

Joshua 23 & 24

Chapter and Verse Summary

The question this morning is... Who do you serve?

Joshua 23

v1. Joshua was Old and advanced in years.

v2. He told all Israel.

v3. He reminded them that all that had been done was accomplished by the Lord.

v4.&5. . If any enemy remains then the Lord will drive them out so you can take possession of the land.

V6. Be Strong! Be careful to obey all that is written in the Law.

v7. DO NOT associate with your enemies! Do Not invoke the names of their Gods.

v8. Hold fast to the Lord.

v9. Remember that the Lord has driven out great and powerful nations and no one has been able to stand against you.

v10. One of you routs a thousand with the Lord on your side.

v11. So be very careful. to Love the Lord.

v12 & 13. If you associate and intermarry with these nations then you can be sure that the Lord will not drive out these other nations.

v14. Joshua says that he will soon die. (the way of the earth) and the Lord has fulfilled ALL his good promises.

v15 &16. But just the same, if you violate the Lord's covenant, then you will quickly perish from the good land he has given you.

Joshua 24

v1. Joshua assembled all of Israel at Shechem.

v2 & 3. He recites what the Lord did through their forefathers long ago and then more recently with them. He began with Abraham Isaac and Jacob and Esau. How he led them.

V4. How they were eventually brought to Egypt and were finally held in bondage by the Egyptians.

V7. They cried to the Lord. And He parted the sea and covered the Egyptians with the water. They lived in the desert for a long time.

V8. He then led them to the land on the East of Jordan.

v9- 13. The Lord then reminded them of their opponents and He moved and gave them the land.

This history lesson was for a reason... It was to make a decision. Take notice at vs. 14 & 15 of Chapter 24. Joshua near the end of his life, challenges the Israelites... to Make a decision about who they will serve.

V. 14 & 15. He says Choose for yourself who you will serve... Whether it is the Lord or the god of the Amorites.

BUT as for me and my household. ... we will serve the Lord.

vs. 16 Far be it from us... to forsake the Lord.

vs. 17 - 18. BC it was the Lord who brought us and our fathers this far... he protected us... by driving all the nations out

vs 19 - 20. Joshua almost tries to sway them against serving the Lord.

vs. 21. The People say NO we will serve the Lord.

vs 22 - 28 Joshua establishes a covenant with the people at Shechem. He drew up a decree and recorded these in the book of the Law. Joshua placed a large stone as a memorial. Then Joshua sent everyone home.

We have come to the end of the book of Joshua and the end of the life of Joshua as well .

vs. 29. Joshua 110 years old died. they buried him in Ephriam.

They brought Joseph's bones and buried him at Shechem. Eleazar the priest the son of Aaron died and was buried at Gibeah.

If there is a simple and yet practical message that we might want to remember here as Christians... it is:

1. That the end of our life is summarized... by the very commitments we keep... and our commitments reveal who it is that we serve.

Joshua asked the question this way in 24:15... if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then *Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...*

The wisest man who ever lived (Solomon) said that when He looked at life he realized something...

Ecclesiastes 2:16 ¹⁶ For the wise man, like the fool, will not be long remembered; in days to come both will be forgotten. Like the fool, the wise man too must die!

Solomon when he looked at life from a secular position he said the wise man as well as the fool must also die. He said that

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: ² a time to be born and a time to die,

Death is something that cannot be avoided... It will come in it's time.

A crass look at life reveals that at face value there is no difference in life...for everyone will die.

So, The question for the Christian becomes... who do you serve?

In other words...Who do you live for?

- Do you live for yourself primarily? Is your happiness, your joy, your wealth, your well being the most important ... element of your life? Does life center and rotate around you?
- OR Do you live for your spouse , your children or others primarily? Are your decisions of life shaped by what your children want or what your spouse is interested in? Are they the number 1 of your life? Have you lived for others for so long that you don't even remember what it is that you enjoy?
- OR perhaps you live for material things? Is that the most important piece of your life? To get more stuff. Whether it be money or toys such as boats and 4 wheelers and vacation homes or sports.

Now I'm not saying that these things are all wrong to enjoy. But if they are your number 1 ... there in the wrong spot.

The Psalmist said in

Psalms 37:1-6 Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; ² for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. ³ Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. ⁴ Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: ⁶ He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

The Psalmist said :

1. do not fret or become disgusted because of evil man.
2. And do not be envious of those who do no wrong.
Because they all will wither.

Rather focus upon the Lord and trust in Him. Do Good and Learn to delight in Him... to enjoy Him and commit your way to Him and He will work to make you shine like the dawn...the justice of your cause will shine so others will see. Pause

Jesus said that if you wish to separate your self from all of mankind that might be distinguished by the fact that they all died... then experience Me, live forever and never die. He said...

John 6:49-51 ⁴⁹ Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. ⁵⁰ But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.

Paul reminded us that

Romans 8:1-2 there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Paul said that although there is the natural law of death that has been set in motion by the involvement of Sin... there is a stronger law... that of the Spirit that brings Life because of what Christ has done. This law of the Spirit of life has set us free from the law of death and sin.

Paul told Timothy this truth this way....

2 Timothy 1:9,10 This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

There is life in Christ... life that is not held by death, life that is realized when one knows Christ as their Savior and lives FOR HIM. Lives to Serve Him.

You say well I'm not spiritual enough I still struggle with Sin. Yea well So does everyone else.

God wants willingness, those who choose to follow him, not those who think they have arrived spiritually anyhow.

You say I don't know if I know enough of the bible to be useful for Him.

God Wants Willingness, Not Intelligence.

God is more concerned with our "I will" than our IQ.

The question is Who will you serve in Life?

There was once a married couple who didn't love each other. The day they got married, the husband handed his wife a list of chores for her to follow. He insisted that she do all the tasks on her list every day. The wife worked hard to accomplish her assigned duties, but she was miserable as she performed them. Ironing his clothes, preparing his meals, cleaning house—every task was burdensome. Although she obeyed all his rules, she never enjoyed a loving relationship with her husband.

Then one day her husband died. After several years had passed, she fell in love with another man and got married. The new husband never required her to do anything, much less a list of jobs. Instead, he showered her with love and did everything he could to make her happy.

One day this wife was joyfully cleaning house when she discovered her first husband's list of commands tucked away in a drawer. As she read the paper, it dawned on her that she was performing every task on the list, but now she was serving with joy instead of misery. Her love for her second husband inspired her to automatically do the same jobs that her first husband had required. She had served her first husband out of duty, but her second husband out of love.

God wants us to serve Him out of jubilation, not obligation. Legalism adds weights to our work, but love gives wings to our service.

There is no greater motivation to serve God with gladness – until you know the love of God. When you know his ways how can you not follow.

This morning will you make a decision to serve and Follow Him?

Choose this day whom you will serve.... Lets Pray