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THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

The Book of Joshua is called “The Book of Victorious Living.” It is the Old Testament equivalent to the New Testament Book of Ephesians, which is also called “The Book of Victorious Christian Living.” The Book of Joshua teaches us how to live a victorious life here on Earth. There is no better book to study to help a person live a life of victory.

LESSON #1
THE FOUNDATION TO UNDERSTAND THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

There are seven things which Joshua understood about the crossing of Jordan and the Promised Land. If these are not understood, and kept in mind as we study, you will end up confused. These seven things all apply to the promise God made to the believer to enter the “Rest of God,” which is the "Promised Land" of the New Testament.

The Crossing of Jordan

First: The crossing of Jordan does not picture physical death. If it were a picture of physical death, then the Promised Land would be a picture of Heaven. IT IS NOT A PICTURE OF HEAVEN. When they crossed the Jordan River there was a "war to be fought” in order for them to possess the Promised Land. Canaan had seven fortified cities who were the enemies of Israel, God's people. If you do not understand this truth you will miss the entire meaning of the Book of Joshua. Crossing Jordan is a picture of a child of God dying to the **"self-life"** and living the "Christ-life." It is you and me trusting God, by faith, in all things. The crossing of Jordan pictures the New Testament believer entering into “The Peace and Rest of God.” The New Testament picture is "revealed" in Galatians 2:20. Paul said, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

The Promised Land
Genesis 17:6-14

"And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh

of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

As I said above, the Promised Land does not picture Heaven. There are "No Wars in Heaven." The Promised Land is a section of land that God made in a "Covenant" with Abraham to give to him and the people of Israel. It was a land "flowing with milk and honey." It was a place where Israel, in the Old Testament times, could enjoy all the blessings of God and His perfect peace.

The New Testament picture is revealed in two scriptures. The Promised Land of the Old is a picture of "Heavenly Places" in Ephesians 2:6, *"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. Hebrews 4:9 says, *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."* Israel entering the Promised Land, pictures us in the New Testament entering the Rest of God. In John 14:27 Jesus states, *"My peace I give... not as the world..."* To enter into "Heavenly Places" means we have placed our life in His hands. The result of us entering "The Rest of God," is that we will have no worries, no anxiety, and no fretting. It means we have "perfect peace" because of our trust in God. When we truly place our lives in His hands, then we will fully believe that *"all things work together for good*," because when we enter The New Testament Promised Land, the Rest of God, we believe Ephesians 3:20 which says, *"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,"*

The Promised Land And The Crossing of Jordan Applies Only To God's People!

Neither the "Promised Land" nor the Crossing of Jordan picture "salvation" in any manner. This study of the Book of Joshua has nothing to do with lost people. There were no lost people in the midst of Israel when they crossed the Jordan River and entered the Promise Land. Everything in this study applies to "God's People" and to God's people ONLY. The Crossing of Jordan can be traced to God's deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt. The Blood had been applied when they left Egypt. That is recorded in Exodus 12:7, *"And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it."* Exodus 12:13-14 further declares the truth, *"For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.*

The Covenant God Made Was With Abraham, Giving Him the Promised Land.

The Land God gave to Abraham and made a covenant with him, is found in Numbers 34:1-2, *"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan; (this is the land that shall fall unto you for an inheritance, even the land of Canaan with the coasts thereof:)* This is further explained in Ezekiel 47:13-20. **The Covenant God Made With Abraham Was For His People.**

The covenant was between God and Abraham, and it extended to the seed of Abraham and to his generations which would follow him. Genesis 17:9 records the Covenant God made with Abraham, *"And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations."* Also, the covenant God made with Abraham was an "everlasting covenant." That is recorded in Genesis 17:13 and 19, *"13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an <u>everlasting covenant</u> .*

The Conditions of the Covenant

God made a covenant to give Israel the Promised Land, but He also gave Israel some conditions that they must follow. God told Israel they would have to circumcise every male child eight years old and up. That condition is recorded in Genesis 17:11-12. God warned Israel that if they failed to circumcise their children, it would break the covenant. That condition is recorded in Genesis 17:14. God has also given us a condition for entering the New Testament Rest of God. That condition is found in Romans 12:1-2, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*

The Covenant Was Kept by Israel Until They "Lost Faith" at Kadesh-Barnea. Deuteronomy 1:19

Because Israel "did not keep" their part of the covenant, God "breached" His promise in Numbers 14:33-35. God was "relieved" of his Promise. As recorded in Joshua 5:2-55, Israel went for 38 - 40 years without circumcising anyone in the entire nation. All of this came about because of Israel's unbelief. That is recorded in Deuteronomy 1:32.

LESSON #2
FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF
THE PROMISED LAND AND THE REST OF GOD FOR YOUR ASKING.

I want to remind everyone again, that the study of the Promised Land and the Rest of God is for "the people of God." Nothing we study in the Book of Joshua will apply to lost people.

The First Characteristic is God's Plan and Purpose for His Children.

<u>The Promised Land is what God Planned for His people Israel</u>. While Israel was in bondage in the country of Egypt, God heard the cry and felt the affiliation of His people and pledged to deliver His people from their bondage. That is recorded in Exodus 3:7-8, *"And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a*

large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Back in Genesis 17:8, God had already committed to give Abraham and His people a portion of land where He would meet with them and bless them. *"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.* Let me make a point of this before moving on. This is what we call "The Law of Replacement." By that I mean, God never takes one of His children out of one situation where they may be going through a trial, **without already having a "place of replacement" where He plans to care for them, strengthen, and bless them.** He had that for Israel. That same "law of replacement" applies to you and me! When God takes you "out of something" HE HAS A PLAN TO REPLACE IT WITH SOMETHING BETTER! We saw that in Abraham's life in Genesis 13:14-15, after Abraham had given Lot a choice of the land. *"And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."* This is also true with a New Testament Christian as we look toward the Rest of God.

The Rest of God which God Purposes for Every Christian Today. Every person who has trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior has been delivered from the penalty of sin. They are secure in Christ and are on their way to heaven. However, that does not mean they have entered the "Rest of God." After salvation, Hebrews 4:9 tells us, *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."* Sad to say, there are many people today who are saved but are "wandering in the wilderness of the world instead of entering God's Rest! Ephesians 1:3 tells of God's purpose for His people, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"* A saved person needs to "replace" their walking in the wilderness" with being "in heavenly places." You need to stop and realize that is God's plan for you and His heart's desire for you. He WANTS you to enter into His rest. Philippians 4:5-7 briefly explains God's plan and desire for you and for all His children, *"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* To put in briefly, God does not want His children to "have a worry in the world." In Ephesians 4:14, God said this is what I want for my children, *"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"*

Before moving to the next characteristic, let's ask ourselves a few questions. (1) Have you understood and accepted the privileges of being a child of God? (2) Are you still wondering in the wilderness and worrying about things in your life every day? (3) Have you, or have you not entered the "Promised Land" which God has prepared for you? (4) Have you grown to the point, that by God's promises as your Father, to tread on the enemies that try to worry you and make you fret every day? (5) Are you putting your faith in the "everlasting arms of almighty God?" (6) Are you far enough along in your life as a child of God, that you can dwell safely between your Father's shoulders. Deuteronomy 33:12 says, *"And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between*

his shoulders." If you are not trusting your heavenly Father, do you realize that you are frustrating the purpose God has for you?

I want to share two very important verses with you, with the hope that you will memorize them and make them the goal for your life. The first verse is Philippians 3:12, *"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."*

The second verse is Galatians 2:20. I encourage you to follow the pattern that the apostle Paul gave us, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

The Second Characteristic Is that the Promised Land Is Impossible to Reach by the Law.

The Law of God is good, and it has NO defects. Romans 7:12, *"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."* The same is true concerning the "Rest of God." The law can never bring Peace and Rest with God, as no one can keep the law. In Romans 7:22-2 the apostle Paul gave testimony that he could not keep the law, *"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."* The law of God is an "outward schoolmaster to guide us to salvation." Galatians 3:24-26 briefly explains that principle, *"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."* Salvation is a free gift. Just as salvation is a free gift, the peace and rest of God is a free gift. In John 14:27 Jesus tells us that He will GIVE us peace, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*

Philippians 4:7 tells us what the peace of God will do for us, *"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

The Third Characteristic is That We Need a Leader to Lead us Into the Promised Land.

God gave Israel a man named Joshua to lead the nation into the Promised Land. Joshua 1:1-2 says, *"Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel."*

I find two verses that are very important when God told Joshua to lead the people across Jordan and into the Promised Land. In Joshua 1:5, God made Joshua a promise, *"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with*

thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Now let's turn to Joshua 6:2 and read how God kept His promise, *"And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour"*

Joshua is a perfect picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians 2:9-10 tells us of Christ's promise to us, *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"* I Timothy 6:17 tells us that God wants not only to make us complete, but He wants us to enjoy our life on earth. That is God's desire for you and me for our daily life. *"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;*

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is OUR LEADER, and He will lead us to the same victory He gave Joshua and Israel. He will "lead" us to the truth found in this verse. Philippians 4:7, "*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* Question: Do you want "*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding*? Our leader, the Lord Jesus Christ, will give it to you if you follow his plan and put your faith in Him and His Word!

The Fourth Characteristic is the Decision of Whether or Not to Enter the Promised Land is Ours.

As we have seen briefly, Joshua was used of God to lead Israel into the land which God had promised them. However, we also know that Israel, after being led out of Egypt, *"Wandered in the wilderness*" for forty years because of their unbelief and because of their disobedience. Before we apply this to us as New Testament believers, let's consider what Israel had seen and knew about their God. Following is a list of things Israel had seen and knew, not just knew and heard, but SEEN! I will not elaborate on these now, but we will apply them later.

1. They saw God's power to deliver them out of bondage in Egypt.
2. They saw the Red Sea open, and they crossed on dry land.
3. They saw Pharaoh and his army drowned.
4. They saw "water" come from a dry rock in the desert.
5. They saw "manna" come down from Heaven.
6. They saw "a fire" lead them by night.
7. They saw "a cloud" lead them during the day.

Yet when they arrived at Kadesh Barnea, they looked over and SAW the Promised Land and they refused to obey God and cross over into it because the spies went in and returned and told them there were giants in the land! They expressed their feelings in Deuteronomy 14:2, *"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!"*

They got their wish. They "wandered in the wilderness for forty years and died in the wilderness!" Not one of them that came out of Egypt, arrived at Kadesh Barnea but went back, ever entered the Promised Land! The Promised Land was "in view" but they did not enter!

The same is true of many, many Christians today. The state of the church today must be a sorrow to the Heart of our Leader! Christians today have chosen to "wander in the world" instead of entering "The Rest of God" and enjoy all things God has planned for them. They do this despite knowing many things about God and about the Word of God.

Christians know the following, and yet they continue to refuse to enter into the Rest of God and to obey and trust God's Word:

1. Christians know the suffering of Christ, and the blood He shed FOR US on the Cross.
2. Christians know God promised Salvation. Romans 10:13
3. Christians know God's Peace. Philippians 4:6-7
4. Christians know God promised Peace from God. Galatians 1:3
5. Christians know God promised Peace with God. Romans 5:1
6. Christians know God promised Comfort. Psalms 23
7. Christians know God promised Forgiveness. I John 1:9
8. Christians know God promised Heaven. John 14:1-3
9. Christians know God promised Eternal Life. John 3:16
10. Christians know God promised Joy. Hebrews 13:5-6
11. Christians know God promised Provision. Philippians 4:19
12. Christians know God promised Guidance. Proverbs 3:5-6
13. Christians know God promised Victory. I John 5:4-5

In spite of KNOWING all these things, few seem to be interested in trusting God by faith and "entering into His Rest." They seem like they prefer enjoying the things of the world. In my opinion, we need more Joshuas in the church today and less worldly things. Please do not forget that entering into "The Rest of God" is God's plan for His people. It seems today that we are more comparable to Israel and the Promised Land.

The Fifth Characteristic is that Today we Have a Multitude of Adversaries who Oppose Us.

The Promised Land was occupied by at least seven heathen nations made up of Canaanites! Those nations hated God's people, Israel, and were determined to stop them from entering the Promised Land in any way they could.

Today, churches and Christian's face opposition and conflict from every side. The battle is on! However, if we from our hearts and with God's help, Romans 3:37 tells us what the outcome will be, *"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*

I am claiming Hebrews 4:1, *"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."* I encourage everyone reading this book to join me!

Now we will move from the introductions and the characteristics of the Promise Land to Chapter One of Joshua and study the plan God gave him to enter the Rest of God!

LESSON #3
THE MAN GOD USES
Joshua 1:7-9

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. 9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

The Introduction to Joshua

The admonition God made to Joshua in these opening verses are very important to you and me today. The admonishment God made to Joshua, "*be strong and of good courage"* is made six times. Moses made that admonition in Deuteronomy 31:6, 7 and 23. God reiterated those same words in Joshua 1:6, 9, and 18. The word "strong" in these verses does not mean "physically strong." Gideon was greatly used of God, yet in Judges 6:15 this is what it tells us about Gideon, *"And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."* The same is said about Paul, one of the men most used of God throughout the New Testament. II Corinthians 10:10 says of Paul, *"For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible*." **Aren't you glad that Paul did not say, "Sorry, I can't do that. I am too weak!"**

This teaches us that before God can use a man, the man must know and accept the fact that without God he can do NOTHING! We must all remember the words where Jesus in John 15:5 said, *" I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

Joshua never dreamed that one day he would be in a place of great and unbelievable leadership. He had been Moses' servant for many years. Also, Moses did not see Joshua as the man who would one day take his place as the leader of Israel. As Moses approached the day when he must turn the leadership of Israel over to someone, He went to God and ask who he should appoint. Numbers 27:15-18 recorded this, *"And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, 16 Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, 17 Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd. 18 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; 19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight."*

When God told Joshua to "be strong" it was because God knew that Joshua felt he was far too weak to take on such a great responsibility. When God said, “be of good courage” it was because God knew that Joshua was frightened by the thought of leading Israel in the place of Moses. When God said, "be not dismayed" it was because God knew Joshua felt sure he was going to fail when he was put in the place of leadership!

II Corinthians 1:27-31 tells us the type of man God chose to use in a great way, *"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the **foolish things of the world** to confound the wise; and God hath chosen **the weak things of the world** to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And **base things of the world,** and **things which are despised,** hath God chosen, yea, and **things which are not,** to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."*

Today, in 2025, one of the reasons so many churches are suffering and having no movement is because they are like the church at Sardis, which **had a NAME that they are alive, but are dead**. I know very few, if any, young pastors that think of themselves today as (1) A foolish thing, (2) A weak thing, (3) A base thing, (4) A thing that is despised, or (5) A thing which is not. Many young pastors today think they are "strong enough to do anything." They do not realize that "without God" they can do nothing. They study, they prepare, they preach, they lead in prayer, but when they teach or preach, it is more like they are "teaching from a math book" instead of preaching FROM THEIR HEART. They are sound in doctrine, fundamental in their message, but very seldom have ANY results. They are proud of themselves and do not really feel they need help. The Holy Spirit is QUENCHED! Seldom does anyone go to the altar, kneel and pray with a broken heart and tears in their eyes. The church is dead! Therefore, neither the pastor or the church he pastors have the blessing and power of God on their ministry. Isaiah 40:29 says, *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength*.” In I Corinthians 1:28, God said that he uses “*things which ARE NOT, to bring to naught things that are:”*.

If Gideon had felt he was GREAT in his father's house, you and I would never have heard his name in the Scriptures. If Paul had felt he was STRONG, he would never have preached in Jerusalem. He would never have been used by God to plant at least 10 churches, and possibly more, and would never have been chosen of God to write 13 books of the New Testament!

