

# Joshua

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## Introduction

If you omit the book of Joshua, there is a very big gap in the history of Israel. The books before it would be unexplained. And the books after it would be difficult to understand. Without Joshua, the Israelites would be left wandering in the wilderness, and we would not know how they got into the Land. Because of the book of Joshua, we know God kept His promise to Abraham in Genesis 12. Joshua makes a new beginning, a new generation, a new leader, a new location, new responsibilities, and new battles.

The title of the book reflects the major character of the book—Joshua. It means "Jehovah saves." Although the real leader of the book is God. What made Israel's history different from all the histories of the ancient world is that Israel's leaders and people are not heroes—God is.

Joshua wrote most of this book himself. But there have been some editors who contributed to it. Chapter 24 verse 26 says Joshua was the main author. Who are the other authors? We don't know. Some suggest Eleazar the high priest or Phinehas, his son, because those two are mentioned in the book as sharing some responsibility with Joshua. The final editors could have been Samuel or Ezra. Whoever edited it or wrote it, it is part of the inspired Word of God.

Chapters 1–12 are about defeating the Canaanites and chapters 13–24 are about possessing the land.

It took about 7 years to conquer the land, based on the ages of Caleb and Joshua as stated in the book. Then it took about 20 years to divide and possess the land.

## Chapter 1

*Verse 1—After the death of Moses—in 1405, the Lord now speaks to Joshua, who is defined as “Moses’ servant.”*

*Verse 2—The context of Joshua's leadership is Moses' leadership, a continuation of what God gave to Moses. Then He tells him to do something Moses was forbidden to do, *arise and cross the Jordan* because God was giving the land to Israel.*

*Verse 3—God had already given them the land. So what is to us a process (getting the land) is to God a done thing. It doesn't eliminate the struggles of the process. The same thing is true of our spiritual life.*

*Verse 4—A description of the land—from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea. So far, they have never possessed all the land that God had promised them.*

*Verse 5—Nobody will be able to stand before Joshua. Just as God was with Moses, so He will be with Joshua. Six times He mentions Moses in these first verses. Moses is a model for Joshua. Joshua's leadership was never disconnected from Moses. It's actually one of the best examples of discipleship in the Old Testament. Moses didn't even know that was what he was doing. God will not fail or forsake Joshua. Even when they lose the first battle at Ai, it had to do with the people's disobedience, God did not fail them. But Joshua had trouble with this statement at Ai. If you go by your experience, you may think God has failed you or forsaken you, as Joshua did at Ai.*

*Verse 6—Three times God told Joshua to be strong and courageous. It's different than the courage we usually think of. The world's idea of courage is human strength based on human ability. The courage that God's commands us is based on God's ability. In other words, godly courage is rooted in humility whereas the world's courage is rooted in pride.*

*Verses 7-8—God defined this courage with five things:*

1. Be careful—not casual, or sloppy, or careless.
2. To do—it's about application.
3. To do according to all the law which Moses commanded—not some of it while neglecting others.

4. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left—there’s two ways to turn from the law (Deuteronomy 4:1-4 and defined by John in Revelation 22:18-19). Both say it is taking away from the law or adding to it. The Word of God is the fuel of your new nature in Christ. There’s two ways to starve yourself of fuel: not have enough fuel or to pollute the fuel (mixing the Word of God with our traditions, cultural values, etc.).
5. Meditate on the Word of God day and night—that is, on the written Word of God. It’s clear the men of God did memorize the Scriptures (such as Peter in his sermon in Acts 2), but the command is to meditate.

*Verse 9— Summary of first section.*

## **Graduation Class in Chennai, India April 1, 2004**

I would like for us to read Joshua 1:1-9, then Joshua 11:18-20. We shall read it in English and in Hindi.

I would like for us to see if we can develop a few principles of leadership from the leadership of Joshua. I found 4 positive and 1 negative examples from Joshua. I invite you to look for more, but meanwhile, I will share these with you. The overwhelming picture we get of the life of Joshua is clearly one of a model of positive leadership. So let’s focus first on 4 positive examples.

