

It's Your Decision

Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Joshua 23–24

MEMORY VERSE

Joshua 24:15

In Joshua's final words to Israel, he reminds them that God has kept every promise and calling them to choose — decisively and wholeheartedly — whom they will serve. These chapters function like a final team huddle, urging Israel to reject compromise, remember their story, and renew their covenant with the God who fought for them.

Welcome & Introduction

Opening Questions:

Imagine your legendary High School coach, who has led the team for years, calls everyone into a final huddle. They've won championships, overcome setbacks, and built something special together. But now the coach is stepping down. Before he leaves, he gives one last talk:

Remember what got you here.

Don't get lazy now.

Stay loyal to the playbook.

Choose what kind of team you're going to be when I'm gone.

TRANSITION

That's Joshua in essence what is happening in the closing chapters of Joshua. Joshua is the "retiring coach," Israel is the team, and this is the final huddle before they step onto the field without him.

His message is simple but urgent:

"You have to choose who you'll be when I'm no longer calling the plays."

Farewell Address

Joshua 23:1–5

Teaching Points

- Before giving any instructions, Joshua points back to what God has already done. Victory wasn't because Israel was strong — it was because God fought for them.
- Joshua says God has driven out nations and will continue to do so. In other words: God has already opened doors, cleared obstacles, and provided opportunities.
- Israel is finally experiencing peace "on every side," but Joshua makes it clear that this rest is a gift from God. The real rest — emotional, spiritual, mental — isn't found in perfect circumstances but in continuing to trust God's leadership.

DISCUSSION

1. Joshua reminds Israel of everything God has done for them. What's one thing God has done in your life that you tend to forget when things get stressful?
2. Israel's rest came from God, not from perfect circumstances. Where do you usually look for rest or peace, and how does that compare to what Joshua describes?
3. Joshua says God will keep fighting for Israel. What's an area of your life where you need to trust that God is working even when you can't see it yet?

KEY TRUTH

Joshua's encouragement is simple: God has been faithful, and He will keep being faithful — if Israel stays aligned with Him. Their security isn't in their strength but in their relationship with God.

The Company You Keep

Joshua 23:6–13

Teaching Points

- Joshua tells Israel to “be very strong” in keeping God’s commands. Obedience isn’t passive — it takes courage, especially when the surrounding culture pulls in the opposite direction.
- Joshua warns Israel not to mix with the nations around them — not in friendships, marriages, or worship. He’s not talking about avoiding people; he’s warning against adopting their values. Compromise rarely begins with rebellion; it begins with tiny, quiet concessions.
- Joshua says Israel must “cling to the Lord.” That word means to hold tightly, like something you refuse to let go of. Whatever teens cling to — approval, popularity, relationships, achievements — will eventually shape their identity and direction.

DISCUSSION

1. Joshua warns that compromise starts quietly. What’s one small area where you feel the pull to blend in with the culture around you instead of following God?
2. Why do you think Joshua connects courage with obedience? Where do you need courage right now to follow God more fully?
3. In verses 12–13 Joshua warns that the Canaanites remaining in the land among them could erode their loyalties to God. Can you think of an incident where the company someone kept caused them to get into trouble?

KEY TRUTH

Joshua makes it clear: if Israel drifts into idolatry, the blessings and security they enjoy will unravel. This isn’t punishment out of anger — it’s the natural consequence of walking away from the One who protects and sustains them.

Keep the Faith

Joshua 23:14–16

Teaching Points

- Joshua reminds Israel that every single promise God made has come true. He wants them to see that God’s faithfulness isn’t theoretical — it’s proven.
- Joshua warns that if Israel abandons God and chases other gods, the security and rest they enjoy will collapse. It’s a reminder that walking away from God doesn’t lead to freedom — it leads to losing the very things He gave for their good.
- Joshua frames disobedience as “breaking the covenant” — not just breaking rules. Faithfulness to God is relational. In this we see that love for God shows up in choices, priorities, and loyalty, not just feelings.

DISCUSSION

1. Losing a faithful leader or loved one can cause your faith to turn in one of two directions. Why should their faithfulness to the end inspire you to continue strong in the faith?
2. Joshua says God kept every promise. How does remembering God's track record help you trust Him with what you're facing right now?
3. Why do you think Joshua connects turning away from God with losing the good things God gave? Where do you see that pattern play out today?

KEY TRUTH

Joshua stresses that just as God kept His promises to bless, He will also keep His promises to discipline. This isn't meant to scare Israel but to remind them that God's word is consistent and trustworthy in every direction.

Don't Forget Where You Came From

Joshua 24:1–13

Teaching Points

- Joshua's covenant renewal at Shechem follows the pattern of ancient Near Eastern treaties: a historical prologue recounting what the greater party has done, stipulations the lesser party must follow, blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience, and a witness to hold both parties accountable. This isn't a casual promise; it's a formal, binding treaty. Understanding this raises the stakes of what happens in Judges when Israel breaks it.
- Joshua reframes Israel's identity through God's story. Joshua doesn't start with Israel's achievements — he starts with God choosing Abraham, rescuing Israel, fighting their battles, and giving them the land. He wants them to see that their identity is rooted in God's actions, not their own performance.
- God fought battles Israel couldn't win alone. Joshua emphasizes moments where Israel contributed nothing — God toppled walls, sent hail stones, confused armies, and cleared the land. This teaches that God often works in ways we can't see and wins victories we could never accomplish alone.
- Before Joshua calls Israel to choose whom, they will serve, he reminds them of everything God has already done. Obedience isn't a way to earn God's love; it's a response to the love and rescue He has already given.

DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think Joshua highlights battles Israel didn't win by their own strength? How does that challenge the way you think about your own struggles?
2. God's grace came first, then the call to choose Him. How does remembering what God has already done change the way you respond to Him today?
3. Joshua reminds Israel of their whole story. If you looked back at your own story, where can you see God working even when you didn't notice it at the time? How does this help you to remain faithful?

KEY TRUTH

God's faithfulness stretches across generations. From Abraham to Egypt to the wilderness to the conquest, Joshua highlights a long, unbroken chain of God's faithfulness.

It's Not Multiple Choice — It's True or False

Joshua 24:14–18

Teaching Points

- True worship requires sincerity and exclusivity. Joshua tells Israel to “fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth.” God isn’t interested in half-hearted devotion or split loyalties.
- Joshua commands Israel to “throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped.” Even after all God had done, some idols were still lingering. This shows that spiritual baggage doesn’t disappear automatically — it must be confronted and removed.
- Choosing God daily is a deliberate decision. Joshua’s famous line — “as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” — isn’t a slogan; it’s a choice. Israel responds by declaring their loyalty because of what God has done.

DISCUSSION

1. God demands are exclusive to any other object of worship. He rejects half-hearted devotion. What kind of love would it be if a father had two families and split time between both households, or a husband who had two wives in two homes?
2. Israel’s ancestors followed false gods, but Joshua told them they had to choose for themselves whom they would serve. What does it look like to follow God even if one’s family history, culture, or past influences pull them in a different direction?
3. Joshua makes a personal choice: “As for me and my house...” This is how generational faithfulness is established. What kind of choices and habits would be required to establish generational faithfulness today?

KEY TRUTH

Israel’s motivation for serving God is simple: He rescued them, protected them, and fought for them. Gratitude becomes the foundation of obedience. When we remember what God has done in our own lives, loyalty becomes a response, not a burden.

A Sobering Warning

Joshua 24:19–22

Teaching Points

- After Israel declares their loyalty, Joshua says something unexpected: “You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins” (24:19). Joshua is not being pessimistic. He is being honest about the gap between Israel’s confidence and their ability to follow through.
- Joshua is setting up the entire book of Judges. Israel promises to serve Yahweh, and Joshua essentially tells them: you won’t be able to. Their confidence is misplaced. This matters because it’s the reason grace matters. If covenant obedience were easy, we wouldn’t need a Savior.
- The people reaffirm their commitment anyway, and Joshua calls them “witnesses against yourselves.”

They have chosen freely and publicly, and that choice will hold them accountable.

DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think Joshua warned Israel that they couldn't serve God right after they said they would? Have you ever been confident about a commitment and then struggled to keep it?
2. What does it mean that we need God's help to do what God asks? How does that change the way you think about obedience?

KEY TRUTH

If we could keep our promises to God perfectly on our own, we wouldn't need Jesus. Joshua's warning sets up the rest of the story: Israel will fail, and God will keep saving them anyway.

Pledge of Allegiance

Joshua 24:25–33

Teaching Points

- Joshua sets up a large stone as a physical reminder of Israel's promise to God. God often uses visible reminders to help His people remember what He has done and what they have pledged.
- With Joshua gone, Israel can no longer rely on his leadership or momentum. They must choose faithfulness on their own. This mirrors the moment when teens begin owning their faith instead of borrowing it from parents or leaders.
- Joshua doesn't just inspire Israel emotionally — he leads them to make a formal, written covenant. This shows that faith isn't just about feelings; it's about concrete commitments that shape how we live.

DISCUSSION

1. Israel stayed faithful as long as they remembered what God had done. What helps you remember God's work in your life, and what makes you forget?
2. Joshua's leadership ends here, and Israel must own their faith. What does it look like for you to take personal ownership of your relationship with God instead of relying on someone else's faith?

KEY TRUTH

Israel remained faithful as long as they remembered God's works. The text notes that Israel served the Lord during Joshua's lifetime and the elders who remembered God's miracles. Memory fuels faithfulness. Forgetting God's works leads to drifting — a theme that sets the stage for Judges.

Memory Verses & Closing

Memory Verses

- Joshua 24:15

Challenge for the Week: Our culture advances beliefs and positions that are at odds with uncompromising devotion to God. This week:

1. Name one area where you've been drifting closer to the world than God.

Maybe it's a habit, a friendship, a priority, or a hidden struggle.

2. Choose one action that points you toward God.

Something small but real — a step that says, "As for me, I will serve the Lord."

3. Do it before the end of the week.

Let this be your personal "memorial stone" moment.

Close in prayer.