

RISE

Joshua Series, Episode 6 (Joshua 21-24)

Sunday, October 15. Joshua 24:14-15; Joshua 22:1-34

(Joshua 24: 1-15) With Joshua now at the end of his life, he gathers together all the tribes of Israel to convey a message he has received from God. Joshua's speech reminds the Israelites of their long relationship and history with God, and challenges them to leave their past behind by choosing to live fully and wholeheartedly for God.

(Joshua 22:1-34) As the eastern tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh prepare to return to their homeland east of the Jordan, Joshua addresses the group making sure they, once again, hear the message of the need to keep their eyes on God and to live according to His law and instructions. The group sets off for their homeland and upon reaching the region of the Jordan, they build "a large and imposing altar" (vs. 10). When word of the altar reaches the western tribes, they get angry and rally together in preparation for war. But before engaging in warfare, a group of delegated leaders from the western tribes confront and question their relatives about their actions. They ask the eastern tribes "How could you turn away from God and build an altar for yourselves?" and then remind them of how turning from God in the past has been disastrous and harmed Israel (vs. 15-20). In responding, the leaders of the eastern tribes are able to explain and clarify their actions and the intent behind them, which was not a turning from God. Rather they built the altar as an altar of witness to function as a reminder for generations to come.

--Have you made a decision (chosen) to leave your past behind in order to wholeheartedly follow after the Lord? If so, have you specifically made this proclamation to God? Have you verbalized it to others? How does telling God and others about your choice helpful and of benefit to you?

--Identify one example in the past two weeks of you living out Joshua 24:15, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

--What does Joshua's impact on those around him suggest about the impact you have with your family? In your church? Your workplace? Your neighborhood?

--How much thought have you given to the legacy you're leaving for your family and those around you? Why is this important?

--Would you say your example as you live for God is one that is impacting and changing the world around you? Why or why not?

--Take a minute or two to think about pursuing and putting into action "leaving it all behind for God" and "living to die empty." What does that look like for you personally? Are there areas in which you need to step it up?

--How are (or can) you help build a great generation that chases the presence, power and promises of God?

Monday, October 16. Joshua 21:1-45

Joshua 21 concludes the distribution of the land to the Israelites. Although the Levites weren't allotted their own portion of land, they were given cities and pasturelands among the land given to the different tribes of Israel. Joshua 21 contains the details about these cities, 48 in all with their pasturelands. The final three verses of this chapter lay out how all the promises God had made to Israel had come to fruition. "Not one word of all the good promises that's the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass" (vs. 45).

What encouragement did you draw from Joshua 21, and why? How has reading the Book of Joshua, and especially verses 43-45 of chapter 21 today, impacted your thinking about trusting God? What have you learned about God's power, control and timing?

Tuesday, October 17. Joshua 22:1-9

As the eastern tribes (Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh) prepare to return to their homeland east of the Jordan, Joshua addresses the group making sure they, once again, hear the message of the need to keep their eyes on God and to live according to His law and instructions. "But be very careful to obey all the commands and the instructions that Moses gave to you. Love the LORD your God, walk in all his ways, obey his commands, hold firmly to him, and serve him with all your heart and all your soul." (vs. 5).

Would you say you are “careful” to follow the commands and instructions in God’s Word? What does “serving God with all your heart and soul” require of you? What does this look like in your day-to-day life?

Wednesday, October 18. Joshua 22:10-34

After receiving Joshua’s message, the eastern tribes set off for their homeland. Upon reaching the region of the Jordan, they build “a large and imposing altar” (vs. 10). When word of the altar reaches the western tribes, they get angry and rally together in preparation for war. Before engaging in warfare, however, a group of delegated leaders from the western tribes confront and question their relatives about their actions. They ask the eastern tribes, “How could you turn away from God and build an altar for yourselves?” and then remind them of how turning from God has been disastrous and harmed Israel in the past (vs. 15-20). The leaders of the eastern tribes are able to explain their actions and the intent behind them, which was not a turning from God. Rather the altar was an altar of witness to function as a reminder for generations to come.

How important is it to you, and especially the next generation, that you remember and give thanks for His past faithfulness and provision in your life? How much thought have you given to the legacy you’re leaving for your family and those around you? Why is this important? How are (or can) you help build a great generation that chases the presence, power and promises of God? What lesson(s) did you see or learn from this passage about resolving conflicts?

Thursday, October 19. Joshua 23:1-16

With peace throughout the land and Joshua now well advanced in years, Joshua calls together all the elders, leaders, judges and officers of Israel to address and instruct them about following God. He reminds them of how they have seen and experienced God’s goodness, provision and protection. (“The LORD your God has fought for you against your enemies” (vs 4)). Next, he charges them (as he had done many times in the past) to be very careful to follow God’s Law, and to continue to hold tightly to and love God. He then concludes with a warning about the adversity and disaster that will come if the people turn away from God to follow the customs of the foreigners remaining within and around them.

How have you observed or witnessed God’s goodness, provision and protection of this county over the years? How have you personally experienced His goodness? What’s one example of God “fighting for you”? What does Joshua’s repeated charge to Israel and its leaders “to be very careful to follow God’s Law” convey about our need to consistently be taking in God’s Word?

Friday, October 20. Joshua 24:1-33

With Joshua now nearing the end of his life, he gathers all the tribes of Israel to deliver a message he has received from God. Speaking on behalf of God, Joshua reminds the Israelites of their long relationship and history with God, and how it was God who brought them to and then gave them the Promised Land. Joshua then challenges the people to leave their past behind by choosing to live fully and wholeheartedly for God. All of Israel renew their covenant with God saying to Joshua, “We will serve the LORD our God. We will obey him alone” (vs. 24). After Joshua dies, Israel continues to serve the Lord throughout the lifetime of those who had experienced all the Lord had done.

Have you made a decision (chosen) to leave your past behind in order to wholeheartedly follow after the Lord? If so, have you specifically made this declaration to God? Have you verbalized it to others? How does telling God and others about your choice helpful and of benefit to you? Identify one example in the past two weeks of you living out Joshua 24:15, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” What does Joshua’s impact on those around him suggest about the impact you have on your family? In your church? Workplace? School? Neighborhood? How much thought have you given to the legacy you’re leaving for your family and those around you? Why is this important?

Saturday, October 21.

Take a few minutes to think back over the six RISE messages and what you read in Joshua. What was the most significant lesson(s) God impressed on your heart from the message series? What about from your personal reading of Joshua?