#1 The first thing that we notice in Joshua chapter 1 is that Joshua’s leadership was a product of the discipleship of Moses. Discipleship, as a primary means of reproduction, was never commanded or developed in the Old Testament. Discipleship, as a method for reproducing the Kingdom of God, was introduced by John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ. Actually, Jesus got His first two disciples from John— Andrew and the Apostle John. Jesus then gave us the model of discipleship for 3 1/2 years, then left the disciples with this one basic methodological command in Matthew 28:18 to go make disciples of all the nations.

The Apostles continued that methodology, making it the standard for the spread of the Gospel. For example, in 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul told Timothy, “Entrust these things to faithful men who can teach others also.” The Church was to spread the Kingdom of God by multiplication, not addition.

But this method of discipleship was never commanded in the Old Testament except in one area. Parents were to disciple their children. In Deuteronomy 6, Moses said the Israelites were to talk about the Mosaic Law with their children when they sat in their houses, when they walked with them, and when they lied down and rose up.

But no leader in the Old Testament was commanded to disciple other leaders. Yet we can see the powerful influence of discipleship—both for good and for evil. Of the evil kings, it says they followed in the ways of their evil predecessors—their fathers and grandfathers. Of the good kings, it usually says they followed in the ways of David. But we also see how Elijah influenced Elisha, the good priest Jehoiada influenced King Jehoash (2 Kings 11), and when God introduced Himself to Jacob, He said, “I am the God of your father Isaac.” We can see, then, in the Old Testament the process of discipleship and the product of discipleship but no command for discipleship.

But Joshua’s whole ministry is based on the leadership of Moses. (1) Joshua led the victory over the Amalekites, which God directed through Moses in Exodus 17:8-16. (2) Joshua went up the mountain with Moses in Exodus 24:13. (3) Numbers 11:28 says that from his youth Joshua was an attendant of Moses. (4) Joshua was among the 12 spies Moses sent into the land of Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea, as recorded in Numbers 13 and 14. (5) Numbers 27:18-23 tells us Joshua was commissioned for service to assist Moses, and (6) in Deuteronomy 31:23, Joshua is commissioned to replace Moses.

And now in Joshua 1, God says, “I will be with you,” “just as I have been with Moses,” and “be careful to do all the Law which I commanded Moses. The point, then, is this—you will be more likely to be a godly leader if you have a godly mentor or model who has disciplined you. And you will probably not pass on the godliness you know unless you take the time to disciple someone. Ladies and gentlemen, there is no evidence that leading, preaching, teaching, counseling, or pastoring will produce spiritual leadership for the next generation. The odds are all in favor of the one who discipled a few good people.

#2 A second thing I’d like to observe from this passage is that three times God gave Joshua the command to be strong and courageous. This command is based on God’s promise to Abraham to bring the Israelites into the land of Canaan and His promise to be with Joshua wherever he went, so long as he only is careful to do all according to the Law of God gave Moses.

So this strength and courage was not like that of the world. The world’s idea of courage is based on human strength and human ability—in other words, pride. Joshua’s strength and courage was to be based on God’s promise and God’s ability. In other words, humility.

Notice here two implications of this. One, Joshua's strength and courage were based on dependence on God, not independence from God. (And, by the way, pride is the root of all evil. It's the sin of Satan and the temptation of Satan, namely, to pursue value—strength and courage—independent from God. And humility is the root of all virtue. It is to pursue strength and courage from dependence on God.)

A second implication here is that leadership requires us to draw strength and courage from all the situations in life which God gives us. Please understand something—no matter how much you give your life to meaningful things and worthwhile efforts, if you do not enhance (that is, increase) your own spiritual eternal value from those life situations, you will eventually drift away from God. From every life situation God gives you, whether it's pleasant or miserable, you must gain from it strength and courage. And just because you do it right does not mean it will turn out right. If you don't find in it a way to be spiritually stronger and more courageous and eternally profitable, you will become discouraged—about life and about following God.

