

Father's Day, 2021
"As for Me and My House"

Joshua was an incredible leader who was filled with passion, inspiration, and courage —courage to make right choices and courage to hold God's people accountable.

Fathers, you can learn much from Joshua's leadership.

In Joshua 24:1-13 is heavy with what God did for the Israelites.

Joshua is reminding the Israelites who God is and who they are. God is the one initiating, guiding, leading, and moving for them, for their sake.

Text: Joshua 24:14-28

Here is Joshua, old and well advanced in years, addressing Israel. Even though he is at the end of his life, he still has passion and zeal for the Lord. It is easy to lose that passion as we get older because of all the distractions that come our way. If that is or has happened to you—pray. Ask God to impassion your heart again, with passion to know Him and to make Him known.

And this is exactly what Joshua is asking the Israelites to do: Seek God!

Joshua reminds the Israelites that it was God who fought for them. God was moving,,, and they need to respond to His moving.

Joshua 24:14 - Joshua calls the Israelites to make the obvious choice. Based on all that the LORD has done for them. But Joshua knows people. He knows that this will not be the obvious choice for some.

Joshua 24:15 - He lays it out for the Israelites saying it's on them. It's time. It's up to them to choose. Who will they serve?

Will they serve the gods that their fathers served? Will it be the gods of the Amorites? Or will it be the living God who has cared for them and led them for all these generations?

This is an obvious answer. Of course, serve the LORD! Why would you not? Being the leader that he is, Joshua informs the nation of his intent, of his direction--of how he will answer the question as to who they will serve.

Joshua 24:15b - This is not a cute, quaint little statement that can be made flippantly with no regard to what our lives look like or the decisions we make. The beginning of this verse, Joshua 24:15a, shows the gravity of this statement

What Joshua is saying, "If you think serving this all-powerful, good and loving God who led you to be a nation, then delivered you from all your enemies, then clothed you and fed you, and gave you cities and food... is evil, then choose. What gods will you serve. Choose. Make a decision. Stand by it. Live by it."

Fathers, do you feel the weight of this statement? Do you feel the passion, the zeal, the no holds barred attitude of this statement? For Joshua, it is not evil to serve the Lord! Joshua is putting his foot down; he is calling the people to task.

Fathers, what would you do, if Joshua were standing before you today giving this challenge? Would you, like the Israelites, be quick to give lip service?

But following God is not as easy as an emotional moment that causes you to speak shallow, ungrounded words. *No, you need to count the cost.* Luke 14:28-30.

Joshua and Jesus are saying, “Look beyond your simple emotional response and look at what you are being asked to do. Look at your heart! Do you want this?”

Joshua 24:19-20 - He is calling their bluff. He knows that they have not counted the cost. He knows their heart is not right with God. God is holy, and He will not tolerate a flippant attitude. He is patient, but His patience has its limits. Following God looks radically different from simply giving him one hour a week on Sundays.

God is a holy God. He is completely set apart. He is a jealous God. He wants/demands your complete devotion. Why? Why does he demand your complete devotion? It's the entire reason why you were even created. Isaiah 43:6-7; Isaiah 48:9-11

Then the people quickly answer again that they will serve the LORD. So Joshua basically says, “Ok. You are witnesses against yourselves for choosing to follow God. This is your choice. This is what you want. It's what I want, but I sure hope you are not taking this lightly.”

Joshua 24:23 - “Then some things have to change. You've got to put away the foreign gods. You've got to stop trusting in things other than the LORD.” They cannot be reluctant about this. Putting away idols, putting away false gods makes sense...but doing it is another thing all together. Again the Israelites say they will do it, and so Joshua made a covenant with the people that day.

Christian fathers. Fathers who are disciples of Christ. Are you following Christ, or are you giving Him lip service? Does He need to call your bluff?

Are you and your family serving Christ? Or have other gods captured your heart, and in turn your children's heart?

If you are serious about serving Christ—if you are serious about pleasing God, then put away your idols. And fathers, if God's people are paying lip service to God and His Christ, hold them accountable. Examine your heart. You're the leader. Be courageous and do the right thing.