The Source of Joshua's Strength

First: Joshua's Spiritual Strength came from being faithful of little things. Joshua was a servant to Moses for about 40 years. He had been with Moses all during the 40 years that Moses led Israel through the wilderness. As you know, Moses made hundreds of decisions during that time. From reading and studying Moses and the 40-year journey, Joshua had served under him, had taken orders from him, and no doubt learned a great deal over those 40 years. I think there is very little doubt that Joshua knew Moses while Israel was still in captivity in Egypt! There is a key principle in this. **One MUST learn to "take orders" before they can "give orders.**" The

loyalty of a servant to his leader is a MUST before the servant can become a leader. Jesus told us of this principle in Matthew 25:23, *"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, **I will make thee ruler over many things**: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."* There is nothing recorded in the Bible about Joshua ever questioning Moses' leadership. As far as we know, Joshua obeyed Moses in everything he was told to do. Please keep in mind, they had no "written Word of God" in those days.

Joshua proved himself to Moses, again and again. Exodus 19:9-11 gives us one such account. **As a servant to God, he obeyed Moses.** *"And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. 10 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed."*

More important than that, Joshua trusted in God and believed the Lord would do that which He had promised. The nation of Israel did not believe God would give them the land. Therefore, Moses had sent spies into the Promised Land. Let's go to Numbers 14:6-10 and see that truth, *"And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: 7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. 8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. 9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. 10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel."*

None of us can tell what God is preparing us for when we go through storms like Joshua went through. We can be sure of this, when God allows us to grow in strength through trials and tribulations, when we are fully prepared and strengthened, GOD WILL SEND FOR us just as He sent for Joshua to lead His people, Israel, across Jordan and into the Promised Land. Joshua went through a number of trials, but when God knew Joshua was strengthened and ready, He used him to lead Israel to the Promised Land.

Second: Joshua's Spiritual Strength came because he knew that he had been called of God. Joshua 1:1-2 verifies that Joshua was "called of God to lead the people of Israel to the Promised Land, *"Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel."*

When you KNOW that you have been called of God, you also KNOW that you cannot fail. Being used of God does not depend on you and your abilities. It depends on God and His abilities which are unlimited. To serve and to be greatly used of God, you only need two abilities, (1) Availability and (2) Dependability. If you are called of God and have those two abilities, you WILL be greatly used of God. No doubt about it! God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above what you can ask or think. (See Ephesians 3:20).

God made Joshua seven promises when He called him to lead the people to the Promised Land. I remind you that the number "seven" in the Bible means "perfection and completion." God said to Joshua:

1. *"I will give you the Land"* (Verse 2).
2. *"There shall not any man stand before you all the days of your life"* (Verse 5).
3. *"As I was with Moses, so will I be with you"* (Verse 5).
4. *"I will not fail you"* (Verse 5).
5. *"I will not forsake you"* (Verse 5).
6. *"The Lord thy God is with thee wheresoever thou goest"* (Verse 9).
7. *"Thou shall have good success"* (Verse 8).

When God has called you, and you know God has called you, your next step is to MOVE FORWARD! As you "move forward," the rivers will dry when you get to them, and the walls of Jericho will fall flat! The armies of the enemy will flee before you because: "There is NOTHING impossible with God." And God said in Isaiah 54:17, *"No weapon formed against you shall prosper," ...now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people...*

Third: Joshua's Spiritual Strength came by Realizing the Presence of God was with him. In Joshua 1:5, God personally said to Joshua, *"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."* Joshua remembered the battles Moses faced and saw that God did not fail or forsake Moses. Joshua also remembered that God promised, *"As I was with Moses, so will I be with you.*"

When God calls you, move forward and encourage yourself by remembering what God did for Moses and what God did for Joshua, and God will do those same things for you. Encourage yourself by remembering that "the fire is hot," but God is with you. Remember that the river is deep, but God is with you. Remember that the enemies are many, but God is with you. Remember that God told you, "*Fear not, I am with you*…" (Isaiah 41:10).

Fourth: Joshua's Spiritual Strength came from Meditating in the Word of God Day and Night. Joshua 1:8 says, *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*

God told Joshua to "meditate" on the things He had just told him. In Joshua 1:9 God said, *"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."*

When God said, *"be not afraid"*, that tells us that God knew Joshua was afraid and continued to think of himself as a man who could not be a leader in such an unbelievable task. He continued to consider himself as "a servant and not a leader." You and I can understand that. Put

yourself in Joshua's place. Joshua was facing something you and I have never faced. He was facing

seven of the most powerful nations on earth, all in "The Promised Land" which was the land of Canaan. Those nations were the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, and the Perizzites. Each of these were modern nations with powerful armies, yet God instructed Joshua "*be not afraid*" of them, which implies that "Joshua was afraid."

Therefore, God said, *"The book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shall meditate in day and night.*" God wanted Joshua to have "Peace in his Heart" that victory was sure. Today, the same power of God should give us "peace in our hearts that the victory" is ours and is given to us through Jesus Christ. In Matthew 28:18 and 19 Christ proclaimed, "**All** power is **given** unto you and me, when we "*go ye therefore…"* That means that the power of Christ is available to us to "move forward" and serve Him in whatever He has called us to do, and it does not matter what that may be!

God's word is powerful. Jeremiah 23:29 says, *"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?* Then Hebrews 4:12 adds to that, *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* That power is given to us by Christ and the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, guides us, and shows us how to use that power by "meditating on His Word" day and night. Amen!

To "meditate" day and night, means that we should read God's Word every day, study it and ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten and empower us with it. When reading, remember that in Joshua 1:7 God told Joshua, *"do not turn to the left or the right"*. I am sure you know this, but that means DO NOT DEVIATE IN ANY WAY FROM THE WORD OF GOD! Do everything you do GOD'S WAY. If you and I will do that, we can claim the same promise which God gave the apostle Paul in Philippians 4:13, where Paul said, *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* If God did it for Paul, God can do it for you and for me! Trust Him!

If ever any man was so busy that he could humanly think he did not have time to "meditate" in the Word of God, it was Joshua. He was preparing to lead about two and a half million Israelites across the Jordon River, destroy Jericho, and have war with six powerful nations. In spite of "having his plate full and running over," Joshua MADE time to read the book of the law, and to meditate on it day and night! If Joshua can do it, you can do it. IF you want God's power, meditate day and night!

If you do not have victory through Christ Jesus, I can tell you why. It is because you are neglecting reading, meditating, and obeying the Word of God. Anyone who does not "MAKE time for God" will never have victory and rest in their life. God MUST have the preeminence in your life, or you will never find victory. It is there for you to receive. God wants you to have it. Believe it! Claim it! Move forward!

LESSON #4
THREE REASONS FOR A THREE-DAY PAUSE
Joshua 1:11

"Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; <u>for within three days</u> ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it."

God had given Israel the land, which we call the "Promised Land. They were "moving forward" in obedience to God's command. Suddenly, God told them to "stop" for three days. As the lesson title states, there are three reasons God told them to wait for three days.

First: <u>Because God is the God of a Second Chance.</u> There were two and one-half tribes of Israel that needed a second chance. When Israel came to the border of the Promised Land, they did not want to cross over, and they talked Moses into allowing them to stay on the east side of the river. Joshua was upset with them, but he could not disobey or change what Moses had promised. Let's go back to Numbers 32:6-8 and read that account. *"And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here? 7 And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them? 8 Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadeshbarnea to see the land.* As I shared earlier, Moses was upset with those tribes but reading down to Verses 10 and 13 we find that the Lord was not only upset with them, but He was angry with them.

"<u>And the LORD'S anger was kindled the same time</u>, and he sware, saying, 11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me: 12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD. 13 And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consume."

In Joshua 1:12-15 we see Joshua, under the leadership of God, giving those two and one-half tribes a "second chance," *"And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, 13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them; 15 Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising."*

God wanted to give those tribes a second chance. Therefore, God paused the armies from moving forward for three days. It is unbelievable that in spite of all those tribes had seen, those tribes rejected Joshua's offer of a 'second chance.' Those tribes had not only seen the Promised Land, but they had gone into the Promised Land to help fight the war. They had SEEN the almighty hand of God destroy the seven powerful nations of Canaanites which occupied the land. Despite seeing and knowing these things, **they chose** to "go back across the river and live in the world."

This is a picture of Christians today, in 2025, who come to church but choose to "live in the world, and live like the world." Also, they look like the world. They dress like the world. They talk about the things of the world. They go to worldly places. Some of them openly violate the Scriptures in the things listed above. However, Numbers 32:23 says, "*But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."* Those two and one-half tribes were later taken into captivity by the Assyrian empire, and they never returned! (I Chronicles 5:25-26)

Second: Because There was ONE soul in Jericho Who Had Faith to be Saved. I am sure most of you reading this commentary know the story about a harlot named Rahab who lived in Jericho and had little faith. God knew she had "little faith" and wanted her to have more faith. Psalms 36:9 tells us that any time God knows a person has been enlightened, He will send them more light, *"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.*" Because of God's love and Him giving the three days pause, Rahab the harlot was saved. Let us ask ourselves a question. Was it worth it to hold back all of Israel from entering the Promised Land for three days for her to be saved? Her history is recorded in Joshua 2:6-11. She hid the spies who came in from Israel to spy out the land. Because Rahab had "little faith" God gave her time to have more light and be saved before He destroyed Jericho. Below is Rahab's history of dealing with the two spies:

"But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. 7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. 8 And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; 9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

Rahab, the harlot proved her faith by her works. (See James 2:18.) She protected the spies from all harm, helped them escape, and identified with the God of Israel by putting "a scarlet thread" in her window to identify her when Israel crossed the river and destroyed Jericho and all the inhabitants except Rahab and her entire family. Joshua 6:25 tells us her faith was real, as she joined Israel and entered the Promised Land with them, *"And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."*

How did Rahab, the Harlot, know that the two spies were Israelites? There is nothing in the verses that told her they were Israelites and God's people, but she knew it. I cannot explain it, but I am sure of this, THEY WERE DIFFERENT! I Peter 2:9 tells us that Christians are different, *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"*

Let me ask you another question before moving on. Are you different from the world? Do people see and talk with you and then say, "You are different!" If you "*shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness"* you should be different.

In case you are wondering if she was really saved, she is mentioned by name in Hebrews 11:31, which is The Hall of Faith, *"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."* In II Peter 3:9, God said, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."*

Question: What is one soul worth to you? II Peter 3:9 says, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* Was it worth it? God delayed the entrance to the Promised Land for the sake of one soul being saved, and that was an ungodly, immoral, harlot? One soul should be worth that much to you and me. We should never miss an opportunity to share the saving gospel of Jesus Christ at EVERY OPPORTUNITY! It's worth it!

Third: The People Needed to Be Strengthened in Their Faith. The people needed to learn to reach the "end of themselves" and put their total trust in God in order to cross an impossible river called Jordan. Joshua 3:15 tells us a little about that river, *"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)"*

Their faith seems to have been strengthened by the testimony of the spies who crossed the river and returned to Joshua. That is found in Joshua 2:23-24, *"So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them: 24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."* They saw that God was on their side! God is still on your side if you will put your trust in Him, be strengthened and move forward.

A pattern of faith is found in the life of Abraham in Romans 4:19-25, *"And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief;* but was strong in faith, giving glory to God*; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for*

us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

Abraham waited between 20 to 21 years before he saw the promise of God fulfilled. You read in the verses above that he staggered not at the promise of God, even though he had NEVER seen anything like that done before. Verse 21 says of Abraham, *"…being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."*

Now, how does this apply to you, me, and every believer? Verses 23 and 24 above tells us how the pattern of Abraham, walking by faith and trusting the promises of God, applies to us. God said *"…it was not written for his sake alone…**but for us also…**"*

Question: Are you daily working to be Spiritually Strengthened by the Word of God? If not, you should be. Isaish 40:31 says, *"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."*

LESSON #5
THE CROSSING OF JORDAN
Joshua 3:1-10

Let's begin by looking at WHY God promised to drive out and utterly destroy the seven Canaanite nations who occupied the Promised Land. God foretold the sinfulness and the iniquity of Amorites to Abraham in Genesis 15:16, *"But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."* Now move forward four generations to the time of Joshua and we find that the iniquities of the Amorites, which is a picture of the Canaanites, was full and over-flowing. Their iniquities came full, and it was God's timing to destroy them. According to Leviticus 18:12-15, the Canaanites lived a very abominable, immoral lifestyle. Also, Deuteronomy 18 reveals that they had the spirit of satanic spiritualism. Please do not forget that Psalms 7:11 tells us that *"God is angry with the wicked everyday."*

The Crossing of Jordan into the Promised Land does not picture a believer dying physically. It pictures believers "dying to their self-will" and following God to victory in the Promised Land. It also pictures us trusting God with our life and our future. It is clearly expressed in Proverbs 3:5-6. *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."* We are to "stop trying - and start trusting" by exercising full faith in the promises of God. Let's look at how Israel, guided by God, safely crossed the river into the Promised Land.

First: The Unfailing Guidance God Gave Israel To Cross the Jordan River. Joshua gave Israel God's instructions for crossing the Jordan River safely. Joshua 3:3 says, *"And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and **go after it.**"* The "Ark of the Covenant" always pictures "God dwelling with His people." God gave us this illustration to teach us that God, as He guided Israel across the river, He will also guide us “through raging rivers of water” which we face all the days of our lives. Notice that Joshua did not tell the people, "Let's

all meet together and pray over this. This River is raging, is out of its banks, and is over a mile wide. Also, it has stumps and trees rushing down toward us. We need to pray and see if we can come up with a plan to somehow cross over the river." That is what a lot of Christians do today. IF GOD SAID DO IT, we do not need to pray about it and try to make a plan. We need to keep our eyes on the Lord and MOVE FORWARD as He commanded. God, through Joshua, commanded the people that when THEY SAW the Ark of the Covenant move, they were told to *"go after it."* To do that, they had to exercise faith in the promise of God. As you know, they had never walked into a flooding river before! If we are going to have God's guidance, we must do the same and walk by faith, and trust in the promises of God. We are not to "look forward to the destination" but we are to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ and follow His leadership. Hebrews 12:1 says, *"…looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher or our faith."* We are never to "take our eyes off Jesus!" NEVER!

Joshua 3:4 tells us WHY they needed to keep their eyes on the Ark. *"Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for **ye have not passed this way heretofore**."* The Israelites were fearful because they had never faced anything like this before. You and I do the same. Christians face things throughout their life that they have never faced before. God will guide us just as He guided Israel, but we must do as Israel, trust God by faith and follow His leadership. We are God's children. We are to be obedient and FOLLOW HIM to victory. The river was raging and over-flowing its banks, but they obeyed.

They were told to "*let the Ark pass before you INTO Jordan*." Joshua 3:10-17 gives clear details of how God guided them and tells what happened when the people saw the feet of the priest hit the water. They saw the flow of the river STOP immediately. Let's look at those verses one by one. I will begin by calling attention to this same thing happening to Abraham. Hebrews 11:8-11 says, *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."*

Second: The Unfailing Promises God Gave Israel To Cross The Jordan River. Try to imagine how the Israelites felt as they stood there "facing a totally impossible" task of crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land. If you and I had been there, I personally would have agreed with the Israelites, it was impossible. But the Bible, in Mark 10:27 says, *"And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.*

1. In Joshua 3:10 God promised that the people of God would KNOW that He was among them, *"And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will **without fail** drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.*

2. In Joshua 3:11 God promised He would pass before them into Jordan, *"Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you **into** Jordan."*

3. In Joshua 3:15 God promised them that they would see the feet of the priest hit the water, *And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)*

4. In Joshua 3:16 God promised them that they would see the waters of Jordan "cut off" miles above where they would cross over the river, *"That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho"*

5. In Joshua 3:17 God promised that they would pass over on dry ground, *"And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.*

Please remember that Israel had to trust to cross over. Also, please remember, and make a note of this, Israel had NO PART IN THE CROSSING OF THE JORDAN RIVER other than to trust God by faith, and be obedient. Are all these promises that God made to Israel, also made to Christians today? Absolutely! II Corinthians 1:20 says, *"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."* God says that by faith and His promises, and yes that same truth applies to us today, we are to believe the promises of God and be obedient and move forward. The just shall walk by faith!

