty, and hope. Would you claim that today for your own?
2. Why do you wait, arise and be baptized washing away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.