

Just Do It

Discussion Notes- August 31, 2025

1. When was a time when doing something hard made life better in the long run?

The sermon this week reminded us that avoiding hard things only makes life harder later on, while embracing them leads to growth and blessing. Just like ants, everyone has a role and purpose, and we're called to be diligent in the work God has given us. Scripture shows that fear shrinks when we step into action and trust God's presence with us. Success and fruitfulness come through perseverance, even when we're tired or don't feel like it. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. Just do it!

Read Proverbs 6:6-11

"Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man."

Ants are creatures who exemplify hard work, discipline, and the ability to anticipate future needs. If you ever had an ant farm growing up or watched in nature how ants work, it's astonishing. They are such tiny creatures doing hard work. The Hebrew word for *sluggard* appears in Proverbs 14 times but nowhere else in the Old Testament. In this passage, the sluggard is someone who avoids exertion and refuses to do what's necessary. Solomon uses the ant to show that laziness isn't just about resting; it's about avoiding responsibility, which only makes life harder in the long run. Like the ant, we're called to prepare, work diligently, and face hard things now so we don't reap greater struggles later.

2. How do the ants' roles illustrate God's design for purpose and challenge responsibility in our lives?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:8-9

"Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Paul shares that he pleaded with the Lord to take away his thorn or some type of weakness, but God answered, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Just like Paul, we often feel weak when we are tired or afraid, but it's in those very moments that God's strength shines the brightest. Fear and exhaustion remind us of our limits, but they also push us to depend more fully on Him.

Fear and tiredness are two obstacles that keep us from doing the hard things God calls us to. Fear convinces us that the risk is too great or that we don't have what it takes, while tiredness makes us believe we have nothing left to give. Both can tempt us to avoid responsibility or put things off, but avoidance only makes the task heavier later on. When we choose to persevere in spite of fear and fatigue, we open the door for God's strength to carry us and for growth and blessing to follow.

3. How do fear and exhaustion tempt you to avoid the responsibilities or callings God has given you?

Read Ecclesiastes 9:10

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might..."

In Ecclesiastes 9, Solomon reminds us that life is uncertain and that death comes to everyone, regardless of wisdom or effort. Because of this, he encourages us to engage fully in the work and responsibilities before us; whatever our hand finds to do, do it with all our might. Avoiding challenges or waiting for perfect conditions only wastes the opportunities God has given us. Instead, by working diligently and embracing life's hard things, we can experience growth, joy, and the blessings God intends.

The famous Nike slogan, "Just Do It," was inspired by an unusual source. In 1977, Gary Gilmore, a convicted murderer, reportedly said "Let's do it" just before his execution. In the late 1980s, Nike's advertising team adapted the phrase into the empowering slogan we know today. It was designed to encourage action and overcoming hesitation, perfectly capturing the idea of pushing past fear, fatigue, and procrastination. Since then, it has become one of the most recognizable slogans in advertising history, motivating people to take bold steps in sports and in life.

4. What steps can you take this week to engage fully in the opportunities God has placed before you?

Read Hebrews 10:35-39

"Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. For 'Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.' But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls."

The scripture above reminds us not to throw away our confidence or give in to discouragement, because God's promises are sure. The passage encourages perseverance, even when the road is hard or the task feels overwhelming, and it contrasts those who shrink back with those who live by faith and keep moving forward. Just like the sermon has shown us, doing hard things, facing fear, and pushing past tiredness requires trusting God and keeping our eyes on His reward.

5. What is one area in your life where God is calling you to persevere and trust Him, even when it's hard?

Prayer Points:

- Pray for courage to face the hard things God has called us to.
- Pray for diligence to work faithfully in the tasks and responsibilities before us.
- Pray for perseverance to trust God and keep going, even when we feel weak or afraid.

Deep Dive: Joshua — Courage to Do Hard Things

Joshua's story is one of faith, courage, and obedience in the face of overwhelming challenges.

He began as Moses' assistant and faithfully served before stepping into leadership.

Read Exodus 24:13

"The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God."

He was one of the twelve spies sent into Canaan and while most spies spread fear, Joshua (along with Caleb) trusted God's promise and urged the people to move forward.

Read Numbers 13:1-2, 27-29

"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them... And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."

Read Numbers 14:6-9

"And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."

Because of his faith, God chose him to succeed Moses and lead Israel into the Promised Land.

Read Deuteronomy 31:7-8

"Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their

fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it. It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

His calling required him to face giants, battles, and the fear of leading a nation, but God continually reminded him to be strong and courageous.

Read Joshua 1:9

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

1. What set Joshua and Caleb apart from the other spies in Numbers 13–14? How does this challenge our own perspective when facing difficulties?
2. God told Joshua multiple times to "be strong and courageous." Why do you think this command was repeated so often?
3. How can Joshua's example inspire you to trust God with the "hard things" He's calling you to step into right now?