

## Joshua 24 – Who will you serve?

### **Note to leaders**

*Thanks for your ministry in leading your lifegroup or Gospel community. IN today's final study from Joshua spend some time listening to Q's 1& 2. Read the Bible passage in the sections outlined and answer Q's 3-12 over the next 20 mins. Then spend the remaining time in the application questions working on some specific applications for the group and individuals.*

*The Lord's blessing on you and your group*

### **Phil**

### **OPEN (10 Mins)**

1. **Aside from choosing to follow Christ, what is the most significant, life-altering choice you have made?**
2. **Why was this choice so significant? How might your life be different if you had made a different choice?**

*Some choices we make in life are game changers—choices that affect the rest of our lives. When you make a courageous choice in your life, sometimes you have to put a stake in the ground and declare it, even if it's unpopular, and even if the outcome is unknown. Joshua 24 describes Joshua's challenge to Israel to make one such choice. He called them to choose to exclusively worship and serve the God who had brought them into the Promised Land. Joshua also made clear that no matter how they responded to this choice, their lives would never be the same.*

### **DIG (20 Mins)**

#### **READ JOSHUA 24:1-13.**

*Joshua led Israel in the conquest of Canaan for many years. Realizing he was growing old (23:1-2), he called all the Israelites to meet with him. It was time to prepare the nation for his death and the consequent change of leadership (24:1). Speaking for God as a prophet, Joshua retold the history of God's mighty acts on their behalf (vv. 2-13) and then challenged Israel to remain faithful to God who had brought them this far.*

3. What events does God, through Joshua, recount to the people of Israel in these verses? Why might they have needed to be reminded of these events?
4. God also reminded the Israelites, “I gave you a land that you did not labor for, and cities you did not build . . . you are eating from vineyards and olive groves you did not plant.” Why did the Israelites need this reminder?
5. When facing important decisions, why might it be helpful to remember the grace God has shown us in the past? What could we do to be more mindful of God’s grace in our lives?

*Remembering God’s past grace in our lives motivates present faithfulness. The more mindful we are of how good God has been to us and how little we deserve His goodness, the more devoted we will be to Him. When faced with difficult or important decisions, it is easy to let the influence of the world crowd out the voice of God’s grace. This is why spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible study, and community are essential to our spiritual health—they help us to remember and live in light of God’s past, present, and future grace.*

**Read JOSHUA 24:14-18.**

*Joshua set the example for the Israelites by declaring that he and his family worshiped only the Lord. He didn’t wait for a majority vote from the people before taking the stand. He stepped out boldly, leading the people to follow his example.*

6. What do we learn about Joshua’s commitment to the Lord based on his statement in verse 15? What was the difference in Joshua privately deciding to remain faithful to God and Joshua publicly proclaiming it in front of the Israelites?
7. What risks would you assume by making such a courageous statement?
8. Has there been a time where you made a courageous statement or life decision others could see? How did it affect your commitment to follow through?

*One thing that makes Joshua’s declaration so powerful is its immediacy—he committed to serve the Lord with his family starting right then. Another was its catalyst affect on both his family as well as the Israelites. Your stake in the ground isn’t just for you. It’s also for those around you who see the change in you.*

9. How did Joshua's public stand influence the people's response (vv. 16-18)? What kind of example had Joshua set for them?

10. What holds us back from serving the Lord exclusively? What is one step you could take to overcome that which holds you back?

*The people of Israel acknowledged God's past grace in their lives and accepted Joshua's challenge to serve the Lord exclusively. While there are many influences in the world that might sway us from exclusive devotion to Christ, the Israelites were not swayed in this moment as they followed the example of a man of God (Joshua) and responded obediently to the Word of God. If we hope to devote our lives exclusively to the Lord, we must hear and obey the Word of God and follow the godly examples of men and women of faith who do likewise.*

#### **READ JOSHUA 24:19-25.**

*Joshua serves as a model of effective leadership throughout this encounter with the Israelites. Instead of quickly accepting their affirmation of exclusive commitment to God, he questioned the depth of their commitment.*

11. Why does God require an absolute commitment, not just a hasty or subjective one? Why are high standards an essential part of making courageous choices?

12. Why do you think Joshua questioned the commitment of the Israelites?

How might his questioning have encouraged them in their pursuit of God?

*God had determined that he would act toward his people Israel in accordance with their commitment to him. If they obeyed him, they would experience his blessings. If they disobeyed, he would turn, or act in a different manner, and the people would experience the consequences of their disobedience.*

*As Joshua modelled his courageous choice by declaring his commitment to the Lord in front of Israel, so too did Jesus place his stake in the ground more than 1,000 years later by taking on our sins and dying on the cross. There can be no greater declaration in history: "This cup is the new covenant established by my blood; it is shed for you," Jesus said in Luke 22:20.*

#### **APPLY (10-15 mins)**

- What changes might need to be made in your house and family in order for you serve the Lord exclusively?
- What difficult decisions are you currently facing? What would it look like to serve the Lord in the way that you make those decisions?

- What could we do to help one another serve Christ exclusively? What could we do to help each other remember God's past, present, and future grace in our lives?