

## Joshua 7 – “When Things Take a Turn”

1. Welcome
  - a. All together service
  - b. 4<sup>th</sup> of July
  - c. Faith Family Freedom (48 baptisms)
  - d. Every day we get to celebrate the ultimate freedom found at the cross
2. Scripture Reader (Bryan)
  - a. **(James 1:13-15) When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death**
3. Opening (...when things take a turn)
  - a. Our Scripture today will kind of sums up what will transpire in Joshua chapter 7, our text today.
  - b. Up to this point in our study through the book of Joshua, everything has been going just as God had planned
  - c. Chapters 1-6 Have been full of Obedience, Success, and Victories
    - i. They were successful in sending spies into Jericho (ch. 2)
    - ii. They Miraculously crossed the Jordan river on dry land, following God’s commands and the Ark of the covenant (ch. 3)
    - iii. Obeyed God by setting up the 12 stones at Gilgal (ch. 4)
    - iv. Obeyed God by circumcising the entire wilderness generation, which would have made the vulnerable to their enemies (chapter 5)
    - v. Obedient in observing Passover in the land of Cannon (also ch 5)
    - vi. Followed all of God’s instructions while preparing and defeating the City of Jericho (chapter 6)

- d. I mean, Chapter 6 could not have ended any better: **(Joshua 6:27) So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.**
  - i. Man life is good and God is good. The Israelites are in the Promised Land, they are striking fear in the hearts of the Canaanites. It seems as if nothing or no one could stop them.
- e. But.....they could stop themselves. (Sometimes we are our own worst enemies)
- f. And that exactly what we will see happen as Chapter 7 begins
- g. **Joshua 7:1 But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things; Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the Lord's anger burned against Israel**
- h. And it is: the moment "When things take a turn". (*title for today*)
  - i. Achan = troubler – They had to know eventually this guy would cause trouble.
  - j. This is 1 sin, performed by 1 man! However, as we will see throughout this chapter, it will affect the entire nation of Israel.
  - k. Debate of: sin is sin / but what can't be debated is that the consequences of sin are different
  - l. And in this case, in regards to Achan's sin, we will see major consequences
- m. When Achan took the spoils of war he directly disobeyed God's clear command and instructions before the battle at Jericho
  - i. **(Joshua 6:18-19) But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury."**
- n. This sin wasn't just an act of disobedience, When Achan decided to keep some of the devoted things for himself, he didn't steal from Jericho, he didn't steal from his fellow Israelites, He stole directly from God himself.

- o. Jericho is the first battle in the Promised Land, the first victory, and therefore, Jericho was the first fruits of the Promised land, and the first belongs to the God.
- p. Take note family, this hasn't changed any to this day. Our firsts are the Lord's too, set apart to be holy for God, just as the devoted things of the first battle were.
- q. Achan only needed to wait one more chapter and he would have been about to take whatever he wanted when the Israelites take Ai.
- r. But no, he gave into his sin, he was enticed and let his evil desires win.
- s. and the Lord, of course, will hold true to his promise on what would happen if anyone took any of the devoted items, and the camp of Israel has been made liable to destruction and trouble

Trouble and destruction is exactly what we will see in chapter 7 this morning, and as look at the mistakes and failures made throughout this chapter, there will be 3 Lessons that, we as Christians, can learn and grow from. (*wise man always told me....*)

#### 4. The first being, Self-Reliance Leads to Destruction

##### **a. Joshua 7:2-5**

- b. As I was reading this and preparing for this sermon, this section of scripture really hit home for me and I couldn't help to think about my own walk with Jesus:
  - i. *Testimony of self-reliance*
  - ii. Two Phrases that make me cringe in recovery
- c. Seems as if Joshua was in this state of thinking, "I got this"
- d. He didn't pray, he didn't wait nor ask the Lord for instruction like he did any time before or with Jericho! No, seems as if he just acted on self-will and it cost them dearly
- e. If he would have, God would have revealed to him that Israel had sinned and that there are devoted things among them.

- f. He would have made it clear that the number of soldiers wouldn't have matter because until this sin is dealt with "I will not be with you"
- g. I love this quote by Alexander Maclaren **"When God is with us Jericho is not too strong to be captured, but when He is driven from us by our own sin, Ai is not too weak to defeat us."**
- h. Joshua does pray, does cry out to God, but it's after the fact, after the damage was done

**i. Read 6-9**

- j. I can relate to this as well, Joshua acts in the same manner that most of us do after we take matters into our own hands, life hits us in the face, and we are defeated,
- k. He blames God, "why did you bring us cross the Jordan"
- l. Same thing the Israelites did in the wilderness "why did you bring us across the red sea, it would have been better to die in Egypt.
- m. But this is what happens when we take matters into our own hands and when we face defeat and adversity.
- n. Our first reaction seems to always be to blame others or even blame God.
- o. This can be avoided when we keep God first and at the center of every decision in our lives. We will always face battles adversity, and defeats. But when we do, the question we ask God is "why is this happening to me, but instead it's "what are you teaching me?"
- p. I don't know about yall but I'd rather face Jericho with God than, Ai without him.