Third: The Unfailing Power of God to Guard Them as They Crossed the Jordan River.

1. The Israelites SAW the unfailing power of God when they saw the water of the Jordan River "*rise to a heap*."

2. The Israelites SAW the unfailing power of God when they saw a space in the Jordan River, which was 30 miles long, dry up immediately for those 30 miles.

3. The Israelites SAW two and one-half million Israelites cross the river on dry land, and NOT ONE was lost or left behind!

4. Psalms 114:3-5 says, *"The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back. 4 The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. 5 What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?*

Conclusion: You and I are facing an unseen enemy who it is impossible for us to defeat. That enemy is revealed in Ephesians 6:12, *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."* However, Jesus "went before us" and won the victory for us. That victory is declared in I Corinthians 15:54-57, *"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave,*

where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 <u>But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ</u>." If Jesus can give us victory over death, He can give us victory over ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING, and according to Romans 8:28 He can make all things work together for good.

*"And **we know** that **all things** work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

Also, you do not have to be concerned about an "unseen enemy." We also have an "unseen army of angels" who are guarding us day and night, 24 hours a day. II Kings 6:15-17 tells us that the "unseen army of angels" are hedged up around us and protecting us, *"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."*

Sad to say, many of the Israelites chose to "wander in the wilderness" and live in unbelief, rather than put their trust in God and enter into the Promised Land and enjoy the "Rest of God" here on earth. Have you made a choice? If so, which did you chose?

LESSON #6
THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF MEMORIALS
Joshua 4:1-24

Before we begin this study, let me explain what we are talking about when we say "Memorial." This word is used 332 times in the Old Testament, and only 4 times in the New Testament. The reason for this big difference is that God had Israel leave a number of memorials in the Old Testament for the benefit of those of us in the New Testament. The Hebrew word is (**Zikrown**). It means: <u>A thing that should be Remembered and Things that should Remind us of things of the mighty power of God and promises</u>. What God did for His people, Isarel, God will do for you and me. They will guide us in the New Testament in making decisions in our life and are to build our strength and trust in the promises that God has made to us. Please keep these meanings in mind as we study. They will help you to understand God's teaching in Joshua Chapter Four.

THE TWO MEMORIALS GOD INSTRUCTED JOSHUA TO BUILD

Joshua Chapters 3 and 4 coincide together. The two memorials which God instructed Joshau to build were built as Israel was crossing the Jordan. The word "memorial" is only found once in the study and that is found in Verse 7.

The First Memorial
Joshua 4:3-7

In Joshua 4:3-7, God gave Joshua instructions to build a memorial. *"And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night. 4 Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: 5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: 6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? 7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and **these stones shall be for a memorial** unto the children of Israel for ever. 8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there."*

As Israel was crossing the Jordan River and they reached the middle of the river, God instructed Joshua to choose out twelve men, one from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Joshua told them that God had told him to have each of them pick up one stone from the midst of the river where the feet of the priest stood as Israel was crossing over. They were each to carry the stone on their shoulders to take it to the other side of the river. The twelve men of the twelve tribes of Israel represent the entire nation of Israel. God commanded them to take those stones and place them "in the place where they would lodge" when they reached the shore of the Promised land. God had chosen and prepared that place for Israel to lodge. That is revealed is Joshua 4:19-20, *"And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. 20 And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal."*

Gilgal was the place which Joshua and all of Israel lodged in the Promised Land and the place where they returned to after they had fought a battle with the Canaanites who had taken over the Promised Land. Some VERY important things took place in Gilgal. This was "the resting place of God" for all of Israel, while God was going before them and driving the enemy out of the land.

First: It is important because it was in Gilgal where Israel circumcised all the men who entered the Promised Land. God had always commanded Israel to practice circumcision, but after leaving Egypt as the nation traveled through the wilderness, they stopped the practice of circumcision in disobedience to God's command. All the men who came out of Egypt and traveled 40 years in the wilderness died. None of them entered the Promised Land due to the disobedience to God's Word. The practice of circumcision was a sign of obedience and doing so HONORED God. That is recorded in Joshua 5:2 after Israel arrived in Gilgal, *"At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time."*

Second: It is important because after Israel repented and returned to circumcising all of the young men who were born in the 40 years in the wilderness who crossed Jordan into the Promised Land, it is recorded in Joshua 5:9 that God forgave them and removed the reproach from them,

"And the LORD said unto Joshua, <u>This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.</u> Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day. "Israel had lived in reproach to God for between 38 and 40 years in TOTAL known disobedience to God's Commandment.

<u>Third</u>: It is important because after Israel repented and began circumcising all the men as they had been commanded, the Lord "rolled away" the reproach of Egypt. When that happened, Israel again "Celebrated the Passover" which they had not done in 38-40 years! From this point on, Joshua and all of Israel returned to Gilgal after every battle they fought. Joshua 10:15 and 43 both declare this statement, *"And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal."*

This "monument of stones" from the middle of the Jordan River was to continually cause Israel to REMEMBER all that God had gone before them, dried up the river, and led them into the Promised Land.

The Second Memorial
Joshua 4: 9-10

In Joshua 4:9-10, God was speaking directly to Joshua, God's chosen leader who led Israel across the large and extremely dangerous Jordan River and into the Promised Land, *"And **Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan**, in <u>the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood:</u> and they are there unto this day. 10 For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hasted and passed over."*

Joshua built this memorial in the middle of the river on the exact spot where the feet of the priests stood and held the Ark of God while all the people, two and one-half million of them, passed over the river on dry ground and arrived at Gilgal. Let me point out, this memorial was built by Joshua alone, the leader of the nation. Keep in mind that when they stood in the midst of the river, they were holding the "Ark of the Covenant" which pictured "God was with His people." It was God that opened the river. It was God who dried the land. It was God who led them safely across the river and into the Promised Land! The Ark of the Covenant was held there in the middle of the river, <u>until **ALL** the people had safely crossed the river</u>. Verse 11 says, "*And it came to pass, <u>when **all** the people</u> were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people."* There was NOT ONE of the two and one-half million people that God left behind.

The Ark of the Covenant kept the people of Israel safe from death! This is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, our leader today, as the one who stood in the place of Death that we might not only live, but that we might be saved and be able to enter into the "Rest of God." That allows us to enjoy all the blessings of God throughout our entire life. The testimony of every person who crossed the River Jordan was that they had "died to self" and trusted God to allow them to enter the Promised Land and dwell in Gilgal. This is a picture of people being saved from death by trusting Christ, and then by living the "Christ like life!"

Summary: Putting all these things together, Israel (1) Exercised faith in God by following the Ark of the Covenant and crossing the River to Gilgal, which pictures God giving the Promised Land, and repenting of their sin of unbelief. Israel was committing to "Trust God by Faith." All of this took place in this lesson. (2) Israel proved the change from unbelief to belief by beginning to circumcise all the men in Israel who crossed over Jordan. (3) Israel was making a RENEWED COMMITMENT to God, when after 40 years they again celebrated the Passover, which is THE most important celebration of all the special things Israel celebrated. That is because it goes back to when "blood was put on the door of the home of the Israelites" and God said, "when I see the blood I will PASSOVER you." At this point, God's People were back in full fellowship with the Father! Amen and Amen!

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MEMORIALS

God wanted Israel to REMEMBER the mighty works He had done for them. Israel, God's People, were bad about forgetting. In Deuteronomy 6:12, God said, *"Then beware lest thou **forget** the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."*

It is sad that Israel would forget all they had HEARD AND SEEN God do for them. Deuteronomy 1:26-32 is one of the saddest accounts recorded about Israel, *"Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God: 27 And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. 28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there 29 Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. 30 The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes; 31 And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. 32 Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God,"*

Today, Christians are just as prone to "forget" as Israel was. Not only does that apply to Christians individually, but it applies to churches. When Paul wrote his first letter to the church at Ephesus, he did not know of one thing that was wrong in the church. The book of Ephesians is well known as the Book of Victorious Christian Living. The second letter to the church in Ephesus is found in Revelation 2:1-7. In that letter, it says that God has something against them that is very serious. In Verses 4-5 it says, *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5 **Remember** therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."* The church had FORGOTTEN all God had done for them.

Those are very sad accounts, but it seems in this text that God's primary purpose in establishing memorials was to teach children about the mighty power of God. In Joshua 4:6-9 and 21, God told Joshua twice why He had them establish these two memorials.

The Purpose of the First Memorial: *"That this may be a sign among you, that when your **children** ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? 7 Then ye*

shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and ***these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.*** *8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. 9 And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day."*

The Purpose of the Second Memorial: *"And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your* ***children*** *shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? 22 Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. 23 For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over:"*

First: God's Primary Purpose for Memorials is to **Remember them and share them with our children.** Ephesians 6:1-4 puts a great emphasis on teaching children. *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* The failure to do this is a major concern in America today. Children are not being told about the mighty power of God. Christians and churches are not going back in history and sharing the great things God has done in the past with their children.

Second: God's Primary Purpose for Memorials is that having seen the almighty power of God, the church should do ALL possible to **Reach the entire world with the understanding who the Lord is, and that He is an almighty God!** In Joshua 4:24, in the closing verse of Chapter 4 after Joshua and the Israelites have heard and seen God's mighty hand, and how He took them across the Jordan River, and they had REACHED the Promised land, God said, *"**That all the people of the earth might know** the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever."*

"That all the people of the earth might know…" should be the first and foremost matter of importance in the life of EVERY Christian. Reaching the souls of man should take the very FIRST PLACE in our life. John 1:40-42 gives us a great example of this in the life of Andrew, who had heard John share the Gospel. Andrew received Christ as his Messiah and was saved. Let's look at what happened immediately after Andrew got saved, *"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He* ***first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.*** *42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. "*

PLEASE NOTICE! This is vitally important! Verse 41 does not say that Andrew found his brother first. That would have meant that his brother, Peter, was the first person he ran into that he shared the Gospel with. NO! NO! NO! It says, "The FIRST thing he did after being saved, was he

went and found his brother Peter immediately The verse says " *He **first** findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus."* HE **FIRST** FINDETH…" Sharing the gospel immediately became the most important thing in the life of Andrew after he was saved. **Question:** As a Christian who knows Jesus as Savior, is that the most important thing in your life? It should be! We should share the gospel with every person you have an opportunity to share it with. A person's salvation and where they are going to spend eternity should be the most important matter in your life as a believer. In Acts 1:8 Jesus said, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*

LESSON #7
APPLICATIONS TO NEW TESTAMENT TRUTHS

We covered most of Joshua Chapter 5 in the last lesson where Israel repented and went back to obeying the commandment of circumcision, and of observing the Passover. There is no doubt that God was pleased with the return to be obedient, as He removed the reproach of Egypt from them. Israel made a new commitment to God and God recommitted His promise to Israel. Today we say God gave them another chance. I am extremely grateful that Jesus is the God of a second chance. If God was not the God of a second chance I would never have been in the ministry for the past 55 years and would not be writing this commentary on the book of Joshua. Having studied how Israel repented and was given a second chance, before moving to the second half of Joshua Chapter 5, I think it would be good for us to look at some applications to this change in Israel to Christ in the New Testament and the New Testament church.

Christians Today Should Follow the Pattern of Joshua and Israel.

First: We Need to Realize that When We Received Jesus as Our Savior, We Were **Changed Legally** To Become God's Beloved. I Corinthians 12:27 declares that we immediately became a member of the body of Christ, *"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."* We are no longer just someone God loved, but we became His Beloved. Ephesians 1:6 states that truth, "*To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."* The phrase "his beloved" is found 61 times in the New Testament. God loves all the people of the world (John 3:16). However, the phrase "His beloved" is NEVER used, not one time, when speaking of someone whom God loves but has never been saved. In all 61 verses it is referring to those of us who have trusted Christ as our Savior and have become a part of the Body of Christ.

When that took place in your life, two things happened. (1) All of your sins were forgiven and forgotten. Psalms 103:11-12 tells us what happened to our sins, *"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."* **Note**: The east and the west never meet. He not only cast our sins from us as far as the east is from the west, but in Hebrews 8:12 God tells us, *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."*

Also, when we accepted Christ as our Savior and were made a part of the Body of Christ, God gave us an inheritance. Romans 8:17 tells us that truth, *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* Question: Can you imagine yourself as being "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ?" I can't! It is unbelievable that I am an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. If it was not written in the Bible I would NEVER believe that! WOW!

Second: We Need To Realize That When We Received Jesus As Our Savior, We Were **Changed Inwardly** To Become Like Christ. Romans 8:29 states that after we are saved, it is God's will for us to be like His Son! *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."* Me, be like Christ? That is also unbelievable if it was not written in the Bible.

As you know, every Christian made a committal when they were saved. From the Old Testament picture found in Joshua Chapter 4, we have BEEN to the Passover and been washed in the blood. God saw the blood and washed us clean from our sins. Also like the Israelites in the Old Testament, every New Testament believer has been "circumcised." Colossians 2:11 teaches us that truth and how it took place, *"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*" Romans 6:4 tells us we have been raised to walk in newness of life, and are complete in Christ, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* Please note that ALL the above are in the PAST TENSE! They have already happened. Because we have been **changed legally** and become a part of the Body of Christ, and because we have been **changed inwardly**, we need to seriously consider the third application.

Third: We Need To Realize That If We Are **Changed Inwardly**, We Should Be **Changed Outwardly**! When we trusted Christ as our Savior, Ephesians 5:3-4 tells us that we have become saints, *"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, **as becometh saints**; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."* God has made each of us a saint. Therefore, we should be very careful to live like a saint. If you live like a saint, which is like Christ, then the people of the world will see an outward change in our life.

Paul gave his testimony concerning the outward change in his life in Galatians 2:20, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* Also, along this same line, in Ephesians 5:8 we are told that we have become the light of the world. That is hard for me to imagine, but God said it so we must believe it, *"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

I would encourage you to considers the application of these Bible principles to your life. If you examine your life and you do not honestly see any outward change in your life since the time you made a profession of faith, it may be that you made a profession with your mouth but do not

truly believe in your heart, and it may be that you are not truly saved. I wanted to share that with you because the Bible makes it clear beyond any doubt, that if a person is truly born again and in Christ, there will be a change in their outward life. II Corinthians 5:17 says, *"Therefore **if** any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

Romans 10:10 says salvation begins in the heart, not in the lip confession. *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."* Question: Has your outward life changed!

LESSON #8
HOW TO GET ON THE WINNING SIDE!
Joshua 5:13-15

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

Let's try to put ourselves in Joshua's place. God had led them safely through the Jordan River and they were now at Gilgal. The city of Jericho was before them. God had not said one word to Joshua about how they were going to conquer Jericho, a strong city with high walls around the city. I can only imagine that Joshua was spending time alone with God, asking him "How are we going to conquer the city?' Even though Joshua knew that God had brought Israel out of Egypt and opened the Red Sea, plus he had just seen God open the Jordan River and guide them across, he no doubt was wondering, how are we going to bring down those high walls around Jericho in order to conquer the city? He may also have been wondering if the people of Israel would again lose faith like they did at Kadesh Barnea and turn and go back to the wilderness. There is no doubt that God KNEW all that Joshua was wondering.

