

Joshua 24 : Today we conclude Living Victorious in Joshua!

For Context Joshua is giving Final Exhortation to Israel

- Exhortation : Biblically Defined as A Call For, An Appeal, or a Consolation / Comfort

In Chapter 23 : Joshua Commanded Courage, Encouraged Love and Warned against Disobedience

Pastor Mike Encouraged us : to Keep God's Word, Abide in the Lord and Love the Lord...

Today we see Joshua's final words and conclude the Book of Joshua

- *This is Joshua's I HAVE A DREAM SPEECH!*
- Perhaps you have a part of this speech hanging on a wall in your house

Let's stand to give honor to God and read his word...

Joshua 24:14 "Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! **15** And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**"

(Pray : You May Be Seated)

I titled today's Sermon : God is Faithful

• *God is Faithful and is worthy of our faithfulness*

Joshua 24 has 3 Discourses and a Conclusion... We will see.. God Speaking, Joshua Speaking, and Israel Speaking

These Three Speeches Reveal 3 Important Truths :

1. God is a Faithful
2. Serving God is a Decision
3. You Can Only Serve One Master
4. **The Concluding Truth : God is Faithful!**

God is Faithful

God is Faithful to Lead / Faithful to Protect / Faithful to Provide

1) God is Faithful to Lead : He led their Forefathers

24:1 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

Whose Present at this Final Exhortation: Most Important is God!

- This means that God is always present, this is why He is always faithful!
- No matter where you go, He is there!

2 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.

First Detail to Note : It is GOD who is speaking...

- When God speaks, pay attention and look for a definite pattern

Second Detail to Note : IDOLATRY is the MAJOR ISSUE

- If you read through the Bible you will see, it was a constant problem.

3 Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, (I) led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. **4** To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. **5** Also I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagues Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward I brought you out.

Notice the Pattern : It is I! God is Faithful Past, Present, Future!

- *I took your Father Abraham | I Led Him Out | I Gave Him the Son of Promise - IT IS "I" !!!*
- *God is faithful... AND HE PROMISED IT!!!!*
- **Deuteronomy 7:9** Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments...

6 'Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. **7** So they cried out to the Lord; and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time.

This is God's History Reminder of HIS Salvation!!!

- WHY? BECAUSE WE EASILY FORGET!!!!
- This is why I think Paul wrote to Ephesus to Remember your Roots! (Ephesians 2:11-12)
- *The best way to have compassion, patience & humility towards others is to remember your past, when YOU were without Christ & lost in the world!!!*

2) God is Faithful to Protect : In the Wilderness

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and **I destroyed them** from before you.

God was faithful through Egypt and into the wilderness

- No matter what chapter, what season, what change, God is there, HE IS FAITHFUL!

9 Then **Balak** the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel, and sent and called **Balaam** the son of Beor to curse you. **10** But I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand.

God's Faithfulness to Israel was to LEAD to PROVIDE to PROTECT

- Numbers 22 - Even when the enemy was cunning, God was still there.
- **He is always there : God is Faithful!**

11 Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of **Jericho** fought against you—*also* the **Amorites**, the **Perizzites**, the **Canaanites**, the **Hittites**, the **Girgashites**, the **Hivites**, and the **Jebusites**. But I delivered them into your hand.

God's Faithfulness Followed wherever Israel went!

- Do you trust God's faithfulness to follow you all the days of your life?

3) Faithful to Provide : All God gave in the new land!

12 I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, *also* the **two kings** of the Amorites, *but not* with your sword or with your bow. **13** I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and **cities** which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the **vineyards** and olive **groves** which you did not plant.'

No Matter where You are in Life : Remember this Truth... God is Faithful!

Faithful to Lead | Faithful to Protect | Faithful to Provide!

His faithfulness the foundation for our faith and our faithfulness!!!

Serving God is a Decision

God's faithfulness is foundational for this exhortation...

In Light of ALL God has done for you!

- His Faithfulness to Lead
- His Faithfulness to Protect
- His Faithfulness to Provide

THEREFORE HEAR!!!

14 “Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. **Serve the Lord!**”

Fear the LORD | Serve the LORD | PUT AWAY THE IDOLS!!!

- Joshua is exposing hidden sin : A Reminder that Nothing is hidden from God!
- **Fear God** means to have Reverence for Him for His Holiness for His FAITHFULNESS toward you!
- **Serve God** means to be sincere and to be selfless toward the God so selfless toward you!
- **Be Faithful** by letting go of the idols you still hold dear, count them loss of the gain of God!