When I read in Joshua 1:3 “Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses,” I think of Joshua's first attack on Ai, where he was soundly defeated. Joshua was confused and frustrated. So he took it to God, and he learned about God's attitude toward concealed sin. Then he went back to Ai, having dealt with the sin and having developed a strategy to take Ai. Joshua became stronger and more courageous because of his first defeat at Ai.

Ladies and gentlemen, contentment is getting out of every situation all there is in it. Contentment is making the most out of the least. It's not getting what we like but learning to like what we get. It is not what you are or where you are but who you are.

#3 There is a third thing I notice here. And perhaps it's the most obvious. Joshua's success was inseparably connected to his knowledge of and obedience to the written Word of God. Joshua's strength and courage was connected to knowing God through the Word of God—in his case, the Law of Moses. Let's read verses 7 and 8. “Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”

Our job is to know God. Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent” (John 17:3).

There is a very significant verse in Psalm 103:7. It says of God, “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel.” God is looking for those few people who want to know His ways, not just His laws. We have learned this week that Christianity is the only world religion that exhorts us to know God. Buddhism and Hinduism do not have a personal sovereign god to know. Islam and Judaism, the only other monotheistic religions, say you cannot know God—you are only to keep His laws.

But in the Bible we are told to know God. And I want to suggest how you can begin to do that. One, read and study His Word. Become a student of the book. And second, keep His Word radically, recklessly, and without compromise. Be sure you understand it correctly. Don't apply some half truth or emotional out-of-context idea. But once you understand it, live it—radically. My friends, the most exciting thing there is in life is to live it with just one standard—the Bible. In my office, I have a plaque on my wall with the words I heard an old man say years ago. It reads, “I am determined to know nothing more than the Bible knows.” What made Jesus' life simpler than yours is that He only had one person to please—God the Father. I suggest you do the same.

#4 There is a fourth and final thing I'd like to observe from the leadership of Joshua. It comes from Joshua 11:18-20. Let's read it together. “Joshua waged war a long time with all these kings. There was not a city which made peace with the sons of Israel except the Hivites living in Gibeon; they took them all in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, to meet Israel in battle in order that he might utterly destroy them, that they might receive no mercy, but that he might destroy them, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.” Joshua 11, beginning with verse 16, is a summary of all of Joshua's conquests of Canaan. It says three things about it:

- It says he waged war a long time. So will you. The spiritual battle we face is against our old fleshly sin nature, which will not go away this side of the grave.
- Then it says in verse 19 that there was not a city which made peace with Joshua. He had to go to war with each one. So will you. If you are to be victorious over sin, you will have to go to war with every temptation.
- And third, it says in verse 20 that the reason for it was because God hardened their hearts to meet Israel in battle in order that he might utterly destroy them.

Friends, the most dangerous thing in your life is not the temptations you face but your tendency to compromise with them,

negotiate with them, and tolerate them. Please understand. If you try to balance the world's reward system and God's reward system, you will eventually abandon hope in God for hope in the world. One of the most godly men I know was once addressing a group of young missionaries in a large missionary organization. He said, "Twenty years from now, most of you won't be here. And the reason is, you love sin too much." If you try to live with one foot in the world and the other in the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of God will eventually slip away.

The period of Joshua's conquest was followed by the morally off and on leadership of the Judges, where everyone did what was right in his or her own eyes. The Judges were followed by the Kings. There were no good Kings in the Northern Kingdom. Of the 42 Kings of Judah, only 9 were called "good," and of the nine, six finished poorly, leaving three who finished the course faithful to God. Why did most of the Judges and the Kings finish poorly? It wasn't because they rejected God outright but because they compromised with the culture and the ways of the world around them.

Why were the ways of Moses and Joshua not continued? I would like to suggest one failure on the part of Joshua. It is true that Joshua was deceived by the Gibeonites and left a few pockets of Canaanites in the land. But I suggest the biggest failure of Joshua, like most of the Old Testament leaders, is that he did not understand the most dynamic force of reproducing the Kingdom of God. Joshua did not disciple another Joshua. He never passed on what Moses passed on to him. He was a faithful leader, a good teacher, obedient to God's Word—but he never had a Timothy (to give you a New Testament example). He had a Paul but not a Timothy.