5. Our second lesson learned: Your sin doesn't just affect you!

- a. **(Joshua 10-12) The Lord said to Joshua, "Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will**

**not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.**

- b. Look at the language God uses. Israel has sinned*
  - c. Although this was a sin by 1 man, God is holding the whole nation responsible until the sin is dealt with.
  - d. The nation of Israel is a body, is one together, God's firstborn son
  - e. That too hasn't change to this day. (The body of Christ)
  - f. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14) Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.**
  - g. My shoulder injury.....*
  - h. We see this in churches all the time, the sin or failure of a member directly affects the whole congregation and there is a ripple effect due to the sin.
  - i. Church hurt is real as well.....Sin of one broken person could turn someone away from Jesus forever.
  - j. And in this Church body, we are called to look out for one another, to carry one another's burdens, Iron sharpens Iron, that is what forever family is all about!
  - k. Now I am not saying that we have to be perfect, that's impossible, but we must take this serious, we must think before we act, because you never know, you may be the only bible someone ever reads!
  - l. This is exactly what takes place here, 1 man performed 1 sin and the entire nation of Israel was directly effected by it.
  - m. 36 men have lost their lives, 36 wives became widows, and 36 families have lost their fathers.
6. Our final lesson we can learn today is a bit of a formula: sin – repentance and confession = death
- a. We know the sin in this case. Infact my chapter is titled Achan's sin.
  - b. We see the effect that this sin has had on not only Joshua and the army but on the entire Nation of Israel.

- c. Up to this point there hasn't been any repentance. Seems as if he would have come forward when Things took a turn and the battle at Ai was lost.
- d. Seems as if Achan would have come forward and confessed when 36 of his fellow soldiers lost their lives to an inferior army.
- e. But he hasn't, he has remained silent and hidden.
- f. Let's continue to read and see if this changes: **verse 16**
  - i. **Early the next morning Joshua had Israel come forward by tribes, and Judah was chosen. The clans of Judah came forward, and the Zerahites were chosen. He had the clan of the Zerahites come forward by families, and Zimri was chosen. Joshua had his family come forward man by man, and Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was chosen**
- g. Could you imagine what was going through Achan's mind during this process
- h. He is probably sitting there with his family and he knows that he is guilty, he knows what will happen when it is revealed that he is the one who has brought this destruction on his nation.
- i. First it's his tribe that is brought forward – still silent
- j. Next his clan is chosen – still silent, still no confession, still no repentance
- k. Next his family is chosen – still sitting there silent
- l. Well his time has come, as man by man is asked to come forward until he is indeed chosen.
- m. True Repentance is action confessing your sin, turning away from it and turning towards God
- n. Nobody can make you repent, it must come from a pure heart.
- o. Opportunity after opportunity he had the chance to come forward and Achan chose not to.
- p. Now I don't know if it would have changed anything for sure but knowing who God is and his character I believe it would have made a difference
- q. It definitely would have if he would have confessed and repented before his fellow brothers went to Ai for battle

- r. What we do know about confession and repentance is that it gives glory to the Lord (verse 19)
  - i. **Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, and honor him. Tell me what you have done; do not hide it from me.”**
- s. Well Achan does finally own up to his sin and will confess but only because he has been singled out by God himself.
- t. By this point, it’s isn’t repentance, it’s simply admitting you were wrong. There is a difference between the two.
- u. Before we read this next part I want you to look at sin, how it starts, and how it develops (verse 20)
  - i. **Achan replied, “It is true! I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”**
- v. This is exactly what James 1:13-15 is warning us of- the progression of sin
  - i. **James 1:13-15 13 When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death**
- w. Achan first saw, but that wasn’t the sin.
- x. If he would have just confided in one of his brother’s right then and there when the urge began, I believed without a doubt it would have stopped there. but, he didn’t and it became temptation.
- y. This temptation, this evil desire grew and he then coveted the robe, gold and silver. But still he had a chance. Confide in someone and allow them to help
- z. I can’t stress this enough family, when sin begins to stir inside of you, Use the people God has placed in your life to help you through it!

- aa. But he didn't, his desire conceived and gave birth to full blown sin, and he acted and took the devoted items and hid them under his tent.
  - i. Achan knew this was wrong, he knew he was in fact stealing from God otherwise why would he hid it instead of showing it off to his buddies
- bb. And When we allow sin to become full grown, the last part of our equation and the last part of our scripture comes true, death!
  - i. **25 Joshua said, "Why have you brought this trouble on us? The Lord will bring trouble on you today." Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been called the Valley of Achor ever since.**
- cc. In this case we actually see a physical death take place, which still happens today (addiction)
- dd. But will happen 100% of the time is sin, if allowed to continue and grow, leads to a spiritual death.
- ee. Feeling we have when we are living outside of God's will.

## 7. Closing (Band return to the Stage)

- a. My encouragement for you all this morning is to look within and see where you any of these struggles are affecting your walk with Christ.
- b. I know for me All 3 points, I could relate too directly
- c. I am quick to run back to a life ran on self will, quick to get comfortable and forget to include God in all of my decisions
- d. I too struggle with sin, like everyone else in this room and watching today, and I must always remember that my sin will not just affect me
- e. And sin is powerful and will lead to death, and sin cannot be defeated alone. We live in community, we are the body of Christ. Do not walk this journey alone. It was never intended that way...
- f. Confide in the people God put in your life before sin takes over
- g. FINAL INVITATION TO COME FORWARD