JOSHUA IS EXHORTING FAITHFULNESS TO A GOD WHO IS FAITHFUL!!!

15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”**

(Bob Dylan) “You Gotta Serve Somebody”

- ‘it may be the devil, it may be the Lord but you gotta serve somebody.’

Serving God is a Decision!!!

- *Trusting God is a Decision, Walking in the Spirit is a Decision, Refusing temptation is a Decision*

“But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Last week Pastor Kevin exhorted us to stand in the Gap for our families!

- Men : We are the Priests the Providers and the Protectors of our homes!
- Men, Women, Fathers, Mothers, Grandparents STAND IN THE GAP & Let not the enemy in!

Joshua's Declaration should be our decision our declaration and our Determination!

- *HOW CAN WE? READ ON... (The heart of the problem is Idolatry)*

You can Only Serve One Master

16 So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; 17 for the Lord our God *is* He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed.

The people don't deny God's Faithfulness but declare it!!!

- Their SALVATION, their freedom, the LEADING, the PROTECTING, the PROVIDING!

18 And the Lord drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the Lord, for He *is* our God."

The people declare who they will serve... Look at Joshua's response!

19 But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the Lord, for He *is* a holy God. He *is* a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20 If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good."

Israel Says, "We will serve." Joshua says, "YOU CANNOT SERVE!"

- Joshua is saying, "YOU CANNOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS"
- As Jesus said it, "YOU CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON!" (Matthew 6:24)

Joshua keeps pointing out their idols... And they are not getting it!

21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the Lord!"

22 So Joshua said to the people, "You *are* witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord for yourselves, to serve Him." And they said, "We *are* witnesses!"

Get ready for the mic drop...

23 "Now therefore, *he said,* "put away the foreign gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart to the Lord God of Israel." 24 And the people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!" 25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

There were still idols, Joshua knew it, later history would reveal it!

- If you read the whole of Israel's history you will quickly learn they had an idol addiction

But the sin of Idolatry doesn't exist today... Does it? YES!!!

What are Our Idols today?

"An idol is something that we look to for things that only God can give." (Tim Keller - Counterfeit Gods)

Lets Consider some Examples of Modern Idols...

- I need to be married so I can have unconditional love! WRONG. Only God can give you such love!
- I need a bigger income so my family will be cared for! No. God is your gracious provider!
- I need a good education and career so my future is secure! Only God knows your future!!!!
- ***WE CANNOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS we CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON cannot... We MUST COME TO JESUS IN FAITH and CONFESS our SIN and he IS FAITHFUL and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us of all unrighteousness! (1 John 1:9)***

As we conclude Joshua we see: God's Faithfulness is Affirmed!

(2 Tim 2:13) *"When we are faithless He remains faithful, He cannot deny himself!"*

26 Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. 27 And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God."

A Stone of Witness : A Tangible Reminder of the Day of this Covenant

- I helped co-lead an FCA Mammoth Retreat this summer...
- We spent time with God... And the last thing I told them was to grab a stone to serve as a reminder of what God did.

I think this Stone Points to our Greater Stone : The Chief Stone... Who is Jesus the Christ!

- 1 Corinthians 10 Paul says everything in the wilderness is a reminder for us to learn from...
- Paul says the spiritual rock they drank from, that followed them was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4)

Like Joshua : God's Great Covenant was Fulfilling in Jesus!

28 So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.

29 Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, *being* one hundred and ten years old. 30 And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Serah, which *is* in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. 31 Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.

Joshua was buried in HIS INHERITANCE : God is Faithful!

32 The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at Shechem, in the plot of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred [g]pieces of silver, and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.

Josephs also was buried in HIS INHERITANCE : God is Faithful!!

33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died. They buried him in a hill *belonging to* Phinehas his son, which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim.

Eleazar too was buried in HIS INHERITANCE : God is Faithful!!!

In Conclusion : God is Faithful!

- **The Victorious Christian Life is Possible because of God is faithful!**
- God was FAITHFUL to His COVENANT PROMISE....
- Jesus was FAITHFUL to the work fo the CROSS
- The SPIRIT is FAITHFUL to complete God's work in us!
- By His Grace WE CAN FAITHFULLY SERVE HIM to the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Believe I Repent I Receive

- **May we Believe our God is Faithful!**
- **May we Repent of our Faithlessness!**
- **May we Receive His Grace & Power to Live Faithful!**

“And May we be confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ!”

Philippians 1:6