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Joshua 22
Best for the Body
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Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think most people think about the group first or the individual first? Why is that?
2. Who is a good example of serving others (besides Jesus)? What was their impact like?
3. Can you think of a great partner or teammate you had? Were they active and all in or not? What made them great?
4. What do you think are things that keep people from being generous with their money? Does the Bible address any of those things?
5. How are you at asking open ended questions? Where or how could you improve?

Joshua 22 brings us to an interesting situation.

The battles are won and the land has been divided.

But 2 1/2 tribes didn't want to live west of the Jordan.

God allowed it on the condition they...

...support and fight with the rest of the nation.

They were not to divide over their own desires.

God didn't design it or direct it, but He allowed it.

Reminds me of working on Zoom...

...You can do it, but it's more complicated...

...it takes more work, and it is more problematic.

These 2 1/2 tribes do cause the first drama, create more work, and eventually will be the first to be conquered.

Every choice has a cost.

You can get involved with unbelievers.

You can skip church for weeks.

You can work 60 hours a week and barely see family/friends.

You can decide not to read your bible.

You can keep all your money for yourself.

You can choose to cope with stress in unhealthy ways.

...But it is eventually going to cost you...and others.

Walking in the wisdom of God gives US the best chance...
...and THOSE we walk with, the best chance, at finishing well.

When we finally trust that God knows best & has the best...
...We can start choosing His best, BUT then we realize...
...His best isn't just about one it is about everyone.
...God so loves you and God so loves the world...

You can go faster alone, but we will go farther together.

The big idea:

The best question is not what is best for me. The best question is, what is best for the body?

5 points today will answer that question.

It will apply to business, the church, ur friends, and family.

Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, **2** and said to them: "You have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. **3** You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the Lord your God. **4** And now the Lord your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents *and* to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you on the other side of the Jordan.

This is a great commendation.

They did not want to live on the west side of the Jordan...

...But they did what they said they were going to do...

...they served their brothers.

1. Serving others is best for the body.

A great teammate understands their role and plays it for the whole

A great neighbor cares about the neighborhood not just their yard.

A great family member realizes there are other needs besides their own to consider.

A great church member sees the needs of the whole church not just their own.

It is rare to find people who really do care for others...

...But as God's people, that should be us.

We should see and serve others not just ourselves.

Jesus led with that example...

Philippians 2:3 *Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

This is a well done, gold star moment...they started off great.

22: 5 But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” 6 So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

Joshua’s final words are about commitment and spiritual action. Joshua is saying, don’t just talk or think, DO these things. Act. These are actions: love, walk, keep, hold fast, and serve.

And how? ALL in.

Walk in **ALL** his ways,
serve Him with **ALL** your heart
With **ALL** your soul.

2. Being active and all in is best for the body.

Jesus said in John 4:34

"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

Have you ever had a teammate that just didn’t do the work?

You could tell they weren’t all in?

They had their own agenda, they had their own plans.

They come into the season out of shape.

They come into the meeting unprepared.

They come into the conversation clueless.

It is often true 20% of the people do 80% of the work.

If we could get 80%, that would be a game changer.

Joshua is encouraging them to choose the best way.

Be active and be all in for the Lord, it benefits everyone.

7b And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, **8** and spoke to them, saying, “Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.”

What they had, they worked for and were blessed with.

From hard work to wise investments to personal sacrifices...

...What we have is what God has blessed us with...

...But what we have been given is not meant to be just for us.

They fought the battles, they got the reward and...

...God says share it with your brethren.

3. Generosity is best for the body.

- It keeps selfishness from creeping in.
- It helps us look outside of ourselves.
- It brings joy to be able to give to others.

Generosity makes things possible for everyone...

...that wouldn't be available to anyone...

...w/o the generosity of someone.

Your generosity in sharing power on your team is powerful.

Your generosity in giving to your family and friends is appreciated.

Your generosity in spending time or buying a treat is sweet.

For the church as well, the work of the church moves forward...

...on the generosity of the body.

Take a step of faith and begin to give.

Or take a bigger step and begin to give regularly.

You will know the joy of generosity and the freedom of giving...

...But you will also make a difference in the mission of God...

...and lives of the body.

These tribes had fought and won and their generosity to the body strengthened everyone.

Now here comes the drama...

10 And when they came to the region of the Jordan which *is* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan—a great, impressive altar. **11** Now the children of Israel heard *someone* say, “Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan—on the children of Israel’s side.” **12** And when the children of

Israel heard *of it*, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them.

Herein lies the core of countless problems and arguments.

Someone does something. Someone hears something.
And people are ready to go to war!
But because the 2.5 tribes don't want to live on the westside...
...they built an altar for themselves.

It is extra work, so they can live where they want & serve God...
...But it is causing extra misunderstandings.

What is the problem with building an altar?

Idolatry is the problem.
The Jews know not to worship idols.
They know they drove out the Canaanites because of their idols.
...**And the first thing these 2.5 do is build an altar?!?**

16 “Thus says the whole congregation of the Lord: ‘What treachery *is* this that you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord, in that you have built for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel this day against the Lord?’ ”

18b... And it shall be, if you rebel today against the Lord, that tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel.

20 Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.’ ”

There are a lot of great things here.

The people are zealous to obey and follow the Lord.
They fear the Lord and desire to depart from sin.
They call their brothers out on their seeming sin and compromise.
And they understand one person's sin impacts everyone's lives.

4. Holiness is best for the body.

We have seen this again and again in Joshua.
Individual sin impacts everyone.

The person that leaves their spouse to find themselves.
The lawyer that skirts the law to get ahead.
The pastor that has an affair to fulfill his passions.
The leader that bullies people to maintain their control.

All choices send ripples into the future.

We just have to decide what ripples we want to send.
Ripples of righteousness or ripples of regret?

But...they have completely jumped to the wrong conclusions and they haven't even asked a real question.

...Sometimes in our zeal we forget to ask questions.

23 If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the Lord, or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, or if to offer peace offerings on it, let the Lord Himself require *an account*. **24** But in fact we have done it for fear, for a reason, saying, 'In time to come your descendants may speak to our descendants, saying, "What have you to do with the Lord God of Israel?'

So the 2.5 fear their current position outside the land may cause problems for their future generations.

And they do the work to try and make sure that won't happen.

Fear is a very common motivator. And empathy can go a long way

5. Asking questions is best for the body.

Don't jump to conclusions.

Don't be quick to judge a situation. Don't make assumptions.

Start with genuine, open ended, non-threatening questions.

Questions help us learn about each other.

NOT:

What's wrong with you? What is your problem?

Why are you so_____? lazy, dumb, ungrateful etc?

Why can't you just relax/chill?

You don't really love me/like me/trust me, do you?

Instead...

What are you guys doing here?

Can you help me understand?

Why are you doing this or why do you feel like that?

Can you tell me more about that?

Jesus was great at asking questions...

Jesus often asked "how" and "why" questions.

In your family or business or friendship...

...asking a genuine, non threatening question is best for everyone.

So here is my open ended question for you...

How often do you think about what is best for the body?

Just as the 12 tribes of Israel were one nation.

**We are one body, all different parts, all different roles...
...but all connected and dependent on each other.**

Let's start thinking of what is best...
...not just for ourselves but for the body.

I Corinthians 12:25 This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. 26 If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. 27 All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.