My request of you graduates is this. "Entrust these things which you have heard to faithful men who can teach others also."

*Verse 10*—Joshua commanded the officers—

- (1) Joshua acted quickly. The people did not have to wait after Moses' death to see who would lead.
- (2) He acted decisively. He gave clear purpose and direction.
- (3) He acted with administration. He used the leaders whom Moses had selected (Deuteronomy 1:15) to prepare the people to cross the Jordan in 3 days.

They are crossing the Jordan just north of the Dead Sea, about 450 meters below sea level. Although the river is usually not very deep, it provided a natural border between the east and west side. Also, it was a jungle, with wild animals, except for the fords. At this time of year, during the rainy season, the river was flooded.

*Verses 12-13*—Joshua reminded the 2 1/2 tribes whose land was on the east side of the Jordan that they were to accompany Israel to the west side and help conquer the land. Their wives, children, and possessions could stay on the east side, but the warriors were to accompany Israel.

*Verse 15*—They were to help until God gave their brothers rest.

- (1) You are your brothers' keeper. We should never think, "I've got mine, you get yours."
- (2) Don't practice isolation. Don't restrict your Christianity to only one group. Be involved in several different groups.

## **Applications**

1. *I should not expect to be a leader or train leaders quickly. Joshua was 40 years in training. He was 80 years old when he took command.*
2. *I should expect my leadership and that of others to be greatly influenced by the leadership of others.*
3. *God keeps His promises no matter what we do. We are to perform our responsibilities no matter what God is doing. He will use you if He wants to, but your responsibility is to be obedient.*
4. *We're to be strong and courageous, not in our own strength and courage, but in God's Word. The Bible does not say that we shouldn't increase our skill level, but if I begin to trust myself instead of God, then you are just in my way, so I'll step on you so I can get what I want.*
5. *We must be clear and decisive. God is clear and decisive. It's a disease of the American church—the trumpets in the pulpit call no one to battle. They make such a vague sound that anyone can follow—don't offend anyone so we'll have more people in our seats. If you make a distinct sound, your ministry will be like Jesus and Paul—most people will leave you.*
6. *We are our brothers' keeper. I think that's the theme of 1 Corinthians—the conduct of believers is the responsibility of other believers.*

## **Question**

Our courage as a Christian will be mostly connected to:

- A. Our faith in God's Word.
- B. Our meditation on God's Word.

C. Our being disciplined in God's Word.

*B is correct. The courage of verses 6 and 9 are in a context of meditation on God's Word. A and C are incorrect only in that they are not given in Joshua 1.*

## Chapter 2

*Verse 1*—Joshua sent two spies secretly from Shittim. Secret not from Jericho but secret from the Israelites because he doesn't want the problems they had at Kadesh-Barnea. Joshua did not want people to vote on whether they would go or not based on what these spies said.

*Verse 2*—They came to the house of Rahab the harlot. From God's perspective, there is no military value to send spies to Jericho because of the way He captured Jericho. It didn't make any difference what these spies learned. The only value was to identify and save Rahab. She was a believer in the midst of unbelievers. It's like Noah at the time of the flood and Lot in Sodom and believers at the Rapture of the church. God took out the believer before He destroyed the city. Rahab was in God's plan to be in the lineage of the Messiah.

There's no such thing as a long-term secret. But both Joshua and the spies kept short-term secrets, with the idea that they would eventually be known.

*Verses 2-3*—The king of Jericho sends word to Rahab to bring out the spies. He thinks they are there to search out the whole land, not just Jericho.

*Verses 4-7*—Rahab had hidden the spies and lied to the king's men. Secrets, to bring about some good, are okay:

- (1) If they are about morally right things (preserving a life, giving an anonymous gift, war strategy). It's never right to keep a secret about a morally wrong thing (adultery, etc.).
- (2) If the secret is short-term. Be sure you understand that the secret will be made known. Never have a secret which you want to never be made known.

