

COVENANT WITH THE FATHER | JOSHUA 24:1-15 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL

TOPICAL: Father's Day Message | 06/21/2026

INTRO: **Before there was ever an earthly father, there was God the Father!** / Human fatherhood did not originate in society, tradition, or even biology; **it originated in the heart of God!** / **GOD the FATHER designed earthly fathers after His own likeness**, so that **THROUGH** their love, leadership, provision, protection, and faithfulness, **His children might catch a glimpse of the perfect Father in heaven!**

- Yet, while many fathers today are **More Involved** than ever, **many have lost sight of the God-given VALUE of fatherhood**. – We see faithful fathers leading, but we also see homes where a father's influence is **absent** or **undervalued**, or even **undermined!** ... **WHY?**
- Possibly because the **ROLE** of a father **has DRIFTED** from God's intended design. / **The strength** of our homes, our churches, and our lives **is NOT found in OUR methods or good intentions**, but in a **Faithful Covenant Relationship** with our Heavenly Father!

So, this **FATHER'S DAY**, I want to expound on a **COVENANT WITH THE FATHER**, as found in (Josh 24:14-15), where Joshua challenges God's people to faithfully serve the Lord and declare, **"As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."**

START: One of the Greatest Tragedies in modern Christianity is that **SO MANY** want God's blessings **WITHOUT** God's Covenant! – They want His protection without **Surrender**, His provision without **Obedience**, and His promises without **Commitment**. – Yet throughout Scripture, we find God relating to His people through **COVENANT**.

In the Bible; **COVENANT** is a solemn agreement between God and humans, where **God makes promises** and sets conditions to be fulfilled. (*Both conditional and unconditional ones exist*)

- God made a covenant with **Noah**. **The Noahic Covenant** (Gen 6:18; 8:20; 9:8-17)
- God made a covenant with **Abraham**. **The Abrahamic Covenant** (Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-14)
- God made a covenant with **Israel**. **The Mosaic Covenant** (Ex 19:3-6; 24:3-8; Deut 5:1-3)
- God established the New Covenant through Jesus Christ (Luke 22:20) **"This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."**

P/A: You see church... The Christian life is not a casual relationship... it is a Covenant Relationship!

In (tt. Josh 24), Joshua gathers Israel together for what amounts to a Covenant Renewal Ceremony. – **This was not simply a motivational speech...** this was a **Call to recommit themselves** to the God who had faithfully kept every promise He ever made.

- The question before Israel **was not**: **"Will God remain faithful?"** – The answer to that was already settled. – The question in Joshua's mind was: **"Will God's children remain faithful to their covenant with Him?"** – That same question confronts every believer in Christ today!

BACKGROUND: **WHY SHECHEM MATTERS!** – In (Josh 24:1), Joshua assembled Israel at **SHECHEM**; a location which was rich with covenant history! *It was here that...*

- God first **PROMISED** Abraham the land (Gen 12:6-7)
- Jacob **BURIED** foreign gods beneath the terebinth tree (Gen 35:2-4)
- It was here that Blessings and Cursing's were **PROCLAIMED** (Josh 8:30-35)

P/A: SHECHEM, is a place that God's people should return to often. – A **"Place"** where generations had repeatedly encountered God! *Because God had never broken covenant with them! Joshua called them to...*

I. REMEMBER THE FATHER'S FAITHFULNESS (Josh 24:1-13) – **READ:** In these verses, Joshua's challenge to God's people, was based upon God's past faithfulness. – **For 13 verses Joshua recounts God's Covenant Activity:** "I took..." (3), "I gave..." (4,8), "I sent..." (5a), "I brought..." (5b,6,8), "I delivered..." (10,11). – The hero of (Josh 24) is not Israel... **The Hero is GOD, the Father!**

A. The Father Pursued Them: **Israel existed** because God **CHOSE** Abraham. – Likewise, God the Father has pursued us! – "*We love Him because He first loved us.*" (1 John 4:19)

B. The Father Protected Them: (Deut 33:27) "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; He will thrust out the enemy from before you, and will say, 'Destroy!'"

C. The Father Provided for Them: "*You dwell in a land that you did not labor for.*" (Josh 24:13) (Grace)

P/A: Likewise, God the Father has loved us, pursued us, protected us, and provided for us—**NOT because we earned it**, but **because of His Everlasting Covenant of grace!** (tt. Heb 13:20-21)

- **We must Remember God's Faithfulness:** Every breath... Every meal... Every answered prayer! – Every salvation... Every victory... **All of it comes from the Father!** (by Grace)

"When you remember God's faithfulness in the past, you gain confidence for the future." – C. Smith

SEGUE: God's people **cannot remain neutral.** The remembrance of His grace **should naturally to a Renewal of their Commitment...** *which is exactly what Joshua does next...*

II. RENEW THE FATHER'S COVENANT (Josh 24:14-15a) – **READ:** Joshua's challenge of renewal is **THREEFOLD** explaining **HOW to KEEP** their end of the Covenant. – *We learn first that...*

A. Covenant Requires Reverence (14a): "*Now therefore, Fear the LORD...*" – **FEAR** (Heb. - *yare*); which means more terror, it instills **Reverence** and **Awe!** (Ps 33:8) "*Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.*" – In context, "*yare*" communicates a **Submission to Covenant Loyalty!**

1. Joshua was there **when Moses instructed their fathers** while in the wilderness (Deut 10:12), "*And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*"
2. Joshua is calling God's people to **Wholehearted Devotion**, not merely emotional respect!
 - **Sadly, God's children** often fail to Honor Him or give the Respect due Him: (Malachi 1:6) "*A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts...*" (Disrespectful Children)

P/A: We do not **FEAR** God because He is cruel; we **FEAR** Him because **He is Holy, Sovereign**, and **Worthy** of our highest honor and deepest reverence.