Verse 13 says that all of this was taking place, "*…when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand…!"* **Please note**: This was not a dream or a vision! *"…Joshua saw this man!"* Immediately, Joshua asked the man a question, " *Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?"* Please note that Joshua did not get an answer to his question! The man responded but did not answer Joshua's question. He only made a statement, and said, *"Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come." Immediately Joshua fell at his feet and worshipped him.*

Who was this man? This is not the first time in the New Testament where men fell at someone's feet and began worshipping them. There was a man who fell at Peter's feet. Acts 10:25-26 says, *"And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."* In Revelation 19:10 it

says, *"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* On both occasions those who fell at the feet of Peter and at the feet of the angel were REBUKED!

In this occasion, when Joshua fell at the feet of this man and worshipped him, HE WAS NOT REBUKED! This tells us that this man was Jehovah God, the God of all of Israel. Matthew 4:10 tells us, *"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."* WOW! Can you imagine how Joshua felt when he realized that he was looking at Jehovah God! I imagine Joshua felt like Hebrews 11:27 states, *"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

APPLICATIONS TO BE ON THE WINNING SIDE

First: The Application to Christians. In answer to Joshua's question God said, "… *Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come."* Let me point out the meaning of a couple of words in this verse. First: The man said, *"**as captain** of the house of the Lord.*" In that day, the rank of "captain" was the highest ranking in any army. Today, he would be considered "The Commander in Chief of the nation." Second: The word "host" is translated from the Hebrew word, "**Tasba**." It means "An army of unnumbered warriors." These warriors were no doubt angels, as they were unseen. Therefore, "The Commander in Chief" is leading an unnumbered group of angel warriors" who were going to fight for Israel against Jericho. Also note, the Commander in Chief has his sword drawn and He is READY to do battle. That would clearly imply that if the Commander in Chief had His sword drawn, every warrior under him had their swords drawn!

Now, let's be sure and remember that there is nothing in the chapter where God was going to remove Joshua as the "human leader of Israel." God always works "in and through" human leaders. HOWEVER, the **only thing God expected** Joshua to do was to put his faith and trust in Him as the Commander in Chief and OBEY his orders! Keep in mind, Joshua COULD NOT SEE THE FUTURE! Joshua had no choice but to follow God's instructions.

Concerning the "host of warriors", this is not the first time in Bible history that we read of God's "unnumbered army" ready to fight for God's people. Elijah, in II Kings 6:11-17 is a great and Biblical picture of God's unnumbered army, standing ready to fight for God's people.

*"Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber. 13 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. 14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. 15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: **for they that be with us are more than they that be with them**. 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he*

may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

In John 10:18 Jesus said, speaking of His own life, "*No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* All the Roman soldiers working together could not have nailed Christ on the cross today. He made that abundantly clear in Matthew 26:53, as they were preparing to nail Jesus to the cross and crucify him. He did not resist them, as he knew he came to earth to die on the cross for our sins. He wanted them to know that it was not by their power that he was going to be crucified! He said, *"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me* ***more than twelve legions of angels****?"* Twelve legions of angels are 72,000 angels, and Jesus said His Father could have sent him MORE than twelve legions of angels.

This should be encouragement to us to know that God's more than 72,000 warring angels are ready to protect us against our enemy. The key to Joshua being on the winning side was not because God was on his side. It was because he was on God's side. I have heard many, many Christians say, "I need God to be on my side." GOD BEING ON YOUR SIDE IS NOT THE WINNING SIDE! You might think that your side is a good side, but your side may not be the winning side. What is the winning side? **The winning side is when YOU ARE ON GOD'S SIDE!** How does a Christian get on God's side? You get on God's side when you do everything according to God's plan, God's leadership, according to God's instructions, and doing it for His glory!

In Joshua's case, God told Joshua that He was going to give them the fortified city of Jericho. Here is the important point. God did not give Joshua ANY TYPE OF PLAN AT ALL concerning destroying Jericho! I can imagine that when God first told Joshua that He was going to destroy Jericho, that Joshua met together with warriors of Israel, and talked about finding some ladders to climb the walls and some sledgehammers to tear down the wall. That sort of thinking is we want God on our side! That was "man's thinking!" However, God did not so much as tell Joshua or Israel to get involved in the walls of Jericho in any manner. God did not "EVEN TELL THEM TO TOUCH THE WALL OF JERICHO! In other words, God was telling Joshua that He did not need ANY HUMAN HELP FROM HIM OR FROM THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL!

Christians today have a MAJOR problem with this. We always think God needs our help! Why in the world do Christians think that way when we know that God, our Commander in Chief, has thousands and thousands of angels standing ready to do whatever God wants done? Hebrews 1:13-14 tells us that God DOES NOT NEED OUR HELP! It is ridiculous for any Christian to think that God needs his help.

"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The angels are not sitting around in heaven looking for something to do. That multitude of angels are in the ministry 24 hours a day and 7 days a week carrying on the work of God, watching over and protecting God's children. **Joshua made the decision that he did not want God on his side, but rather that he wanted to be on God's side**! By making the choice, JOSHUA KNEW HE WAS ON THE WINNING SIDE! Joshua is a pattern for Christians

to follow today, as we serve the same God that Joshua served! Christians should choose to obey our "Captain, the Commander in Chief," and stop making our own plans for our life! Whether we are fighting an enemy we can see as Joshua was, or an enemy which is invisible, we need to get on the "Captain's side," which is always the winning side! Do everything you do in obedience to God's word. God has a plan for your life. FOLLOW IT!

Joshua Obeyed God, by Faith, and GOT ON THE WINNING SIDE.

Second: The Application To The Church. Joshua faced a giant enemy, which was the city of Jericho, which he could see. Joshua could "see his enemy" and that made him realize it was an impossible task for him to have victory over his enemy. Today, Ephesians 6:12 tells us the church is facing an enemy we cannot see. Therefore, sad to say, because we cannot see our enemy coming after us, we do not realize that we are facing a war which is impossible for us to win. *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." God says, "we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness!"* When we can't see our enemy, we are not nearly as fearful, and therefore we feel "we can handle it!" WE CANNOT HANDLE OUR UNSEEN ENEMY!

The church loses many battles today because we use the wrong weapons. One of the problems in churches today is that we are using "carnal and worldly weapons," thinking God needs our help. The Bible tells us that we are not to use carnal weapons. II Corinthias 10:4 makes that CLEAR beyond doubt, "*(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, **but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds**;)"* Churches today use all kinds of "advertising" to draw people into their church. You will not find any place in the Bible where the church advertised in any manner in the New Testament. You and I cannot imagine the walls of Jericho falling without Israel getting involved in the tearing down of those walls. However, we believe, and have no doubt that the walls of Jericho fell, and Jericho was conquered by the hand of almighty God. We know that God had no help from Joshua or Israel, but we still believe that God brought down the walls! **Why then do we not believe that God can do the same for the church today**. We believe and declare that God is almighty and that nothing is impossible with him, yet we always seem to want to help Him. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus told us how **He** was going to build His church, *"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build** my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus did not say, **With your help**, I will build my church"*. He said, *"…**I WILL BUILD** MY CHURCH; AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT!"*

God told Joshua exactly what He wanted them to do, and nothing more. God's instructions to Joshua in Joshua 6:1-5, *"Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. 2 And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. 3 And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. 4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and **the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of***

***the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat**, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him."*

God has given the church His plan for building His Church. As we have studied, He told Joshua and Israel that He wanted them to walk and to circle the city and shout. That was clear and simple. God has also clearly explained the part He wants us to have in building His church. God's plan for building His church is found in Acts 1:8, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and **ye shall be witnesses unto me** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* THAT is the part that God gave us in the building of His church! He gave the church one responsibility in the building of His church.

Also, God knew that we did not have the power to do the one thing he instructed us to do. Therefore, God gave the church THREE tools to empower the church to do what He told the church to do. He gave the church three "spiritual weapons." But many times, the church does not seem to believe those three things are sufficient.

First: God knew that we could not carry out His plan in our human power. Therefore, He gave us The Written Word of God. Hebrews 4:12 tells us how powerful the Word of God is, *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

God also made us a promise in Isaish 55:11 which says, *"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: **it shall not return unto me void**, but **it shall accomplish that which I please**, and **it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.**"*

Second: God gave us the Holy Spirit to empower us to use His Word and to witness. Above in Acts 1:8, God said, "*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you…"* How powerful is the Holy Spirit? Zechariah 4:6 tells us how powerful the Spirit is, "*Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."*

Third: God gave us the ministry of prayer. Jeremiah 33:3 tells us how powerful the ministry of prayer is, *"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."*

Question: Can anyone think of ANYTHING that the church can add to the three things God gave us to help God more than using those? I already know the answer! No, there is NOTHING the church can add to the plan of God. The church today needs to "follow the pattern of Joshua and Israel". The church needs to use the spiritual weapons which God has already given us and use no world activity to add to His plan.

We need to put our trust in the "Captain of the Host of the Lord." If the church does anything other than obey Acts 1:8 and use the spiritual weapons God has given us thinking we are helping God build His church, then the church has room to boast! Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works,*

lest any man should boast." Proverbs 27:1 tells us that we are not even **to boast** of another day of our life, *"Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."*

Let's join Joshua and Israel and "GET ON THE WINNING SIDE!"

LESSON #9
THE WALLS OF JERICHO ARE FALLEN!
Joshua 6:1-27

Joshua had led the people of Israel across the Jordan River, and they had set foot in the Promised Land. When they arrived in the Promised Land, they were immediately confronted by a strong enemy, the city of Jericho. Jericho was known as a strong and mighty city with walls that reached high toward the heaven. Deuteronomy 1:28 says, *"Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there."*

God's Instructions to Joshua Concerning the Battle of Jericho.

First: Let me point out a VERY important statement which God gave to Joshua. In Joshua 6:2, God said, *"And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I **have given into thine hand Jericho**, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour."* God did not say I **will** give thee the city of Jericho! God said, I have already given you the city or Jericho. This tells us that the battle had already been won. This also excludes ANY AND ALL BOASTING by Joshua or any Israelite! God, and God alone gave the victory.

Second: Humanly speaking, God's plan seemed unreasonable. There is no mention of any tools needed to tear down the walls around Jericho. There is no mention of them digging trenches to go under the wall. There is no mention of any battering rams to break the wall down. There is no mention of any ladders to climb up the walls.

Third: Humanly speaking, God's plan seemed strange. Joshua 6:2 tells that Israel had men of war, *"And ye shall compass the city, **all ye men of war**, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days."* There was a war coming, but there is no mention of any weapons of war to fight with. I served in the United States Marines for several years during the Korean War. That is not the type of plan we made to win the war with Korea.

Fourth: God's plan was for "The Ark" to be in the midst of the nation, The men of war went first. The Priest bearing the Ark was behind the men of war. The people followed the Ark. That pictures God being in the midst of His people! Hebrews 13:5 tells us that God is in the midst of us today, in 2025, and unto eternity! *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* I have no idea who may be reading this commentary on the book of Joshua, but I can give testimony

of one thing I do know. I know that whoever you are and wherever you may be, God is right there with you! I hope that you will stop and realize that Bible truth.

God's Requirement for the People of Israel

First: God Required them to **Be Still**, meaning Be Silent! This requirement is found in Joshua 6:10, *"And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout."*

Can you imagine how difficult it was for the Israelite nation to remain silent? This is especially true considering the circumstances they faced. They were headed into a great war, but the people were not allowed to ask any questions about the plan. They could not ask when this was going to happen. They could not express their opinion. They could not express any disagreement. They could not offer ANY suggestion concerning how to fight the war. In Psalms 46:10 God said, *"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."* God was testing their faith in the promise He had given them when He said, *"I have given into thine hand Jericho!"* This is another declaration that GOD DOES NOT NEED OUR HELP, OR EVEN OUR SUGGESTIONS! It would greatly benefit Christians and churches today if they would realize this truth and by faith, not understanding what and how God is doing something, obey it.

Second: God Required them to **Wait** upon Him before acting.! The people of Israel had to wait seven days without having any idea what God was going to do! They walked around the city for six days and saw NOTHING! I can only imagine how they felt. As many Christians do today, when they do not see an answer to their prayer for something vitally important to them, I feel sure the Israelites said, "Where is God?" There are promised blessings from God to those who "wait upon God." Isaiah 40:31 says, *"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."*

Abraham is a great Bible illustration of a man who waited on the Lord. Hebrews 11:8-10 says, *" By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."*

Third: God Required them To **Obey Him with no Questions**. Joshua Chapters 5 and 6 confirms this if you need to go back and read about God demanding obedience. Many Christians do not know how important obedience is. I Samuel 15:22 tells us how important it is for us to obey God, *"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."*

Joshua told the people, "When you see the Ark move, FOLLOW IT!" They obeyed and their obedience was blind obedience, as they had no idea what the future held for them. How did they obey? They obeyed BY FAITH. The people circled Jericho once on the first day and returned to Gilgal. They did that six days in a row and saw NOTHING! On the seventh day they circled the city seven times and saw nothing. However, when Joshua commanded them "to shout," the walls of Jericho FELL FLAT! Can we imagine what the Israelites felt? I think they rejoiced and began to praise and glorify God. Why? Because THEIR FAITH BECAME SIGHT!!!

God has given Christians commandments to follow. Let me name four very important commandments that God expects us to obey. (1) You and I are to witness to people about Jesus Christ. Acts 1:8 says, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* (2) You and I are to study to show ourselves approved of God and be prepared to give answers. II Timothy 2:15 says, *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (3) We are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit, which means that we are to give total control of our life to the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 gives us that commandment, "*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;"* (4) Christians are to pray without ceasing. Acts 12:5 commands us to do so, *"Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."* There is a simple five-point outline in this verse if you want a pattern to follow:

1. Prayer was made
2. Without ceasing
3. By the Church
4. Unto God
5. For Peter (Be specific - Don't pray "God bless everyone.")

If we will be obedient, God will do just as He did for Joshua and Israel. He will do what you and I cannot do, and we will SEE it happen. We will see our faith turn to sight and will shout the victory and will praise and glorify God!

Two Important Points Before Closing

First: The Importance of Keeping Our Word. Joshua, through the spies he sent to spy out Jericho, had made a commitment to Rahab, the harlot, to spare her life. When God caused the walls of Jericho to fall and the warriors of Israel entered the city, Joshua on three different occasions found in Joshua 6:17, 23, and 25 made very sure that Rahab was rescued, and her family and brother brought to safety. God always honors His word, and every Christian should do the same and honor our word. My father raised me saying, "Son, your word should be your bond!" Amen!

Second: The Importance of Keeping Ourselves from Any Accursed Thing. Joshua 6:18 tells us the importance of so doing, *"And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it."*

The Hebrew word for keep is "Shamar." It was a word commonly used in the Old Testament like "Keep yourself from touching a thorn bush." The Hebrew word for accursed is "Charsm." Its basic meaning is "to have your nose flattened against your face if you touch the thorn bush."

The New Testament counterpart to Joshua 6:18 is found in II Corinthians 6:17 which says, *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"* The Greek word for touch, is "aphorizo" which means: DRAW A BOUNDARY and DO NOT CROSS IT! Christians and the church are to DRAW A BOUNDARY between themselves and the world. A Christian in not to touch ANYTHING CONNECTED TO THE WORLD. We are not to even TOUCH IT!

