

House Rules

The Final Hand – We Serve the Lord

Pastor Jeff Atherton



Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT)

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. But 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.

1. Serve God with your WHOLE HEART

Joshua 24:14 (NLT)

So *fear* the Lord and serve him *wholeheartedly*.

Proverbs 9:10 (NLT)

Fear of the Lord is the *foundation* of *wisdom*.

Colossians 3:23 (NLT)

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were *working for the*

Lord rather than for people.

HALFHEARTED faith leaves WHOLE families empty

2. Clear out the things that COMPETE with God

Joshua 24:14 (NLT)

Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped.

Exodus 20:3 (NLT)

You must not have any other god but me.

1 John 5:21 (NLT)

Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts.

IDOLS promise much but DELIVER nothing

3. Decide TODAY, Not SOMEDAY

Joshua 24:15 (NLT)

Choose today whom you will serve.

1 Kings 18:21 (NLT)

How much longer will you waver, hobbling between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him!

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NLT)

Indeed, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation.

Not choosing IS choosing — silence is a DECISION

4. Lead your home TOWARD God

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NLT)

Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.

Acts 16:31 (NLT)

Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household.

FAITH is CAUGHT more than it is TAUGHT

Seven Days of Serving the Lord

This week, let's make Joshua's words practical.

Not just words we hear but declarations we live.

Sunday: In this house, we follow Jesus first.

Monday: We choose God's way, not our own way.

Tuesday: We will love each other with kindness and respect.

Wednesday: We will be thankful for what we have and trust God for what we need.

Thursday: We will forgive quickly, let go of anger, and live with peace.

Friday: We will serve others, share what we have, and show God's love.

Saturday: We will shine God's light in our home, our school, and our world.

Talk About It:

Students

1. What things do students your age most often "serve"?
 2. How would your friends know if you were serving Jesus first?
 3. Which daily declaration stands out to you the most? Why?
 4. What would it look like for your whole family to live one of these declarations this week?
 5. If your friends could write your family motto, what would they say it is?
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Adults

1. Why does Joshua emphasize today when calling the people to choose?
 2. What idols are most tempting in your life or home?
 3. Which of the 7 daily declarations feels most natural for your family right now? Which feels hardest?
 4. How might reciting these as a family reshape your rhythms and conversations?
 5. What practical step can you take this week to "plant a flag" in your home?
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Going Deeper - Bible Study

Primary Texts: Joshua 24:14–15; Matthew 6:24; 1 Kings 18:20–21; Romans 12:1–2

Observation

- What repeated commands do you see in Joshua 24?
- What contrasts are drawn between serving God vs. idols?

Interpretation

- Why is wholehearted devotion so important in Joshua's challenge?
- How does Elijah's call in 1 Kings 18 echo Joshua's "choose today"?
- Why does Paul call believers to be "living sacrifices" in Romans 12?

Word Study

- Serve (abad): to work, worship, devote fully.
- Wholeheartedly: undivided, complete loyalty.

Connection to the Gospel

- Jesus said: No one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24).
- The cross plants God's flag — His claim on His people.
- Through Christ, families are not just "choosing" but being empowered by the Spirit to serve Him fully.

Application

- Which declaration do you most need this week?
 - How could you turn one of these statements into a family prayer or blessing?
 - Pray daily as a family: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
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REMEMBER:

The gospel is the GOOD NEWS of Jesus Christ... That he died on the cross for our sins and rose again on the 3rd day to defeat sin and death!**

Read - Think - Pray - write down your thoughts... then do something - GO BE THE CHURCH!

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