*Verses 9-13*—Why Rahab is remembered and mentioned 2 times in the New Testament.

- (1) I know God has given you the land.
- (2) The terror of you has fallen on the land. The hearts of the people melted in fear.
- (3) She knows the history of what God did (drying up the Red Sea, defeating Sihon and Og).
- (4) Israel's God is God of the heavens and earth.

She asked that the spies would take an oath to save her and her family.

Observations about Rahab's statements:

- (1) Most of the statement is about Rahab's fear of God.
- (2) She understood what God was doing at that time—giving the land to Israel.
- (3) Her information did not come from a mystical experience or a revelation from God but from what God had done in the past.
- (4) Her works were directly connected to her theology. James said there is no gap between our faith and our works and used Rahab as an example (James 2:25).

*Verses 15-21*—Negotiation between Rahab and the spies. Rahab used her advantage to preserve herself and her family. It's also assume that she will become part of Israel. So what she was doing was consistent with what God was doing. After the spies left Rahab, she kept her promise, when she could have turned them in to the king. So her faith in God was real. She let them down by a rope. Before they leave, they say, they'll be released from this oath unless:

- (1) She dies a scarlet cord from the window.
- (2) She gathers herself and family into the house.
- (3) Anyone who goes out of the door and into the street, their blood is on their own head.
- (4) If she tells anyone about this, then the deal is off.

*Verses 22f*—God used the testimony of the spies to encourage Joshua to go against Jericho as God had told him to do.

## Applications

1. *There is no such thing as a secret which will not be told. All secrets are always short-term (2:1).*

2. *Never attempt to lie—a lie is a deception which one assumes the truth will never be known. A short-term deception where the truth is expected to be known is not the same as a lie, which assumes the truth will never be known. Nevertheless, a direct intentional falsification of information is always wrong (2:2-7).*
3. *Base your actions on the fear of God (2:8, 11). We promise according to our intentions but we perform according to our fears.*
4. *Aim your efforts in the direction of what God is doing in our age [learned from the Bible—building His church] (2:9).*
5. *Place your faith in what God has done throughout history rather than mystical experiences (2:10).*
6. *Since there is no inconsistency between your faith and your works (James 2:14f) , work on what you believe as well as what you do (2:11).*
7. *Make your desires align with God’s desires (2:12-21).*
8. *Keep your word—even if you don’t have to (2:22-24).*

## Question

Which is more correct?

- A. Our works govern our faith.
- B. Our faith governs our works.
- C. Our faith and works govern each other.

*C is correct. In the passage, Rahab’s faith and works operated together, governing each other. A and B are not correct because neither faith nor works are seen as superior in Joshua 2.*

## Chapter 3

*Verse 1—Joshua rose early in the morning (6:12; 7:16; 8:20; also practiced by Jesus Mark 1:35; Luke 4:2). Joshua didn’t waste time.*

- “cross over” occurs 18 times in these chapters 3-4.

*Verse 2—The officers helped Joshua. After 3 days (1:11).*

*Verse 3—The people were to follow the Ark of the Covenant. The ark was constructed along with the tabernacle during the first year after the Exodus and before the wilderness wandering. It was put in the Holy of Holies. Inside was the (Deuteronomy 10:1-5) second copy of the Ten Commandments. When Moses finished writing the Law, it was placed next to the ark (Deuteronomy 31:24-26). Only Aaron and the high priests were allowed into the Holy of Holies, and only on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). As the people leave Mt. Sinai (Numbers 10:33-35), the ark journeys in front of the people. When the ark set out, the people traveled. When the ark rested, the people camped. At Kadesh-Barnea, spies were sent out. The people refused to go into the land and they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, following the ark. In Joshua 3 we actually see the ark leading the people. It’s mentioned 21 times in chapters 3-4.*

*Verse 4—The people were to keep a distance of 900 meters (300 feet) from the ark. The ark was holy and the people were not to come close to it. Also, the people had to see it, so it was separate from them (Exodus 33:17-23).*

*Verse 5—The people were to consecrate themselves. Literally, make themselves holy. The preparation for crossing the Jordan was a spiritual not physical.*

