

Choose for Yourselves Who You Will Serve
By Trey Sullins

The power to choose is an important responsibility. God has given humans this power so that rather than having a creation of mindless servants, He could have a creation of humble, willing servants. With this power of choice also comes great responsibility in making the right choice. Joshua gives a great encouragement to Israel along these very lines in Joshua 24:14 “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!” Joshua’s message is important for Christians to understand so that we might be righteous in God’s eyes.

Joshua instructed the people to fear God. There are many different ways we fear in life. For example, you might have a fear of flying, getting sick, or having a car wreck. While fear of these things might cause us to be hesitant in action, the fear of God is a fear which causes us to act. A Proper fear of God means a proper respect, honor and love of God. It means that we as the creation understand God’s control and authority over us. Romans 9:21 says, “Does not the potter have power over the clay.” This type of fear causes us to act and do as God says. Second Corinthians 7:1 makes the connection further that it is upon the fear of God that we grow as Christians “let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” God is our creator, He is the one who saves us, and He is the one who blesses us; therefore, he certainly deserves to be feared in a Biblical way.

Joshua instructed the people to serve the Lord. The natural progression of having a proper fear of God is that you served the Lord. Notice also that this service was to be “in sincerity and truth.” In sincerity means that this service must be genuine. It is with the right attitude and desire. Remember back to when you were little, and your parents forced you to share your toys? Most likely you did not share in sincerity, but you only did it because you were told to. When it comes to our service to God, we cannot serve simply because we are forced or commanded to. We must serve because we want to! The second part to this is serving in truth. Serving in truth means that the service is according to the truth of God’s word and will. Joshua is instructing the people here to honestly serve God according to the way He commanded them. Is this how we serve?

Joshua instructed the people not to forsake the Lord. One of the biggest problems humans tend to fall into is forgetting God. Consider in the book of Judges “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6, 21:25). This pattern of forsaking and forgetting went on for hundreds of years with the nation of Israel. Joshua was once again trying to remind the people to stay faithful to God Almighty and reject the false god’s of the world. Joshua further delivers this point by saying, “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell” (Joshua 24:15). This exhortation is something which we should take to heart as well. There are so many things in our lives which can distract us from living a life for God. However, just like Joshua says we can never allow ourselves to forget God.

Imagine that great assembly standing before Joshua in Joshua 24:14-15. Now put yourself in that crowd, hearing these powerful words from a chosen servant of God. With this great motivation the

Christian should be ready to choose to fear God properly, serve God sincerely, and never forsake God. Who have we chosen in life?