

**VGROUP STUDY GUIDE**  
**"JOSHUA: LETTING YOUR GUARD DOWN"**  
**JOSHUA 7: 1-26**  
**FEBRUARY 19, 2023**

**FOCAL POINT:** Gal. 6: 9, **"So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up."** Watch this video and discuss what you noticed about Cliff Young ([YouTube.com/watch?v=g6-eFOBen\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6-eFOBen_4))

Our series through the book of Joshua is called *Called to Conquer*. And a part of conquering is making sure we continue running the course the Lord has set out for us. The Israelites experienced this in ch. 6. But in ch. 7 we see they let up and it cost them.

**TEXT:**

*The Israelites, however, were unfaithful regarding the things set apart for destruction. Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of what was set apart, and the Lord's anger burned against the Israelites. 2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and told them, "Go up and scout the land." So the men went up and scouted Ai. 3 After returning to Joshua they reported to him, "Don't send all the people, but send about 2,000 or 3,000 men to attack Ai. Since the people of Ai are so few, don't wear out all our people there." 4 So about 3,000 men went up there, but they fled from the men of Ai. 5 The men of Ai struck down about 36 of them and chased them from outside the gate to the quarries, striking them down on the descent. As a result, the people's hearts melted and became like water. 6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell before the ark of the Lord with his face to the ground until evening, as did the elders of Israel; they all put dust on their heads. 7 "Oh, Lord God," Joshua said, "why did You ever bring these people across the Jordan to hand us over to the Amorites for our destruction? If only we had been content to remain on the other side of the Jordan! 8 What can I say, Lord, now that Israel has turned its back and run from its enemies? 9 When the Canaanites and all who live in the land hear about this, they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. Then what will You do about Your great name?" 10 The Lord then said to Joshua, "Stand up! Why are you on the ground? 11 Israel has sinned. They have violated My covenant that I appointed for them. They have taken some of what was set apart. They have stolen, deceived, and put the things with their own belongings. 12 This is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies. They will turn their backs and run from their enemies, because they have been set apart for destruction. I will no longer be with you unless you remove from you what is set apart 13 "Go and consecrate the people.*

*Tell them to consecrate themselves for tomorrow, for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: There are things that are set apart among you, Israel. You will not be able to stand against your enemies until you remove what is set apart. 14 In the morning you must present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe the Lord selects is to come forward clan by clan. The clan the Lord selects is to come forward family by family. The family the Lord selects is to come forward man by man. 15 The one who is caught with the things set apart must be burned, along with everything he has, because he has violated the Lord's covenant and committed an outrage in Israel." 16 Joshua got up early the next morning. He had Israel come forward tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was selected. 17 He had the clans of Judah come forward, and the Zerahite clan was selected. He had the Zerahite clan come forward by heads of families, and Zabdi was selected. 18 He then had Zabdi's family come forward man by man, and Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was selected. 19 So Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, and make a confession to Him. I urge you, tell me what you have done. Don't hide anything from me." 20 Achan replied to Joshua, "It is true. I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I did: 21 When I saw among the spoils a beautiful cloak from Babylon, 200 silver shekels, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, I coveted them and took them. You can see for yourself. They are concealed in the ground inside my tent, with the money under the cloak." 22 So Joshua sent messengers who ran to the tent, and there was the cloak, concealed in his tent, with the money underneath. 23 They took the things from inside the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites, and spread them out in the Lord's presence. 24 Then Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the cloak, and the bar of gold, his sons and daughters, his ox, donkey, and sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and brought them up to the Valley of Achor. 25 Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? Today the Lord will trouble you!" So all Israel stoned them to death. They burned their bodies, threw stones on them, 26 and raised over him a large pile of rocks that remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from His burning anger. Therefore that place is called the Valley of Achor to this day.*

When you let your spiritual guard down there is:

### **Defeat (vv. 1-5)**

1. Name 2 words from v. 1 that should cause concern for us. How were they unfaithful? Why did the Lord's anger burn against them? What had He told them to do that they didn't do? (Reference Josh. 6: 17-18)

2. What happened when they were disobedient to God and then they went to battle against the city of Ai? God's blessing was no longer w/ them. God's power was not with them. Practically, what did that mean for the Israelites? (Read vv. 4-5 again).

3. In light of these verses, how have you seen it play out in your personal life when you strayed from God's instructions? How do you see it playing out in our national life as the political, educational and entertainment world ignore God's directions?

### **Discouragement** (vv. 6-9)

1. When you drift from God it doesn't take long to revert to your old ways. Does v. 7 remind you of anything? Go back and *read Ex. 14: 12*. What had the people in the book of Exodus forgotten and what had Joshua forgotten?

2. God had been removed from the picture. Joshua and the Israelites were now being dominated by fear. They were allowing their emotions to flood their minds. But God had set up a dam to protect His people. What was the dam? His Word, His directives!

a. How have you seen God's Word protect? How have you seen God's Word encourage you when you were discouraged?

### **Sin** (vv. 10-18)

1. Drifting from God leads to sin. The word "sin" simply means "to miss the mark." It's the picture of an archer missing the target. Some of the Israelites missed the target by a mile! *Read Joshua 6: 18-19*. How had they missed the target?

a. Very possible they let their guard down after the big win at Jericho thinking, "It's obvious we're special. Because we're special it'll be okay for us to take this stuff for ourselves."

b. Rationalization enables you to put a thumbs up on sin. Look at v. 21. You know what I notice? They didn't take everything. They just took some stuff. But what had God told them to take?

c. It's very easy to think you can sin a little and it not be that big of a deal. *Read James 2: 10*. Share your thoughts on this verse. What does it mean? Does it seem fair?

2. In light of our text, what parallels do you see in Acts 5: 1-11? What was wrong with what they did?

3. What are some things you can do to keep your spiritual guard up?