*Verse 7—God will exalt Joshua in the sight of Israel. The reason was so that the people would know God was with Joshua the same way He was with Moses. Our job is to exalt God. We are not to seek to be exalted. If God wants us to be exalted, He will do it (James 4:10). Our task is humble submission.*

*Verse 9—Joshua calls the people to come and hear the words of God.*

*Verse 10—God will dispossess the Canaanites, so the Israelites will know God is the living God. Faith is not based on faith. It is based on the work of God in history.*

*Verse 12—Twelve men, one from each tribe, apparently not the officers of verse 3. Joshua appoints these men in 4:4 for a specific job.*

*Verse 13—When the soles of the priests touch the Jordan, the waters will be heaped up. Here Joshua is a prophet, giving the people an opportunity to verify that he is a true prophet. We can also give people an opportunity for people to verify our*

teaching is from the Word of God. If you don't point to it in the Word of God (and point to other things like culture, etc.), then you do not give people an opportunity to validate your ministry as being from God.

*Verses 14-16*—The Jordan overflowed its banks. The water flowed down from above (9,000 foot Mt. Hermon in the north). Where it was heaped is not known today, but estimates are about 29 km north of where they were. The priests carry the ark to the middle of the river area and stop. Then the people cross over. It was the springtime, rainy season. Much flowing water, piled up as when they crossed the Red Sea.

## Applications

1. *Obedience to God requires being a self-starter. Joshua arose early in the morning. Laziness will never accomplish the work of God (3:1).*
2. *Leadership requires a certain amount of organization—even if you aren't gifted for it. Moses and Joshua both had some network of officers (3:2-3). Respond to opportunities rather than create them. You're responsible for the depth of your ministry, God will take care of the breadth.*
3. *The first requirement for ministry is to consecrate yourself, that is, to make yourself holy by confessing your sin (3:5-6).*
4. *Never attempt to exalt yourself. You will always look silly. If God exalts you, you will be respected as a servant of God but only until you try to take on some personal glory (3:7-9).*
5. *Invite people to believe in God because of the evidence He has given us throughout history, not by blind faith (3:10-17).*
6. *Give people an opportunity to validate your teaching as being from the Bible.*

## Question

Leaders are those who:

- A. Are accomplishing the most for God.
- B. Are being used by God.
- C. Are being lifted up by God.

C is correct. Joshua was lifted up among the people by God revealing Himself through Joshua. A and B are incorrect because God used immoral men and even evil spirits to accomplish things. Don't be impressed if God uses you.

## Chapter 4

*Verses 1-7*—They were to take 12 stones from the shore and put them in the middle of the Jordan and take 12 stones from the Jordan to put on the shore. This is their first night in the land. This was to be a sign to the children to teach them about the crossing. The sons of Israel did as Joshua commanded. God gave Joshua a mechanical command without assigning any application to it. Joshua did it literally, but then he applied it for the people as a teaching aid for the children to believe in God because of what happened here historically.

*Verse 9*—The stones are in the middle of the Jordan until the editor of the book wrote.

*Verse 10*—*The people hurried across.*

*Verses 12-13*—40,000 fighting men from 2 1/2 tribes on east side of Jordan crossed in front of the other people.

*Verse 14*—God exalted Joshua in the sight of Israel, as He did with Moses, so the people would obey God through Joshua.

*Verse 15-18*—As soon as the priests' feet touched the shore, the Jordan waters returned as before. So God closed the back door—there was no going back over the Jordan.

*Verses 22-24*—They were to tell their children about what happened. In fact, all the earth was to know what God had done.

## Applications

1. *The specific commands of God given for us in the church age must be followed specifically (4:1-5).*
2. *Spiritual leaders give application to the commands of God which are according to the character of God as revealed through the Word of God (4:6-23).*
3. *We should point to the biblical record of the work of God as evidence that the whole world should fear the God of Israel (4:24).*

## Question

Why should we teach our children to love their enemies?

- A. Because it will keep them out of trouble.
- B. Because God says so.
- C. Because it reflects the character of God.

