

20211006 Joshua 23-24 Staying on Course

27 Joshua 23-24 Staying on Course – Wednesday, October 6, 2021 - Night

Let's review:

God took Israel out of bondage in Egypt. That's a picture of us being taken out of our sin and we're taken into the Promised Land. God set you free so you could walk free of the bondage of sin.

The wilderness is that time of growing, learning, struggling, and figuring it all out. Then we saw the Children of Israel cross over the Jordan river. That's how it is when we want to know God's promises and we want to take hold of them and make them our own. This is done by stepping out in faith.

The last two Sundays, we've looked at principles that help us to stay in Victorious Christian Living. Once we're living victoriously there are attitudes that can quickly steal our joy. Tonight we'll focus in on three principles that Joshua sets forth in his address to the nation: 1) Obedience 2) Separation 3) Love for God. Three New Testament references that address these three would include.

Obedience: Jesus said, *"If you love me, you will keep by commandments."* John 14:5

Separation: *"² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* Romans 12:3

Love for God: Jesus told them, *"'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'* Luke 10:27

Open with me now to Joshua Chapter 23.

23 *After a long time had passed and the LORD had given Israel rest from all their enemies around them, Joshua, by then a very old man, ² summoned all Israel—their elders, leaders, judges and officials—and said to them: "I am very old. ³ You yourselves have seen everything the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake; it was the LORD your God who fought for you.*

When we get caught up in the battles of life, we need to keep reminding ourselves that the battle is the Lord's. It is not ours. We can be tempted to try to think the battles are ours, but they are not. It is a relief when we surrender these to Him. Verse 4.

⁴ Remember how I have allotted as an inheritance for your tribes all the land of the nations that remain—the nations I conquered—between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea in the west. ⁵ The LORD your God himself will push them out for your sake. He will drive them out before you, and you will take possession of their land, as the LORD your God promised you. ⁶ “Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left.

1-“BE CAREFUL TO OBEY”. We have already talked about the beauty of “Joyful obedience”. The application for us of course is not to obey the Mosaic Law because we are not under the Mosaic Law. Ours is a different obedience. It is an obedience of our minds and our spirits. We are to stay the course by turning our will and our way over to the Holy Spirit. NOW LISTEN CLOSELY TO ME. We don’t need to try harder. We need to surrender harder. We need to “let go and let God.” The personal question we each need to ask is, “Are we obeying God and are we in obedience to what He asks us to do?” You can know every verse in the Bible, but if you’re not living in obedience it doesn’t matter. Obedience is key. Jesus said, “If you love me, youll keep my comandments”. When I want to walk in victory I must be living in obedience. When I am obedient, I am living a life of holiness. As I’ve said before, I believe there is power in holiness because we’ve turned it over to the most powerful being in the universe. We don’t obey so that God will love us more, and we don’t obey to go to heaven. That is NOT what sends us to heaven. We obey because we love Him. Now look at verse 7.

⁷ Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them. You must not serve them or bow down to them. ⁸ But you are to hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have until now.

2- DON’T TAKE ON AND TREASURE THE WORLD’S IDOLS

To live in victorious Christian living we must live in a separate and holy manner. I think this really is applicable to us in that we are not mix with the world and the way the world thinks and operates. We are in the world, but we are not OF THE WORLD. That means we don’t pursue the things the world does. We don’t have a value system that the world has. (means we have other things that are important). This applies to what we watch and the priorities that we have. It is easy to let idols slip in and find a place between us and the Lord. We are called to be separated from the world. Remember Rabbi Schnaider telling us about the “puppets” that the Argentina couple wouldn’t get rid of in their home. They were in fact physical idols. Likewise, Le Vaughn who visited last Wednesday night told me about his fiancé in Veracruz who destroyed actual physical idols that had been passed down to her from generation to generation. Well, we may not have little statues and such that we revere, but we need to be careful to not desire what the world desires. Verse 9

⁹ "The LORD has driven out before you great and powerful nations; to this day no one has been able to withstand you. ¹⁰ One of you routs a thousand, because the LORD your God fights for you, just as he promised. ¹¹ So be very careful to love the LORD your God.

LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD – This will keep you in Promised Land living more solidly than anything else. The way you keep a heart for the Lord is to continually yield yourself to the Holy Spirit. Yield to Him daily. Get up and say, "Lord, this day is yours. You have given me breath and life. Direct me Lord to do your will." And get ready, because He will do so. I find that being in the Word helps me to stay focused on Him. Just spending time in Joshua has grown me in the Lord. I benefit as I prepare to teach. It keeps God's Word fresh.

The way I love my wife is to spend time with her. The way I love all of you is to spend time with you. I maintain a connection with you. I spend time listening when you need someone to talk to. That's how we can love the Lord our God. Let Him be your Lord. Let Him be your God. He listens to you. Now, you listen to Him.

The first part of verse 9 reminds me and you that He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:4). Believe that and act on it! Now verse 12.

¹² "But if you turn away and ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you and if you intermarry with them and associate with them, ¹³ then you may be sure that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. Instead, they will become snares and traps for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land, which the LORD your God has given you.

The world worships self, money, sexual pleasure, perversity, time on media, and a host of other things. Sunday, I told the group that my friend who is a marketing consultant told me that millennials spend 61% of their time on social media looking AT THEIR OWN PROFILES. They are self-absorbed. They are worshiping self. They have put themselves on the throne of their lives. We lose the restful victorious Christian life the more we go after what the world prizes. Verse 14.

¹⁴ "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed. ¹⁵ But just as all the good things the LORD your God has promised you have come to you, so he will bring on you all the evil things he has threatened, until the LORD your God has destroyed you from this good land he has given you. ¹⁶ If you violate the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, the LORD's anger will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land he has given you."

This describes a covenant relationship. We don't live under this Mosaic covenant. Remember with Israel the promise was "keep the law and you can keep the land". With the Lord we live in a Grace covenant. He loved us and freely gave us our salvation, but when we get out of his will we don't LOSE THE LAND, but we in effect lose the "Promised Land Living" that is our inheritance. When we cease walking in the promises of God, we end up lost. We lose the plot. We don't know where we're going. We lose direction in our lives. We chase the world and it leads to the wilderness.

Let's listen to the words of Jesus, if there is an adjustment that needs to be made, choose this evening to make that adjustment.

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life. Revelation 22:17

And we close with one of my favorites.

²⁸ Come to me and I will give you rest—all of you who work so hard beneath a heavy yoke. Wear my yoke—for it fits perfectly—and let me teach you; for I am gentle and humble, and you shall find rest for your souls; for I give you only light burdens."
Matthew 11:28

Let us pray.