In Joshua's day, there was a "two-fold curse" for anyone who did not keep this commandment in Joshua 6:18. **First**: The person violating the commandment was "accursed." **Second:** The entire nation of Israel would be accursed and troubled. That is made clear in Joshua 6:18! This will be illustrated in our next lesson.

LESSON #10
SIN IN THE CAMP
Joshua 7:1-26

I will not insert the twenty-six verses at this point but will apply them as we go through the entire chapter. Chapter 6 ended with God giving Joshua and Israel a great victory. They were "shouting the victory and rejoicing!" However, Chapter 7 begins with that small, but very serious little word, ***"But…!"*** When God led Israel across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land, His plan was for them to have continued an unbroken victory. God never planned on them being defeated by any of the Canaanite nations, as He had given them the land. But in this chapter we find that Ai, a very small city in the land, defeated them. This is the only defeat that Israel endured.

Why did God allow the small nation of Ai to defect His people. Because there WAS SIN IN THE CAMP! Joshua 7:1 tells us about that sin, *"But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel."* In Joshua 6:18 God had given Israel a clear command not to touch the accursed thing and told them that the entire nation of Israel would suffer if the commandment was disobeyed. *"And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make **yourselves** accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the **camp of Israel a curse**, and trouble it.* Because of one man sin, all of Israel was accursed!

Three Things Which Caused Joshua and Israel's Failure.
Joshua 7:2-3

First: Israel's First Cause for Defeat was Due to Self Confidence: Joshua 7:2-3 reveals the confidence they had in themselves, *"And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country.*

*And the men went up and viewed Ai. 3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; **for they are but few.**"*

Ai was a much smaller city than Jericho. They had an estimated 12,000 men of war, which was small compared to Jericho. Isarel had over 30,000 men of war. When Joshua sent men to spy out the city of Ai they returned and gave the report to Joshua, and they had the attitude that "We can handle this. It's no big deal. We don't really need God's help to take down Ai." This is the way the Devil attacks Christians after a victory. Every Christian needs to memorize and remember what the Lord said in John 15:5, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

One of the most dangerous times in a Christian's life is when they have been blessed of God and God has given them a great victory in their life. After a great victory, many Christians feel they have grown strong enough in the Lord that they can handle the "small temptations and problems, which the Devil sends them." When God gives us a great victory, the only thing that should grow in us is our faith in God for the next trial! No Christian has ever grown strong enough spiritually to handle the attacks of the Devil without God . We should always remember what Paul told us about his flesh. In Romans 7:18 Paul shared this problem with us, *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* Paul knew that in his own flesh and strength, he could do nothing.

In II Corinthians 12:9-10 Paul shared how that in his victorious Christian life, he had ALWAYS depended on God and not on his OWN strength, *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak,**….. then am I strong.**"* If the apostle Paul was not spiritually strong enough to handle small things, certainly no Christian today should ever be self-confident about being able to handle ANY THING!. The Devil is always looking for someone who feels confidence in their flesh. He knows he will win the victory over them.

Second: Israel's Second Cause for Defeat Was the Neglect of Prayer. In Joshua 7:3-6, Joshua had sent spies to Ai to determine what they needed to do to conquer that city, *"And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. 4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. 5 And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water."*

There is no stated fact or indication in this text that Joshua went to the Lord and sought His leadership before he followed the advice of the spies. He sent about 3000 men of war for the purpose of destroying the city of Ai! Apparently Joshua, along with the spies, felt confident in their own abilities and strength to win this small war. Much to Joshua's surprise, the 200-300

warriors from Ai caused Israel's entire army of 3000 to flee. Plus, Ai's army smote 36 of the great men of war while they were fleeing back to Gilgal!

It is clear from Joshua 7:7-11, that if Joshua had gone to God in prayer and sought His leadership, God would have heard his prayer and let him know that there was SIN IN THE CAMP, and that he should deal with the sin before sending his army to Ai.

Please take time to study these verses and you will find that to be true. *"And Joshua said, **Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us**? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! 8 O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! 9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name? 10 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? 11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff."*

In Ephesians 6:18 Christians are commanded to pray in all things, *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"* There are some exceptions. We do not need to pray about anything that God has commanded us to do. He has said that we are to "be Holy like He is holy!" We should try our best to be holy every day of our life. We do need to pray for His guidance and direction in our life each day, guidance to holiness! If He has given us a clear command, then we do not need to go to Him in prayers, just ask "what shall I do?"

After the defeat by the army of Ai, THEN Joshua fell on his face and sad to say, he seemed to have been blaming God for the defeat. Notice, God did not answer Joshua's question about "Why?" Rather, God asked Joshua a question. He said, "*10 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?"* Joshua went to the Lord in prayer, but it seems that God was saying, “Sorry Joshua, it's too late for that now.” That gives us another principle about prayer. Most Christians spend time in prayer when things are going well, but we rush to Him when things go bad! Joshua, as great a leader as he was, failed on this occasion. Remember, God is just as interested in the "little things" in the life of His children as He is in the "big things." In Philippians 4:6 God said, *"Be careful for nothing; **but in every thing** by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."* Dear Reader, PLEASE remember this principle and live by it.

Third: Israel's Third Cause for Defeat was Due to Their Disobedience. In Joshua 7:11 God said, *"Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff."*

Joshua immediately obeyed God and called the nation of Israel together, tribe by tribe and family by family. All of this is recorded in Joshua 7:16-18. God led Joshua to the man who had disobeyed and had partaken of the accursed thing. After God revealed to Joshua that it was a man

named Achan of the tribe of Judah, Joshua sharply rebuked him for his disobedience. That rebuke is found in Joshua 7:19-22, *"And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. 20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: 21 When **I saw** among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then **I coveted** them, and **took them**; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. 22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it."*

Achan acknowledged that he had disobeyed and had partaken of the accursed thing. PLEASE NOTE! Achan acknowledged his sin, but there is NO MENTION of him being sorry for his sin. There is no mention that he repented. There is no mention of him confessing his sin to God and asking forgiveness! Christian let's stop here for a minute and look at the sin of Achan. First, Achan said, "I saw the accursed thing." Second, Achan said, "I coveted the accursed thing." Third, Achan said, "I took the accursed thing." Let's apply the sin of Achan to the New Testament believer. God has CLEARLY commanded us not to partake of the accursed thing. I John 2:15-6 says, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For **all** that is in the world, (1) the lust of the flesh, and (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."*

Achan's sin violated these three principles. (1) Achan **saw** the accursed things. That is the lust of the eyes. (2) Achan **coveted** the accursed things. That is the lust of the flesh. (3) Achan **took** of the accused things, which were worldly things he wanted. That is the pride of life! All these things are things of the world. God said, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."* Christians are commanded not to lust after the things of the world. Let me give you a Bible principle for you to follow and it will protect you from falling and disobeying God's command.

Achan's sin began "by what he SAW!" For this reason, every Christian should make the same covenant which Job made in Job 31:1. Job said, *"I made a covenant with mine **eyes**; why then should I think upon a maid?* Why should we make a covenant with our eyes as Job did? Because Lamentations 3:51 tells us what happens when we look on accursed things with our eyes. It affects our heart. *"Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city."* David learned the hard way in Psalms 119:37, *"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way."*

If you fail to obey God's commandment to love not the world, you will see Numbers 32:23 become real to you. *"But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."*

God's Cure For Sin In The Camp
Joshua 7:15 and 25

Verse 15: *"And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel…*

Verse 25 *"And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones."* In the New Testament, this is a picture of SIN being put to death in the church.

The judgement of God on known but unconfessed sins in believers is extremely serious. When Achan was judged, as you read in Verse 25, it was TOTAL REMOVAL of sin from the camp of Israel. There are no alternatives! Sin cannot be allowed in the camp of Israel or in the New Testament church. The stoning on Achan is a picture of how sin must be dealt with in a church. It cannot be tolerated!

There is a clear New Testament application to the church in these verses. I Thessalonians 5:19 says, *"Quench not the Spirit."* The Holy Spirit is the life of a church. Sin in the church will ALWAYS quench the Holy Spirit. To "quench" the Holy Spirit, means the Holy Spirit will not bless the Word of God when it is preached in a church. Then the Holy Spirit will not speak to the hearts of people in the congregation and will not apply the preached Word to the hearts of the people and change them into being more like Christ.

If there is just ONE KNOWN SIN in a church, the person involved in that sin should be confronted. There are ways to deal with sin in a church. That is explained in Matthew 18:15-18, *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."*

First: The person who is committing the sin should be confronted. If they are convicted, repent of their sin, confess it to God and ask for His forgiveness, the sin is gone. **Second**: If the person does not respond and repent, the leader or person who first confronted the sinful person should take one or two decisions and confront the person again. If the person does not respond to the small group, the church should go to the last step. **Third:** The pastor should take the matter before the church. If the person still rebels and does not repent and confess their sin and get forgiveness from God, the person should be voted out of the church. That is what is pictured in the case of Achan. He was stoned. When a person is voted out of the church, that is a picture of SIN BEING PUT TO DEATH BY THE CHURCH. If this is not done, the church will be a DEAD church!

When sin is dealt with in the church, that is a picture of the sin being put to death. That always results in the blessing of God returning to the church. Joshua 7:26 declares that truth, *"And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day."*

Sad to say, I have known of churches in America which had sin that was known by the pastor and other leaders, but instead of confronting the sin and dealing with it according to the Bible, they all agreed to "Pray about the matter!" That is a failure. A pastor and leaders should pray about many things, but sin in the church is not one of them. I know of several pastors who

have done that. We saw earlier where Joshua, after sin was found in the camp of Israel, fell on his face and prayed. God said, "Joshua, what are you doing on your face praying. You know what the sin of Israel is, so get up off your face and GO DEAL WITH THE SIN!"

LESSON #11
THE GOD OF ANOTHER CHANCE
Joshua 8:1-35

Joshua Chapter 6 told the story of a GREAT victory which God gave to Israel. Joshua Chapter 7 tells the story of a very UNEXPECTED defeat! The defeat left Israel GREATLY discouraged. As you know, the defeat was in no way God's fault. The defeat came because of "sin in the camp." What was the sin of Israel? The sin of Israel was failing to obey God when He CLEARLY told them not to touch the accursed things.

After that sin had been dealt with according to God's work and the sin destroyed, God began to tell Joshua that He was going to give him and Israel another chance. This time, for a reason known only to God, God gave him a completely different plan for taking and destroying Ai! This time it would not be by a miracle of God as it was with Jericho. God gave Joshau a plan to destroy Ai like I was taught while in the United States Marine Corp! This is not the first time God has directed Israel to do something totally different. The passage is a little long, but it is a good example of God changing His plan for us from time to time. I encourage you to read II Samuel 5:18-25 and see that. This change was given to King David, a great man of war.

As I shared, God does things in different ways but the manner in which God does things is not important. The important thing is that we understand and accept the fact that "the battle is the Lords" and it is not important HOW the battle is won, but WHO wins the battle. (I Samuel 17:47) God is always the one who gives us the victory and will always do it His way.

Failure is Frustrating but is Never Final.
Joshua 1:8

"And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, <u>I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land</u>:"

Israel failed but it was because of their disobedience to what God had told them to do. This is something all of us need to remember. If you knowingly disobey God, your disobedience will find you out! In Galatians 6:7 God said, *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* Please make a note of this principle. I would encourage you again, when you wake up every morning to die to self as Paul did, and ask God to make you sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Anytime you slip and sin against God by being disobedient, you need to stop immediately and claim I John 1:9 and confess you sin or failure. This

verse tells us that God is the God of another chance, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

In the sections we just studied, we saw Israel fail. They trusted by faith in God and crossed the Jordan River. Then God gave them a great victory over the city of Jericho. At that time, Israel was stronger in their faith than they had ever been before. Then suddenly, they failed! It was a shock to them, and they were frustrated. However, they returned to God, confessed their disobedience and quickly learned that their failure was not final! God had something else He was going to show them to do. That is just as true in the life of every Christian. Every Christian fails from time to time. Many times, Christians will fail, get discouraged and quit! Please remember what happened to Israel. As their failure was not final, your failure IS NOT FINAL. Don't Quit! God gave Israel another chance, after chance, after chance. God never gave up on Israel, and God still has a plan for them in the future. He will do the same for you.

Let me give you some examples: In Genesis 35:1-3 Jacob failed but went back to Bethel and won the victory. In Luke 22:54-62 Peter failed, cursed and denied Christ, but repented with tears, and then in Acts 2:41 Peter preached and 3000 people got saved. In Jonah 1:1 Jonah failed, disobeyed God, and went the opposite way from what God had told him to do. In Jonah 3:1 we see that God gave him another chance. In Acts 15:37 John Mark failed but later got right with God and God used him as the human penman of the Book of Mark (II Timothy 4:11). I have failed again and again, just as you have failed again and again. However, the God of Jacob, the God of Peter, the God of Jonah, and the God of John Mark, gave them another chance. Our God today is the same God who gave them another chance. Your Father will always give you another chance. DON'T QUIT!

Success Is Sweet, But Not Secure.
Joshua 8:25.

"And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai." This is the verse that talked about the great victory for Israel. You will understand all of this much better if you read the entire Chapter 8 before beginning this lesson.

There is no doubt that the city of Ai was celebrating, exalting themselves, and "shouting it out" over the great victory they had over Israel. However, they did not win the war because they had a better military or great military leader, and the celebrating was short lived. According to Romans 2:5, God's judgement on the city of Ai was already in the making. Ai thought they had it made and were very proud of themselves. Let me point out something we need to remember. When God's children are right with Him and living in obedience, **they will never end up being defeated**. Ai won the war not because they had a better army, but they won the war because Israel was in disobedience to their God. If you remember, Joshua and Israel **got on the winning side**, when they got right with God. You need to keep in mind the great change between the first war with Ai and the second war with Ai, so we will know how to "**get back on the winning side**" when we fail, as Israel did. Let's look at the basics of the plan God gave to Joshua to attack the city of Ai for the second time and how God would give them a great victory.

Joshua 8:3-4 tells us that under God's leadership Joshua chose 30,000 men of war and sent them to one side of the city of Ai to set up a camp on the west side of the city. This is called an "ambush." In Joshua 8:12, it tells us that Joshua took another 5,000 men with him and went to the north side of the city, which is where the gate of the city was located. When morning came, Joshua and his 5000 men rose up as if they were going to attack the city of Ai. Verse 14 tells us that when the king of Ai saw Israel coming toward the city, he rose up with his army and charged toward Israel. It was clear that the king of Ai thought they could do the same thing to Israel that they did the first time, and that Israel would flee from them as they did the first time. The king was right! Israel fled from them when the army of Ai charged toward Israel. On this second time, I imagine that Ai was thinking they would totally destroy them, and the army boldly attack and destroy Israel. This time Israel did flee but it was not out of fear. They fled according to the plan God had given them!

