



## Courageous #6: Choose Faithfulness

Text: Joshua 24:14-15

Care and Missions Pastor Dan Slagle

Israel has entered the Promised Land. The Lord has given them victory. And now Joshua's time as leader of Israel is coming to an end. What will his final words to his people be?

1. **Read Joshua 24:1-15.** Note that before giving any commands, Joshua, speaking for the Lord, recounts what God had already done on Israel's behalf. What is the significance of this order? And in what ways is this true for us as Christians as well? (See Ephesians 2:1-10 and Study Deeper)
  
2. To fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness, first requires that we serve Him *exclusively*.
  - a. Why is it important to know someone well in order to serve them well?
  
  - b. If you wanted to get to know someone better, what would you do? So what does this look like as we think about getting to know God (and not just knowing things about God) better?
  
3. Second, we must serve God *proactively*.
  - a. Instead of waiting for someone to ask us to step up and serve, we should be actively looking for needs and then get about meeting those needs. What needs do you see when you look out at the world that break your heart and linger with you?
  
  - b. What can you personally do to work towards alleviating that need?
  
4. Finally, we must serve God *expectantly*. Describe the difference between a perspective that asks, "What can I do?" vs. "What can God do?"

**Challenge:** As a church, our upcoming Christmas Eve services provide us an amazing opportunity. Hundreds of men, women, and children will walk the halls at Faithbridge that don't ever step foot in a church building otherwise. **Studies show that guests decide within the first few minutes whether or not they will come back to a church.** *Will you be there to show and tell them that, "We're glad you're here!"?* You can affect someone's eternity with just over an hour or so of your joyful service! Sign up to serve at <https://faithbridge.org/news/news-feed/christmas-eve-services-2019/>.

**Prayer:**

Partner with another person in your group.

- Share with each other what devotional rhythms you have in your life to connect with God and get to know Him more.
- If you face any particular challenges developing those spiritual habits (busyness, tiredness, lack of motivation, etc.), share those as well.
- Finally, share a goal you have for your time with God for this coming week and beyond.

(Note: As we head into the season of Advent (preparing for Christmas), **an Advent devotional is a great tool to use to develop this daily habit of meeting with God!** Perhaps you and your partner (or even your entire group!) can commit to going through this same devotional and sharing what each other are learning each day! <https://document.desiringgod.org/good-news-of-great-joy-en.pdf?ts=1479878227> )

Pray for each other:

- that as you pursue those habits, God would reveal Himself more and more
- pray for the motivation and wisdom on how best to grow in those habits

Then commit to texting or calling each other everyday this week to check in on how each other's time with God is going.

**STUDY DEEPER**  
**What Does It Mean to Serve God?**

“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). What does that mean?

- It means to do what he says in a way that makes him look supremely valuable in himself.
- It means to submit to him in a way that makes him look thrilling.

There are ways to submit to God that only make him look threatening, not thrilling. There are ways to do what he says that only call attention to the fact that he is an authority, not a treasure.

That kind of service is *not* the service God commands.

What's the difference?

The difference is that God has told us not to serve him as though he needed anything.

“Nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything” (Acts 17:25).

“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

Both these texts put all the emphasis on God's giving to us when we serve.

So the kind of service that makes God look valuable and thrilling is the kind that serves God by constantly receiving from God. The key text to describe this is 1 Peter 4:11 –

“Whoever serves, [let it be] as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”

God is seen as glorious when all our serving is moment-by-moment receiving from God’s supply.

We receive this supply by faith. That is, we trust moment by moment that what we need, in serving him, he will supply (“life, breath, and everything”). This is the opposite of being anxious. Such serving is happy. And it makes God look no less authoritative, but infinitely more desirable. This is the glory he means to have. The giver gets the glory.

Therefore, “serve the Lord with gladness” (Psalm 100:2).

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-does-it-mean-to-serve-god>