

TAKE GROUND Part 8

“DECLARE”

Today: The book of Joshua

-We see a transfer in leadership, crazy faith, an empowerment from God, victory of trials and hardship, and finally a declaration of serving God.

Joshua 24:15b

“...But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.”

We have been asking ourselves the wrong question when we read that verse!

We ask ourselves, will me and my family worship & serve?

But the question is, who or what will me and my family worship & serve?

We were created to be worshippers!!

If we don't worship God we will worship & serve

-money, family, people, job...

The choice is not WILL we serve, but WHO will we serve?

Joshua 24:13-15

¹³I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them.

¹⁴“So fear the LORD and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD alone. ¹⁵But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.”

Joshua is sharing about all that God had done

Joshua 24:2-3

² Joshua said to the people, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River, and they worshiped other gods. ³But I took your ancestor Abraham from the land beyond the Euphrates and led him into the land of Canaan. I gave him many descendants through his son Isaac.

To encourage and inspire the Israelites for future service

Joshua reminded them of their history!

-He credited God with the victory

-He challenged them to continue forward in service and victory

Paul did something similar with the Ephesian church

-He reminded them of the gift of their salvation

Ephesians 2:4

“But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved”

Paul then told the believers of the expectation of service!

Ephesians 2:10

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Showing how God has been faithful not just to them, but also to past generations

He has always provided!!

For the People of Israel and for us as Christians today

-Our walk into the Promised Land is walking in salvation through Jesus

-Accomplished by the power of God!

-He desires to move us out of the wilderness, death, destruction

-Into the place of blessing

-Into a covenant with Him

It comes to a point!!

The contract has to be signed

Joshua says you have to choose "Who will you serve?"

-The One True God or the idols that your ancestor served

An idol is simply anything that we put in place of serving or worshipping God

You might not think you worship an idol!!

-Maybe for you it is your job, that promotion, that pay raise, that status -Maybe political views, what you think is right or what news source you think is right -Maybe a hobby, pastime, fantasy football

-Maybe it is your kids, a hobby or sport that gets your attention and time

None of these things are bad!!!

When it becomes the thing that we base our lives around it may be getting in the way of what God wants

-Typically it's easier for us to pick up on someone else's idol than it is our own

- Students and cell phones

- But we all probably have things in our life that we worship!!

I am going to use a word that probably many of you don't like hearing

-Submission

Jesus is our savior, but He is also our Lord and our King

-When you serve a king, you have to submit to the mission!

-You submit your opinion

Culture teaches us to value our opinion

The Kingdom of God teaches us to submit our opinion

We have to submit to the mission - to what Scripture teaches!

-After Joshua is the book of judges

-When Joshua died and the elders of Joshua's generation died

-the people turned back to idols

-they turned away from God!

Joshua 24:23-25

²³“All right then,” Joshua said, “destroy the idols among you, and turn your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.”

²⁴The people said to Joshua, “We will serve the LORD our God. We will obey him alone.”

²⁵So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day at Shechem, committing them to follow the decrees and regulations of the LORD.

We must be willing to surrender our lives completely to Him!!!

Jesus offers Himself as our source of power and strength

-In our own power we try and fail

2 Corinthians 12:5

I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself. I will boast only about my weaknesses.

If we forsake the things of the world that distract and weaken

-Walk hand in hand with Jesus

-Victory is ours as we accomplish our divinely appointed task!

The story of Joshua is so well illustrated

- Whether you came from families that followed the Lord or you didn't

- We all come to this spot where we get to make a covenant with Jesus

- We get to say who we will serve!!

Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me. - Martin Luther

We need a savior!

We need to point people to Jesus as our savior!!

Not to a Pastor, a leader, or even a parent (they can help!)

-They need Jesus for themselves!

- I say this not because it isn't important to invest in your family

-Because you are not the savior!!

-You don't need to feel the pressure to be a savior because you will never be that!!

- You need Jesus for you, no one else!