Joshua 8:18-23 reveals God's plan which He had given Joshua, a plan which gave Israel a great victory over Ai. Let's read those verses. Joshua was on the front of the city when he and the 5000 warriors fled. As I said, they did not flee out of fear. God's plan was for them to turn around and flee in order to draw the army of Ai out of the city and pursue Israel, expecting a great victory. This was God's plan. When the army of Ai left the city to pursue Israel, God instructed Joshua to use his spear to give the 30,000 warriors of Israel, who were hidden in ambush on the other side of the city, a sign which would tell them it was time to attack and take the city, *"And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city. 19 And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and* <u>*they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire.*</u> (This is when Ai realized that things were not going as they planned.) *20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness* (Israel) *turned back upon the pursuers. 21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. 22 And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them,* ***<u>so that they let none of them remain or escape. 23 And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua."</u>***

The king of Ai suddenly realizes what had happened, <u>but it was too late!</u> Verse 25 tells us that God gave his people a great victory, and that the entire army of Ai was slain, plus the king of Ai was brought to Joshua and Joshua later hung him by the neck from a tree. God gave Israel a great victory because they repented of their failure, and they started obeying. Also, as you will remember, Israel had dealt with the sin that was in the camp, had obeyed God and had PUT THE SIN TO DEATH. That is a picture of how Jesus Christ "put sin to death when he died on the cross for OUR sins!" One minute the enemies of God were shouting the victory and the next minute they were defeated and destroyed. Joshua 8:25 says, *"And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai."* **<u>The success of Ai was sweet, but it was not secure!</u>**

Now, how does that apply to the New Testament believer? God and God alone planned the victory for Israel. God and God alone can give us victory. All we need to do is follow the pattern

set by Israel, repent and put the sin of disobedience out of our life. We must be obedient to the Word of God. When we do that, we are assured that "God is among us, therefore we are on the winning side!" Romans 8:31 says, *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* Romans 8:37 tells of the victory, *"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*

It does not matter what type of warfare you are in or how greatly you may be outnumbered, through God and His Son, Jesus Christ, you will have the victory if you keep your eyes on the Lord Jesus. Isaiah 54:17 says, *"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD."*

Decision Determines Destiny.
Joshua 8:30-31

There were two well-known mountains a short way from the city of Ai. These were Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. These mountains were the exact opposite of each other and had a valley between them of about 500 yards. Mount Ebal was a barren mount covered with stones and rocks over which people stumble. Mount Gerizim was a beautiful scene, lush and fertile places where people loved to walk. God, through Joshua, is using this as a visual or picture to share with the Israelites and with us. Joshua 8:30-32:

"Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal, 31 As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, ***an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron:*** *and they* ***offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings****. 32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel."*

There is one VERY important teaching in these verses where God told Joshua to build *"an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron:"* Deuteronomy 27:4-6 tells us that the stones were also covered is a lime sealer and they could not be moved. Plus, the law given Moses, which is what we call the "Ten Commandments", was written on those stones and they were also sealed on the rocks and could not be removed. Joshua is following the command God gave to Moses. **Why is that so important?** It is very important because it pictures our Lord Jesus Christ. As stated above, the "Altar" Joshua built was with WHOLE STONES which no man had EVER reshaped with a tool of iron, and they were also cemented together so that no man could make any changes, no matter how small the changes might have been. Then the "law given Moses by God," (the Ten Commandments) was written on those stones. They were cemented and could not be changed or moved!

This is vitally important, as all together this pictures Jesus Christ when he sacrificed Himself on the cross of Calvary, also a barren mount of stones which had no beauty to be seen. PLEASE note. The Altar was built of "whole stones" and not with stones which man had shaped in any form or fashion. NOTHING! This clearly pictures Jesus Christ giving His life, fulfilling the law of sin and death for us, and providing salvation and a victorious life. AGAIN, MAN HAD

NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH SHAPING THE STONES! Every victory you experience in your life, is given to you by almighty God! At the same time, the decisions you make will determine your destiny! Joshua offered the people of Israel, and us, a choice in Joshua 24:14-15, *"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD,* ***choose you this day whom ye will serve;*** *whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell:* ***but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.****"*

LESSON #12
THE WILES OF THE DEVIL
Joshua 9:1-2*7*

In Ephesians 6:11, we are warned of the wiles of the devil. *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. That makes this lesson one of great importance."* That makes this a VERY important lesson. The word "wiles" is misunderstood today. It comes from the Hebrew word "methodeia." It means that the devil uses different methods of attacking you and me as Christians. The Devil's methods are to "lay in wait for us." Joshua and Israel had just been given a GREAT victory over Jericho and Ai. The devil had confronted Joshua and Israel "face to face," and the devil lost the battle. However, the devil is an UNRELENTING DEVIL. Joshua Chapter 9 gives us a picture of how he changes methods. We need to be prepared. We as Christians, and the church, need to study this chapter as II Corinthians 2:11 warns us not to be ignorant concerning his methods, *"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."* Let's start our study by looking at Satan's Devices.

Satan's Three-Fold Personality

First: Satan Comes After Us As A Roaring Lion. I Peter 5:8: *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"* We generally hear a lion when he roars. Satan roars loudly trying to put fear in our hearts and minds. This is usually the first step Satan uses when he is going to attack us. He wants to make us think the "very worst in the world" is about to happen to us. Satan seldom follows up on this type of attack as he knows that Christians and churches generally always identify him being behind a roaring lion attack and therefore are well prepared. When he roars and puts fear in our hearts, he is generally trying to prepare us for a totally different type of attack which he already has planned. Satan is much easier to identify when he comes as a roaring lion than as a subtle serpent or an angel of light.

Second: Satan Comes After Us As A Subtle Serpent. Genesis 3:4: *"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:"* Satan is far more dangerous as a "subtle serpent" than he is as a "roaring lion." Sad to say, many Christians do not recognize him when he comes as a subtle serpent. I John 2:19 explains that a little more clearly, *"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*" Satan, as a subtle serpent, tries to deceive us into thinking that he wants to help us, but he does not! We will further develop this in the next section of the study.

Third: Satan Comes After Us As An Angel of Light. II Corinthians 11:13-15 says, *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*" Again, Satan is more dangerous to us as an angel of light, than he is as a roaring lion, or a subtle serpent. Satan, like false apostles, pretends to be one of us, pretends to agree with us, and pretends to appreciate our God. We find that in Joshua 9:9, which we will study in depth as we move forward. *"And they said unto him, From a very far country* ***thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him****, and all that he did in Egypt,"*

Illustrations of Satan's Three-Fold Personality at Work

First: Satan Comes as A Roaring Lion. We see this clearly displayed in Joshua 9:1-2, "*And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof; 2 That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord.*

These six kings, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, represented six powerful nations who were going to make war against Israel! Their hatred toward God's people was so great that all six kings were willing to put aside their differences with each other in order to attack and destroy Israel. Behind the scenes Satan was attempting to PUT FEAR IN THE HEARTS of God's people!

The six kings and their nations, according to Verse 3, knew that God had fought for Israel and destroyed Jericho and the city of Ai. Therefore, they did not attack Israel as they had planned. Rather, under the influence of Satan, they changed their plan and approached Joshua as a "subtle serpent."

Second: Satan Changes To A Subtle Serpent. Joshua 9:3-6, *"And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, 4 They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; 5 And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. 6 And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us.*

Under Satan's leadership the people of Gibeon came to Joshua and Israel trying to make them feel sorry for them. They lied about where they were from and told Joshua that they were from a far country. In reality, the city of Gibeon was only about 25 miles from where Israel was living in Gilgal. They dressed in some old worn-out clothing and lied about their clothing being old and worn out because of their long trip of several months. They did the same and lied about their shoes, their bread, and several other things trying to make Joshua and Israel feel sorry for them.

John 8:44 tells us who is behind the lies they were telling, *"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."*

Third: Satan Changes to an Angel of Light. Joshua 9:9-11, *"And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt, 10 And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.*

Gibeon told a number of lies about themselves, from where they came, their clothing, their old shoes and bread. Those were serious lies. However, now it gets even more serious. Now, Satan through the people of Gibeon, turns to being an angel of light, saying, *"We have heard of the fame of your God. We have heard all your God did for you in Egypt. They said, Please make us your servants! Please make a league with us and let us join you a servants!*

Satan made the people of Gibeon LOOK GOOD to Joshua and to the men of Israel. He shared that the people of Gibeon would be a very great blessing to Israel saying please, at the very least, you can allow them to stay with you in this land **and be your servants**! He said Gibeon, according to Joshua 8:25, has over 12,000 men, ALL of which will BE YOUR SERVANTS! That will be a GREAT blessing to Israel! I can imagine the people of Israel saying, "WOW! This will be a blessing." That is the same thing Eve thought back in Genesis Chapter 3!

Very sad to say that Satan, the subtle serpent who then turned into an Angel of light, deceived Joshua and Israel. The GREAT failure of Joshua and Israel is found in Joshua 9:14, "*And the men took of their victuals, and **asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD**!* This is even sadder when we remember that Moses had clearly told the Jews not to make a treaty with those who live in the land. Exodus 34:12 says, *"Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:"*

Joshua 9:14-15 tells us of that wrong, unscriptural decision. "***And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them."***

Let me make a major point here. If it can happen to Joshua and Israel, it can happen to you and to me. Anytime we are facing a decision which is not clearly covered in the written Word of God, we need TO STOP AND SEEK COUNSEL FROM THE LIVING WORD OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST! ALWAYS!

This is a picture of the spiritual warfare that Christians face today. Ephesians 6:12 says, *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."* For this reason, God told us in Ephesians 6:13 to "put on the WHOLE armour of God." Every Christian

needs to pray and ask God to give them "the spirit of discernment" to make them aware of Satan when he comes after us as a (1) roaring lion, but then deceiving them, (2) as a subtle serpent and (3) an angle of light.

Every Christian needs to "watch their back." The powers of darkness will almost always begin by putting fear in our hearts to distract us, while Satan is planning to attack us in a completely different manner and take us by surprise. Satan knows if he can put fear in your heart, you are much less likely to see him coming as an angel of light! Satan HAS NO RESPECT for God or for his Word. Exodus 5:23 tells us that truth, *"And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go."*

LESSON #13
GOD OVERRIDES OUR HONEST MISTAKES.
Joshua 10:3-4

"Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, 4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

Joshua Chapters 6, 8, and 9 are tied together with Chapter 10. In Chapter 6 God gave Israel a great victory over Jericho. In Chapter 8 God gave Israel a great victory over the city of Ai. In Chapter 9, things went a "different way" because the men of Israel *"asked not counsel at the mount of the Lord."* In Chapter 10 we find that God over-ruled Joshua's mistake and turned his mistake into a great victory over the five kings who planned to attack and destroy Israel. This tells us that if we make a mistake, admit it, and ask God's forgiveness, that God will use our mistake for our good.

In Joshua 10:1-2, the king of Jerusalem had heard what Israel's mighty God had done to Jericho and to Ai, *"Now it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem* ***had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king;*** *and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; 2 That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty."* Gideon had now joined Israel. Therefore, the king of Jerusalem gathered four other kings and were going to attack Gibeon because they had made a league with Israel. The five kings hated Israel and were angry with Gibeon because the people of Gibeon had betrayed them and joined Israel, the nation they hated. In Joshua 10:6, we find that Gibeon sent for Joshua and told him that the five kings were going to attack them, and he pleaded for him to bring the army of Israel to Gibeon to protect them.

This time, Joshua no doubt "sought counsel from the Lord" because in Joshua 10:7-9 we find God giving Joshua encouragement to go up. God said, *"So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. 8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of*

them stand before thee. 9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.

In Joshua 10:10-19, we find that God gave Israel a great victory and destroyed the five nations which were the enemies of God. This victory came based on three things:

First: By Faith, Joshua and Israel Believed the Promise of God. Joshua 10:8 says, *"And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee."* PLEASE notice that God said, "*I have delivered them*…" This is not past tense. God did not say, "I WILL deliver…." God said, "I HAVE already delivered them…."

Second: By Faith, Joshua and Israel Got Involved and Did Their Part. Joshua 10:9 says, "*Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night*." They realized that "faith without works is dead!' James 2:17says, *"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."* Let me be clear, God did not need them. Joshua 10:11 tells us that God did a miracle and gave His people a victory. "*And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword."* God always expects us to "do what we can" and then He will do what we cannot do!

Third: By Faith, Joshua Prayed and Asked God for a Greater Miracle. Joshua 10:12-14, "*Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. 13 And* ***the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies****. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. 14 And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel."*

There is no point in me trying to explain these two miracles, since that is impossible. However, you and I, by faith, must believe that they happened. The hailstones and the sun and moon staying still for about one full day, just because God's Word said they happened! However, from Joshua 10:16-42 we find that by faith, Joshua and Israel continued across the Promised Land which God had given them, and they destroyed every Canaanite city in the land from Kadesh-Barnea to Gaze and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon! Amen! What a mighty God we serve! Verse 43 tells us that after the many victories, Joshua and Israel returned to Gilgal, the place God had given them to the promise of victory, a time of rest and a place to meet with Him!

LESSON #14
THE APPLICATION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Joshua Chapter 10 is a picture of what the New Testament church should be like in 2025. Joshua is a type and picture of Jesus Christ. The work that Israel's mighty God did, under the leadership of Joshua, was known throughout the entire country! The people of the world saw those

mighty works, and they were fearful. The church should be showing the super-natural power of our God in the churches throughout the entire United States. Years ago, back in the 1960-1970s, that was true! The government of the United States was fearful of the church. The church had great input into the government. That is not true today. Today the world has no respect for the church, for the Bible, for church going people, nor for our God. Why is that?

It may be because Christians are no longer Christians. This is something many do not understand. Let's consider this to provoke our thinking. A person cannot be a Christian unless they are saved. However, you can be saved and not be a Christian! The word "Christian" denotes a "lifestyle." The word "Christian" means "a little Christ, or an imitator of Christ." True believers were given the name "Christian" in Acts 11:26. *"…..And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."* They did that because the disciples were "living their life as much like Christ as possible." They were using the mighty power of God, and the world SAW IT! Let me point out something. The people who called the disciples "Christians" were not other believers. The people who called the disciples "Christians" were the people of the world, lost people who had observed the life the disciples were living! They were "like Christ!"

What does this teach us? That does not seem to be the case today. If it were, the world would see it and it would cause them to wonder how Christians do that, and it would make them fearful of the church, because what they would be seeing is "the mighty power of God working in our lives." I am sure you agree. Today, in the Laodicea church age, we are seeing far more of WHAT MAN CAN DO than what God can do!

The Characteristics of Christ That Shows Us How We Should Live

1. Christ was Holy in ALL things.
2. Christ was loving in ALL things.
3. Christ was humble and meek.
4. Christ was faithful in ALL things.
5. Christ was a servant at heart and washed the disciples' feet.
6. Christ was obedient to his Father in All things.
7. Christ was uncompromising in All things.
8. Christ was prayerful in All things.
9. Christ was zealous about every person hearing the Gospel.
10. Christ was bold in witnessing.
11. Christ was pleasing to His Father in all things, John 8:29.
12. Christ was the beloved of His Father.
13. Christ was 100 % devoted to His Father.
14. Christ was faithful to put EVERYTHING in His life ahead of the world.

Romans 8:29 tells us that God wants every Christian to be like his Son, Jesus Christ, *"For **whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."* Let's stop and ask ourselves a question. Am I living my life following the characteristics of Christ? If and when this happens, the world will see it and will call us Christians! What will the world see? They will see our almighty God in our lives!

LESSON #15
Joshua Chapter 11 - Joshua Chapter 19

We are now looking at Chapter 11 which deals with the final victory which God gave Israel over Canaan. Chapter 12 deals with the list of kings over which God gave Israel victory. Chapter 13 deals with God's instructions to Joshua concerning the division of the land which God divided and gave to the twelve tribes of Israel. Although Chapters 14 through Chapter 19 are six different chapters, each of these chapters deal with and gives a list of the lands which Joshua divided among the tribes of Israel. I am not saying these chapters are not important, but they have little to no applications to Christians or the church today. Everyone reading this commentary may go back and read these chapters for the sake of "tying them together." However, there is one section of Chapter 14 which gives us a great picture of Caleb's faith, dedication, and determination. I am going to insert that study at this point, but I do not feel it profitable to deal with the division of the land.