B. Covenant Requires Purity (14b): *“Serve Him in sincerity and truth...”* The word **SERVE** (Heb. - *abad*) is used over 15 x’s in (Josh 24). – For **40 years** Joshua saw what **halfhearted service looks like!** He also knew that God saw the hearts of His children, so he challenges them to SERVE God is with a **PURE heart! *With True and Deep Commitment!***

- (Heb 12:28–29) *“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”*

P/A: God cares more about the sincerity of our hearts that the outward service! (*aka. Lip service*)

C. Covenant Requires Resolve (14c-15a): Joshua gives Israel **two commands:**

1. Put Away: *“Put away the gods which your fathers served...”* – Israel belonged to God, yet some still held onto idols from their past and from the culture around them. **Joshua knew that God would not share their devotion with competing gods!**

- **The same is true today!** **We cannot fully serve Christ** while clinging to things that rival Him for our affection and obedience. // **God does not call us to manage our idols—He calls us to remove them!**
- **Father's Day Application:** Men often want God's blessing without God's authority. – But Joshua stands before the fathers of Israel and essentially says: *“You cannot lead your family toward God while secretly bowing to something else.”* – **A father's hidden idol always becomes his family's future struggle!**
 - > If a father worships success, → his children will learn ambition.
 - > If a father worships comfort, → his children will learn complacency.
 - > If a father worships entertainment, → his children will learn distraction.
 - > But if a father worships Christ, → his children will witness devotion.
 - > Before Joshua says, *“As for me and my house,”* → **he first says, “Put away!”** – Because **there can be no covenant commitment until there is covenant cleansing.**

2. Choose: *“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...”* – **Joshua calls for a DECISION! ... Not tomorrow... not someday... but Today!** – **Everyone serves something.** But the question is not whether we will serve, but **WHOM** we will serve. – **Faith requires a deliberate choice to follow God.**

- **Father's Day Application:** Many fathers **know WHAT they should do spiritually** **but have never fully committed to doing it.** Joshua's challenge is simple: **Choose to Settle the matter!**

P/A: The fathers who impact generations are **those who first settle the covenant in their own hearts** and then lead their families by example! – **Quote:** *“God is not looking for people who will give Him part of their lives. He seeks those who will give Him all.”* – **A.W. Tozer**

III. REFLECT THE FATHER'S HEART (Josh 24:15b) – Joshua does not merely demand a choice... **He demonstrates one!** – *“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”* – His statement reflects his own **personal conviction, family leadership, and covenant commitment** to Father God!

A. As for me: Before Joshua could say, *“my house,”* he first said, **“ME.”** – Joshua first **settles the matter** in his own heart.

B. **And my house**: Joshua **accepted responsibility** to lead his family toward God. *(It's what fathers do)!*
– A father cannot lead his family where he is unwilling to go himself.

C. **We will serve the LORD**: **NOT occasional worship**, but a lifelong commitment of **allegiance** and **obedience**. – Regardless of what culture does, regardless of what others choose, **he was first committed that his family first served the Lord!**

P/A: Joshua draws a line in the sand here! – The nation may choose differently, **but his decision is already made**. → He was determined to keep **COVENANT WITH THE FATHER!**

FATHER'S DAY APPLICATIONS: Today, on Father's Day, we honor fathers, grandfathers, and the men who have helped shape our lives. But Joshua's CHALLENGE reminds us that the **greatest legacy a man can leave is not wealth, success, or accomplishments—it is a life devoted to God.**

When Joshua stood before Israel, he was not making a casual statement... **He was Renewing a Covenant**. He was declaring that God's faithfulness demanded a response! → The God who had delivered, provided, protected, and blessed His people **deserved their wholehearted allegiance!**

The Same is TRUE for us... **Our Heavenly Father has been faithful**. He pursued us when we were lost. He **redeemed us through His Son**. He **adopted us into His family**. → **He will never break His covenant with us!** – **The question for us is... will we remain faithful to Him?**

- Joshua looked at the people and said, ***"Choose this day whom YOU will serve."***
- Joshua then declared, ***"As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."***

TODAY, every believer must answer that same question...

- Will your **HOME** be shaped by culture **or by CHRIST?**
- Will your **FAMILY** inherit your preferences **or your FAITH?**
- Will your **CHILDREN** remember your hobbies, or will they **remember your DEVOTION to God?**

A Covenant is not merely words spoken; it is a life COMMITTED!

So, before we leave this place, let every father determine in his heart to **choose COVENANT WITH THE FATHER!** → **ASK: WILL YOU DO THIS!...**

Repeat after me... I may not be perfect, but I will be faithful... **I will love God!** → I will lead my family toward Christ... **I will leave a legacy of faith!** → **As for ME and MY house, we will serve the LORD!**