THE FAITH OF CALEB IS A PATTERN FOR US TO FOLLOW.
Joshua 14:6-13

"Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea. 7 ***Forty years old was I*** *when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. 8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt:* ***but I wholly followed the LORD my God****. 9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. 10 And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo,* ***I am this day fourscore and five years old.*** *11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. 12* ***Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day****; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said. 13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. 14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel."*

First: Let's Look at the Foundation of Caleb's Faith. Caleb was 40 years old at Kadesh-Barnea. He had known Moses for over 40 years while he was in bondage in Egypt. He also had known Joshua for many years (Joshua 24:29). Caleb and Joshua were 2 of the 12 spies who Moses sent from Kadesh-Barnea to the land God promised them " to spy out the land" before Israel failed and wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Caleb saw Moses faithfully following the Lord for 85 plus years.

Numbers 13:26-31 gives us the record of Caleb's testimony of what he saw in the Promised Land and also records the promise of God to give them the land, *"And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. 27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. 28 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. 30* ***And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.*** *31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.*

No doubt Caleb remembered the leadership and faith of Moses. He remembered how God delivered Israel out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. He remembered how God destroyed Pharaoh and the entire Egyptian army when Moses led them out of Egypt. He remembered how God had opened the Red Sea and all of Israel crossed on dry ground! I am sure that was the foundation of Caleb's faith. When he remembered those things, he said, “If God did those things for us back then, God can surely give us this land He promised us today.” What was the difference in Caleb and Joshua compared to the other ten spies? The other ten spies said, "Look how much bigger they are than us." Caleb said, “Look how much smaller they are than our mighty God!”

Second: Caleb's Faith Was Patterned after Older, Faithful Men. Caleb patterned his life after Moses, whom he had known and watched for many years. Exodus 40:16 tells us of the faith Caleb saw in Moses, *"Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he."* Let's follow Moses back to Joseph, Jacob, Isaac and to Abraham. Caleb began his pattern of faith after Abraham. Hebrews 11:8-10 tells of the kind of faith Abraham had, *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."*

Caleb waited for 45 years for the land he was promised, but never gave up his faith that God, through Moses, would give him the land he had promised to give him. When the land was divided, he was 85 years old. He had stood on the promise of God for 45 years. He had waited. Isaiah 40:31 talks about the reward of waiting, *"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."* Caleb followed the same pattern of Moses. He wholly followed the Lord. (See Joshua 14:8 and 14.) For 45 years he did not see the fulfillment of the promise to give them the land, yet he lived by an old saying, "Trust God when you can’t track Him!" One more thing! Don't get discouraged and quit! Caleb has rewards laid up in heaven. You may be doing the same! Again, DON'T QUIT!

Christians today should follow the pattern found in the men of the Old Testament. Romans 15:4 verifies that as a fact, *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written*

<u>for our learning</u>, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The promise of God to give Israel the Promised Land began with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. From Abraham it was passed on to Isaac. Then Joseph followed the faith of Abraham and Isaac. From them came a strong pattern for Moses to follow, which as you know he did follow. From Moses it was passed on to Joshua and Caleb. From them you will find that the same pattern of faith which Abraham had was followed by the major prophets and the minor prophets in the Old Testament. Then we move to the New Testament and find that the faith of Abraham was followed by Peter, James, John, and Paul. All these men, in their teaching and preaching, pointed back and referred to Abraham and used him as an example! Also, we have had men down through the ages, until today, who have followed the pattern of these godly men. We should thank God for the men who have gone before us and set a pattern for us to follow. Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and Jacob, are mentioned in the Bible, BY NAME, over 1,019 times, and their lives and ministry are "referred to" many other times! THAT should tell us something! We should learn from them!

Let me remind you of something. EVERY Christian should stop and realize the great privilege we have by being included with such a godly group of men which started about 2100 BC and continues until today. One more thing! Let's make a commitment to "pass the baton on to those coming behind us." This is VERY important. Four times God commanded us, saying, "The Just Shall Live by Faith!" Those are found in Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38.

In closing, let's read I Corinthians 15:58. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."* Let's each of us commit to (1) Being steadfast, (2) Being unmovable, (3) Always abounding in the work of the Lord. Why? Because God promised that your labor is not in vain in the Lord! Amen, and Amen! Caleb followed all of these, and the Bible gives testimony that ***"…he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel."*** (Joshua 14:14)

<u>Let me close this chapter with some questions</u>. Are you being steadfast in the Lord's work? Are you standing unmovable for the Lord? Are you wholly following the Lord your God? If not, it is my prayer that God will use these lessons to convict your heart and that you will commit your life to God and begin doing those things.

LESSON #16
JOSHUA'S COUNSEL TO ISRAEL
Joshua 23:1-16

Again, I am not going to include the entire scripture text here at the beginning but will work through the chapter a few verses at a time in order to develop Joshua's counsel. Please keep in mind as we deal with the counsel Joshua is giving, that his counsel is VERY IMPORTANT TO THE CHURCH TODAY!

INTRO: Eighteen or twenty years had passed since Israel had entered the Promised Land. Joshua had been the leader of the people since crossing the Jordan River. Joshua had seen two

things that troubled him. He had (1) seen the people "become content" with the Canaanites living in their land, and (2) he had seen the danger of contentment "leading them to compromise."

THESE APPLY TO ISRAEL OF THAT DAY AND TO THE CHURCH OF THIS DAY!

Joshua Reminded Israel of How Faithful God Had Been to Them.

Joshua was growing old, and he told them he would not be with them to guide them much longer. He was preparing them and telling them WHY they should continue to trust in their mighty God. Joshua knew that everything "rises or falls on leadership" and he was trying to prepare them for when God called him home.

Joshua 23:2 clearly states that he did not call just a few leaders, but he called all of Israel together, *"And Joshua **called for all Israel,** and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age:*

I point this out because no one had any excuse or could say, "I did not hear that!" He not only called all the nations of Israel, but he made a special point in Verse 2 that, (1) their elders were there, (2) their heads were there, (3) their judges were there, and (4) their officers were there. ALL Israel was there and heard the final counsel of their leader, Joshua. When something major is going on, ALL the church should be present!

In Joshua 23:3 he reminded them of "What **THEY HAD SEEN** and what **they KNEW**" concerning how faithful their God had been to them. In Joshua 23:3 Joshua said, *"… **ye have seen** all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; **for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you.***

Joshua reminded the Israelites of what they had SEEN their mighty God do for them. He reminded them that those Canaanite nations were STRONG, but God destroyed them! He also reminded them in Verse 3 that it was not Israel that won those battles but, "*the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you*."

In Joshua 23:14 he reminded them of what **THEY KNEW** *"…And **ye know** in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof."* The Israelites knew beyond ANY doubt that God had not failed them ONE TIME. Even when they had made mistakes in judgment, referring to the people of Gibeon, **they knew** God had turned their mistakes into victory despite the BIG mistake they had made!

In Joshua 23:6 He reminded them that because of what they had seen and what they knew, they should *"**Be ye therefore very courageous** to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, **that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;**"* As you see, Joshua also commanded them that they should MAKE NO CHANGES in their faith, and they should continue to follow the Lord their God without making ONE SMALL change by turning from the left to the right.

The Independent Baptist Church today needs to be reminded that back in 1960 through about 1980, there were of great number of Independent Baptist Churches across the United States. It was the most rapidly growing church in the United States. In those years the Independent Baptist Churches grew and grew in size. I have been a member of one of those churches from 1963 until today. I well remember when our church would have an attendance of 1000 to 1200 weekly and around 900 on the Wednesday night service. When we had a revival meeting there was standing room only, and many people would stand in the reception area and even outside the doors or windows. I can remember when our church had a Mission Conference, we had to put folding chairs down each of the isles, by the wall, and even covered the platform with chairs. The missionaries would present their work, and someone would preach a mission message behind them. We normally seated about 1200 including the balcony. During these conferences we would have 1400 - 1500 attending. The conferences began at 7 PM and would continue until 10 PM or sometimes midnight. Many times, the conferences were scheduled for every day of the week, from Sunday through Sunday. However, it was not unusual for those conferences to continue for two or three weeks! There were young couples who surrendered to go to the foreign mission field. As you know, those days are gone. You can find a little more of what has happened in those years in the link below.

(https://religionnews.com/2014/01/27/great-decline-religion-united-states-one-graph)

Pastors and churches today need to remember those days and ask God to show us what we need to do today, for us to "open the windows of heaven" and go back to the 1960s when our almighty God worked in mighty ways. Back then our auditorium was full, and the Holy Spirit worked in a GREAT way in every service. In those days the government, both local and statewide, was VERY respectful and fearful of the church. They consulted with church leaders concerning decisions they were facing. The churches had a strong influence in the direction the United States was going. Somewhere over the years, the church "turned to the right hand and the left hand!" Churches today have changed and brought the world into the church. We have LOST the power of God and have quenched the Holy Spirit!

Joshua <u>Warns</u> Israel of the Great Danger of Apostacy

He began warning them in Joshua 23:8, which says, "*<u>That ye come not among these nations</u>, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them. 8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day."*

At the time Joshua wrote Chapter 23 there were still at least seven Canaanite nations in the land with Israel. Joshua knew the great danger of God's people mixing with the ungodly people of the world. In Joshua 23:12-13 he warned them of the consequences of violating the commandment of God, *"Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: 13 <u>Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.</u>*

In the same manner, the apostle Paul warned the church at Ephesus of the same dangers. In Acts 20:28-31 Paul wrote to the church saying, *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. "*

This was serious enough in Joshua's day, that in Verse 7 Joshua warned them NOT TO EVEN MENTION the names of their false gods. Let me warn you about the same thing. Do not think more highly of yourself than you should. No Christian or church will ever grow strong enough that we could not fail in this area. Paul, referring to the days of Joshua, made that clear in I Corinthians 10:11-12, *"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."*

Today we see churches who back in the 1960-1980s were totally separated from the world and the things of the world, which is a clear commandment of God. That commandment is found in I John 2:15-16, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."* Churches today have brought many things of the world into the church to try to draw attention to their church. Therefore, churches today are facing a great danger of allowing apostacy to creep into them.

Joshua's Three Safeguards For Israel To Avoid Apostacy
Joshua 23:11

Joshua gave the leaders, officers, and the entire nation of Israel three things they needed to do if they did not want to lose the blessing of God and fall into apostacy. I will develop the three safeguards in the order that Joshua gave them:

Safeguard #1: We Must Obey the Commandments of the Lord Our God. Joshua 23:6 gives us this safeguard. *"Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;"* Joshua no doubt remembered that God had given him the same commandment in Joshua 1:8-9 and now he shares it with all Israel. Now, this safeguard needs to be passed down from generation to generation. I Samuel 15:22 tells us how very important it is to obey, *"…Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,"*

Today, every Christian I know believes that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God. That is sufficient reason, and more, for us to obey everything we read in the Bible.

1. God commands us to pray (I Timothy 2:8). Let's spend time praying every day.

2. God commands us to study His Word (II Timothy 2:15). Let's study every day.
3. God commands us to witness (Acts 1:8). Let's witness every day.

Question: Are you praying daily? Are you studying the Word of God daily? Are you witnessing daily. If not, why not? You need to realize that if you are not obeying God's Word, you are headed toward apostacy.

Safeguard #2: We Must Practice Total Separation. Joshua 23:7-8 gives us God's command to stay 100% separated from the people of the world, *"That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: 8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day."*

We are to separate FROM the people of the world. Regardless of the nation they might be from, Christians nor the church are to mix with "lost people," in ANY way other than witnessing and sharing the gospel with them. In those verses Joshua shared, the following are the negatives:

1. "…come not among these nations."
2. "…make no mention of the name of their gods."
3. "…neither serve them nor bow yourselves unto them."

In the New Testament in II Corinthains 6:17 God gave us the same commandment, *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and **touch not** the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"*

Safeguard #3: We Must Love the Lord Our God With All Our Heart. In Joshua 23:8, Joshua said to the nation of Israel, "*But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day."*

EVERY failure in obedience or separation can be traced to one simple truth. We do not love the Lord as we should. Our obedience to keeping God's commandment is a testimony that we love Him with all our heart. John 14:21 confirms that statement, *"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."* To love the Lord is the most important commandment in the entire Bible. Jesus was asked the question by one of the scribes, "Which is the first commandment of all?" In Mark 12:28-30 Jesus gave him the answer, *"And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? 29 And Jesus answered him, **The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."***

How do we grow to the point that we love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength? You grow in your love with a person by spending time with that person. Before a person is married, they fall in love. However, after a person gets married, their love grows stronger and stronger because they are spending more and more time

with the person they married. Even before I was married, I was in the Marine Corp and stationed at Paris Island, South Carolina. I would receive a "love letter" from the girl I later married. I would open that letter immediately and read it. Then, as I had time, I would read it again and again. I think I am right in saying that before you were married you tried to spend as much time as possible with the person you were going to marry. That is the same way we grow in our love for our Lord Jesus. The more time we spend with Jesus, the more we love him.

How much do you love the Lord today? If you truly love Jesus, you will spend time reading the love letter He wrote you! That love letter is His Word. Do you spend time in prayer, talking to Him and telling him how much you love him? If we love him as we should, we will boldly tell others how wonderful He is! If you are not doing these things, I encourage you to start doing them. I encourage you to start today!

Joshua Gives Israel the Results of Falling Into Apostacy.

First: If You Fall Into Apostacy You Will Lose The Power of God. Joshua 23:13a tells us,

"Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you;"

Second*:* If You Fall Into Apostacy You will Lose God's Protection. Joshua 23:13b tells us,

"…but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

Third: If You Fall Into Apostacy It will Cause You To Live With Pain and Regret. Joshua 23:16 tells us,

"ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."

"Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God."
If you will do that, you will never fall into apostacy!

LESSON #17
SATAN USES THREE STEPS TO LEAD YOU TO APOSTACY.
Watch Your Back - He is always trying to deceive us.

Apostacy is a move away from a solid fundamental position of obeying the Word of God. Going back to the 1980s, many pastors said of churches that were falling away that they are "moving from militant fundamentalism to mildewed fundamentalism." It is very common in churches today. Below is a true example which happened to Soloman, King David's son, and his moving toward being an apostate! He slowly moved from being totally committed to God, God's commandments and living the pattern his father had set for him, to being an apostate. Before continuing this study, let me make one note to help you understand the danger we face daily of becoming apostate. No one ever moves from total dedication to the Lord to being an apostate. It is not a ONE STEP move! Satan has a plan to deceive us and lead us, step by step, to apostacy. He does that so you are not as likely to realize where you are going. Listen closely! If it can happen

to king Soloman, it can happen to you and to me. There are three steps which Satan uses to lead us away from being obedient to our Lord to apostacy.

STEP ONE
APOSTACY BEGINS WITH APATHY.

The word "Apathy" means: "Lack of interest, or real concern about a matter." In this case, "it is lack of real concern about pleasing and obeying God's Word!" Sad to say, Solomon did the exact opposite from what God commanded him to do.

After Solomon became king of Israel, God gave him the following instructions in II Chronicles 7:17-20, *"And as for thee, **if thou wilt walk** before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments; 18 Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel. 19 **But if ye turn away,** and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them; 20 Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations."*

Solomon STARTED OUT RIGHT. If you go back and read II Chronicles Chapter 5 through 7, you will find that Solomon (1) Built a House for God for Him to dwell among His people. (2) He brought the Ark and placed it in the House of God, which pictures "God being Present.". (3) Chapter 5:14 says the Glory of God filled the House. (4) Solomon prayed a great prayer of dedication in Chapter 6:12-42. (5) He dedicated 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. (6) He announced the presence of God among them (7:17-18). WOW! What a testimony of dedication!

Solomon ENDED UP WRONG! Twenty years later, he SLOWLY, step by step, started disobeying the commandments God had given him. We see in I Kings 11:9-10, that Solomon took this giant step backward and went into apathy, *"And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, 10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded." Today, churches are "going after the world, and bring thing of the world into their church to attract the people of the world."* That is apathy! Apathy steps into a church LITTLE BY LITTLE! It never comes suddenly! This comes because pastors and churches are sometimes not truly seeking God's counsel in making decisions.

STEP TWO
APATHY LEADS TO UNSCRIPTURAL ALLIANCES.

Soloman died about 90 to 95 years later. Shortly after Solomon's death, the kingdom was divided into two kingdoms. One was Israel and the other was Judah. After Solomon died, his son, then his grandson, and then his great grandson served as kings. Then Jehoshaphat, the fourth generation down from Solomon, became the king of Judah.

At the time Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Ahab became king of Israel. I Kings 16:30 states that Ahab was the most wicked, evil king to ever rule over Israel, *"And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD* ***above all that were before him.****"*

According to II Chronicles Chapter 17, Jehoshaphat started out right. He honored God, obeyed God, and was blessed by God. There is no doubt at all from king David to Solomon, that the commandments of God had been passed down to king Jehoshaphat. He knew exactly what God expected of him. As I said, Chapter 17 says Jehoshaphat started out right, so we know that he knew how God wanted him to rule God's people of Judah.

No one knows exactly what happened, but in II Chronicles 18:1-5 we find, much to our surprise, that Jehoshaphat WENT TO KING AHAB and made an alliance with him! That was 100% contrary to God's commandment. Ahab was the most wicked king in the history of Israel.

"Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, ***and joined affinity with Ahab****. 2 And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramothgilead. 3 And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war."* The word AFFINITY is translated from the Hebrew word (Chathan). Strong's Hebrew Concordance gives the meaning of the word as "**giving or taking a daughter in marriage."** As you can see in the verses above and the remaining part of that chapter, Jehoshaphat "joined Ahab in war against Ramothgilead."

If you read through the remainder of the chapter, you will see that Jehoshaphat sought for prophets to give him and Ahab counsel concerning the Lord's will. By that, WE KNOW king Jehoshaphat knew it was wrong, but he loved the things of the world, compromised, and went to war with Ahab, the most wicked king to ever rule in Israel. JEHOSHAPHAT MADE AN ALLIANCE WITH THE MOST WICKED KING ISRAEL EVER HAD! Now, let's look and see what Jehoshaphat's bad alliances led to!

STEP THREE
UNSCRIPTURAL ALLIANCES LEADS TO APOSTACY.

II Chronicles 24:18-20 gives us the results of king Jehoshaphat making the decision to disobey the command of God, *"****And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers****, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. 19 Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. 20 And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them,* ***Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you****."*

APPLICATION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

God has given the church THE SAME COMMANDMENT that he gave Jehoshaphat! That commandment is found in several places, but I John 2:14-16 gives us the SAME COMMANDMENT in a very clear manner. *" Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Another clear commandment given to the church to practice is TOTAL separation from the people of the world. That commandment is found in II Corinthians 6:17-18, *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."*

Christians and the church are to be completely and totally separated FROM the world. Christians should stay TRANSPARENTLY and clearly show their **separation FROM** the world! God said DON'T EVEN TOUCH IT. If there is ANY question about doing something in your life or in your church, DON'T DO IT!

LESSON #18
JOSHUA AND CALEB - TWO FAITHFUL MEN
THIS IS A PATTERN THAT EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD FOLLOW.

Moses sent 12 spies into the Promised Land in Numbers Chapter 13. Those 12 spies were in the Promised land for 40 days. When the 12 spies returned and reported to Joshua, the testimony of ten of those men is recorded in Numbers 13:28. Sad to say, after all they had seen God do in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and other places, this is what they told Moses. *"Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there."* Anak means there were giants in the land. They later told Joshua that Israel was not strong enough to take the land. However, two of those spies were Joshua and Caleb! Joshua and Caleb gave an entirely different testimony to Moses in Numbers 13:30, *"And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."*

If we go back and trace the history and life of Joshua and Caleb, which we will do shortly, we find that they were both faithful servants of Moses for 40 years while Israel lived and traveled in the wilderness. They are the only two spies of the twelve who "believed the promise of God" when God promised Moses and the nation of Israel that He was going to give them the land. We are going to study the lives of these two men together, as they "walked with God, lived by faith, and believed every promise God had given Israel." They both date back to the days when Israel was in captivity in Egypt. Their knowledge of Moses dates back to the captivity.

FOUR GREAT CHARACTER TRAITS OF JOSHUA AND CALEB

We will look at and study the four characteristics of these two men, which are: "They were men of devotion. They were men of decision. They were men of dedication. They were men of determination.

JOSHUA AND CALEB
THEY WERE MEN OF DEVOTION.
Joshua 24:14-15

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ***as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD****."*

The word "Devotion" means: **To give up oneself for the cause of another**. Above, Joshua said, "*As for me and my house…we will serve the Lord!"* If you study that phrase, you will find it means that their God had the PREEMINENCE in their hone and their lives!

In order for a person to give themselves up to the cause of another, they need to "get to know the person better and better." Just being saved is not enough. Paul, in Philippians 3:10 said, *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;"* We get to know our Lord Jesus by spending time alone with him. You will get to know Jesus Christ better and better if you will do that.

Let's read Romans 10:17 and I will try to give you an understanding of how to get to know Jesus better, *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by* ***the word*** *of God."* So many times, this verse has been misunderstood. There are words in the Greek language which are translated "the word." The most common one is LOGOS. I have heard it said many times that you get to know Christ better by reading and memorizing His Word. That is not completely true. I know a man who has memorized several books of the Bible, including Romans, yet it has done him no good at all.

The Greek word, LOGOS, is referring to the "written word" and is used 316 times in the Bible. You can study and memorize the Bible, and you will get knowledge, but you will not get to know Jesus better. This is like hearing the word of God taught and preached in Sunday School and church. You may get more and more knowledge, BUT you will not get to personally " know Jesus better every day."

The other Greek word is "Rhema" which is found 67 times in the Bible. The word "Rhema" means “to get something from God.” Maybe better understood would be to say, "You spend time in the word, **ALONE with God**, and continue UNTIL **you get something personal** from God!" You may get something in 5 or 6 verses. I have had that happen. Or you may read 4-5 chapters BEFORE you get something personally from God! You never know how long it may take, but you need to STAY until you get something personally. After you "get something personally" from God, we should do as Joshua did and "meditate" on it day and night, let God develop it, and apply it to your life. This is what God told Joshua to do in Johsua 1:8, *"This book*

of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." This is no doubt how Joshua became devoted to God and gave up his life for the cause of God.

JOSHUA AND CALEB
THEY WERE MEN OF DECISION.
Joshua 24:14-15

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ***as for me and my house, WE WILL serve the LORD****."*

Joshua said, *"… as for me and my house,* ***WE WILL*** *serve the Lord."* He made a decision to serve the Lord. The word decision is only used twice in the Bible. Both of those places are found in Joel 3:14. However, decisions are found many times throughout the entire Bible. Decisions are the key to us having a successful Christian life and honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

Joshua was a man of decision. *"…we will serve the Lord!"* Where did Joshua learn the importance of making good decisions? There is no doubt he learned to make good decisions by being a servant to Moses, and by watching him through 40 plus years. Hebrews 11:23-27 tells us of some of the most important decisions Joshua saw Moses make:

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

Joshua said, "*Me AND MY HOUSE…will serve*." He did not say, "…me without my house." Then he challenged Israel by saying, *"Choose you this day…"* The decisions you must make as a leader in the home are:

1. You must make a decision to GIVE UP THE WORLD! (I John 2:15)
2. You must make a decision to love your wife! (Ephesians 5:25-26)
3. You must make a decision to teach and train your children! (Ephesians 6:1-3)
4. THEN you can make a decision to wholly follow the Lord. (Joshua 24:14-15)
5. You need to make those decisions TODAY!
   I Kings 18:21 says, *"How long halt ye between two opinions?"*

Joshua challenged the people to do the same. He said, "*choose you this day whom ye will serve!"* You do not need to talk to anyone about these decisions. You do not need to "spend time in prayer" about these decisions. Everyone reading this book knows which decision God would have you choose! Question? Are you a man of decision? Will you say today, (1) I will give up the world? (2) Will you love your wife like Christ loves the church? (3) Will you make a decision to teach and train your children to follow the Lord Jesus? If so, you can make the decision and say, "…as for me and my house WE WILL serve the Lord! WE WILL! WE WILL! WE WILL!

JOSHUA AND CALEB
THEY WERE MEN OF DEDICATION.
Joshua 24:14-15

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ***as for me and my house, we will SERVE the LORD****."*

Joshua said, *"… we will* ***SERVE***!" He left no room for doubt. Also, he did not say "we will serve on Sunday!" He was making it clear that he would serve his God every day of the week, and every hour of every day. There is a great picture of Devotion, Decision, and Dedication in Genesis Chapter 24. We will walk through the chapter and point out the pictures.

Eliezer was Abraham's servant. He was a man "**Devoted**" to serve his master regardless of what he was asked to do. In Genesis 24:1-3 we find that Abraham was too old to meet the need of finding a wife for his son Issac. Therefore, he called on his servant Eliezer to do it for him. Abraham knew beyond doubt that God did not want his son to take a wife from among the Canaanites. *"And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. 2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: 3 And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:"*

In those days, putting one's hand under your master's thigh was the manner of making a firm promise that you would do what the master asked him to do. We find in Genesis 24:9 that Eliezer, Abraham's servant, made the promise, *"And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter."* This tells us that Eliezer was not only a man "Devoted," to his master, but he was a man of "**Decision**." He immediately made the decision to "give up his life for the sake of his master" and do whatever his master asked him to do.

Eliezer left immediately to carry out the oath he had made to Abraham. Genesis 24:10 says, *"And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.* From where Eliezer was with Abraham, it was about 400 to 500 miles to Mesopotamia and the

city of Nahor. In that day they traveled by camels. They could travel about 20 miles a day. Therefore, it took Eliezer between 25 and 30 days to travel to Nahor. Please keep in mind that they had to stop at night, sleep in the open, and prepare food they had carried with them. (As you know, there were not motels or restaurants in those days!) Also, it was very hot and very dry. This made it a very difficult trip. Eliezer and the companions were tired, and they were hungry. They had not had a good night's sleep nor eaten a decent meal for about a month. As he traveled, and especially when he arrived at the suburb of the city of Nahor, he prayed for God's guidance. We find that prayer in Genesis 24:11-14. It is VERY interesting.

"And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. 12 And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. 13 Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: 14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

In Genesis 24:15-20 we see that God answered his prayer exactly as he had asked, *"And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder 16 And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came . 17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. 18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. 19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. 20 And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels."* GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS!

In Verses 23-25, Eliezer discovered that the woman's name was Rebekah who was the sister of Laban, and they were both the children of Abraham's brother. *"And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? 24 And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. 25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."* As soon as Eliezer learned that, he realized that the Lord had led him to the exact woman to be the wife of Isaac, Abraham's son. In Verses 26-27 we see how godly Eliezer was, *"And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD. 27 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.* God had heard his prayer and answered his prayer!

From that point, Rebekah led Eliezer and his workers to her home and presented him to her brother Laban. He was well received. They fed his camels well and put them in a place to stay. That is explained in Verses 28-32. We have already seen that **Eliezer was a man of DEVOTION** when it came to Abraham, his master. Also, we have seen that **Eliezer was a man**

of DECISION and gave up his own life for his master. NOW, we will see that **Eliezer was a man of DEDICATION** to his master. PLEASE keep in mind that they had been traveling for 25 to 30 days and nights. They had to prepare their own food, which was no doubt very sparing on such a long trip, and were sleeping on the ground at night. Eliezer WAS TIRED AND HE WAS HUNGRY! With that in mind, let's see what happened next. Laban realized the Eliezer was tired and was hungry. Therefore, he had prepared a great meal. Laban set the meal before him. Let's look at Eliezer's reaction to the meal found in Genesis 24:33, which says, *"And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand."* Eliezer was a MAN OF DEDICATION and HE WOULD NOT EVEN EAT UNTIL HE HAD TOLD WHY HIS MASTER had sent him.! Wow! That is dedication! Turning to the New Testament and the church, we see in John 4:29-36, our Lord Jesus Christ was also an example of DEDICATION to His Father!

"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? 30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. 31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. 35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. 36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

Matthew 6:33-34 tells us that every Christian and every New Testament church should be totally, 100% DEDICATED to our Father. *" But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. "* I close this section with three questions. Are you a person of Devotion? Are you a person of Decision? Are you a person of Dedication? If not, please examine your heart and ask God to develop these characteristics in your life, and make you like Eliezer and like Jesus Christ. We all should be seeking to be like Jesus, which is God's will for every Christian. (Romans 8:29)

JOSHUA AND CALEB
THEY WERE MEN OF DETERMINATION.
Joshua 24:14-15

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ***as for me and my house, WE WILL SERVE the LORD****."*

This closing section of the lesson is based on Caleb, rather than Joshua and Caleb, even though they are both part of this section. As we have shared, Caleb was one of the twelve spies Moses sent to spy out the land which God has promised Israel. In Deuteronomy 1:35-36 we read

that after the spies had returned and given their report, Moses promised he would give Caleb a certain piece of land that he told Moses he wanted. *"Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, 36* ***Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD.****"*

Joshua 14:6-14 is a picture of the great "determination." We will see that Caleb was determined. This is a rather long portion of scripture, but please read it. It will be a great blessing when we put this story together.

"Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea. 7 ***Forty years old was I*** *when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. 8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God. 9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. 10 And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo,* ***I am this day fourscore and five years old****. 11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. 12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said. 13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. 14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.*

This took place after Joshua and Israel had gone in and claimed the Promised Land that God gave them. All of Israel was there. Joshua was dividing the land among the tribes of Israel. While Joshua and Caleb were together in the Promised Land, Caleb reminded Joshua of the piece of land which Moses had promised him back in Deuteronomy 1:35-36. Notice, he reminded Joshua that he was forty years old when Moses promised to give him that piece of land. Later in the verses above, we find where Caleb was 85 years old at the time Joshua was dividing the land. 45 years had passed, but Caleb said to Joshua, “I STILL WANT THAT MOUNTAIN, that the Lord spoke of 45 years ago!” Forty-five years had passed, and Caleb had not changed his mind. He was determined to have that piece of land! He was **A MAN OF DETERMINATION!**

Question! You may be a person of devotion. You may be a person of decision. You may be a person of dedication. But ARE YOU DETERMINED to be that type of person, and devote your life to Christ for your entire life and until God calls you home?

Let's go back to Joshua 24:14-15. Joshua said, "… *choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell"*

I Corinthians 15:58 admonishes us to be ***"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.***

I have one closing question. As I said in the beginning, the word **devoted means** "One who gives himself up for the cause of another."

How can a saved person not be devoted to Jesus Christ?

1. Look at the baby in the manger - He left Heaven and emptied Himself for us.

2. Look how Jesus was mocked by the crowd - He did that in **our** place.

3. Look how Jesus was spit on by the crowd - He did that in **our** place

4. Look how Jesus was smote by a reed on the head - He did that in **our** place.

5. Look how Jesus wore the crown of thorns on His head - He did that in **our** place.

6. Look at the nail scars in His hands - He did that in **our** place.

7. Look at the spear mark in His side - He did that in **our** place.

8. Look at Jesus hanging on the cross and dying - He did that in **our** place.