C is correct. Joshua explained God's command based on his knowledge of God's character. A is incorrect because it is a pragmatic assumption not based on Scripture. B is a correct answer, but in this passage, the emphasis is on Joshua explaining why God said so.

## Chapter 5

*Verse 1*—When the Canaanites heard about the drying up of the Jordan waters, their hearts melted. No spirit was left in them. This is unique to Israel. It never happened to the church, that the people of the world feared the people of God. It was the mistake of the crusaders. The church thought it was Israel, and therefore, they thought the nations would fear them as God worked through them. But the result was that the Muslims renewed their hatred of the Christians and their resolve to destroy the Christians. When conservative Christians in politics try to promote conservative Christian ideas, the result is not the fear of God but the hatred of Christians. It didn't happen with other people of God either—such as Noah, Job—but Abimelech feared Abraham (the first “Israelite”) when he found out Sarah was his wife and the men of Shechem feared Jacob's sons.

*Verse 2*—God told Joshua to circumcise the men of Israel. Some observations

- In Genesis 17:12 it was a command to Abraham.
- Newborn males were to be circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. Others were to be circumcised when they became part of the people of Israel. Abraham was 99 and Ishmael was 13 when they were circumcised on the same day.
- Anyone not circumcised were to be separated from Israel.
- Circumcision was not the Abrahamic Covenant, but it had at least 3 purposes:
  - (1) It was a visible sign of commitment to God.
  - (2) It was a sign of belonging to God and not to the culture around them.
  - (3) It reminded the nation of God's promise to Abraham.
  - (4) Deuteronomy 10:17 Moses said to circumcise your heart and no longer be a stiff-necked people. This is a humble heart (Leviticus 26:41). Paul repeated this idea in Romans 2:29.
  - (5) It seems to be a commitment to God, being set apart from the world, and humility because it is done for God, there is no personal advantage to it.

*Verses 3-5*—Those who came out of Egypt had been circumcised (Joshua and Caleb were only ones left), but those born during the wandering were not circumcised. What God told Joshua to do incapacitated the whole army for several days, right outside the enemy's fortress.

*Verses 8-9*—Today God has rolled away the reproach, or shame, of Egypt. “Gilgal” means “rolled away.” We're not told exactly what that means.

*Verse 11-12*—That day they ate from the produce of the land and the manna ceased. It was time to depend on the land, not on God's miraculous intervention. Both were God providing for their needs. But now it would come from their harvest of the land and they will have to fight Canaanites. In the spiritual life, often will God remove a temptation for a baby Christian. But that isn't the way it will always be. If you expect God to remove all your temptations, you will never become spiritually mature. There comes a time when the manna ends and you need to deal with the land. Most of your temptations will never go away.

*Verses 13-15*—Joshua sees man with sword. Asks him if he is for Israel or against it. The man says, “Neither. I'm Captain of the hosts of the Lord.” So Joshua bowed down and worshipped Him. The Captain told Joshua to remove his sandals because this was holy ground. Throughout biblical history, a person appears who is not God the Father (because one cannot see Him without dying—Exodus 33:20; Genesis 32:30; Deuteronomy 5:6; Judges 6:22; 13:22). Neither is this person an angel because He is called “Lord,” “God,” or “Yehweh.” He's also worshipped or encourages worship, as He does here with Joshua and as He did with Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:5) by telling them to remove their sandals because the ground is holy. Good angels do not receive worship (Revelation 19:10; 22:8). Sometimes this one who appears is called a “man,” as He is here and as He is with Abraham in Genesis 18–20. Sometimes He is called the “angel of the Lord.” John 1:18 says that the Son declares God. It's my conclusion that the One standing before Joshua is the preincarnate Jesus. The reason people saw God and lived was because they were seeing God the Son, not God the Father.

## Applications

1. *Expect God to prepare the hearts of the people to respond to His messengers. That does not mean it will go smoothly or easily or without conflict. (Note Paul's teaching and rejections in the synagogue in Acts 18 and 28:23-24.) (5:1)*
2. *We must be careful to obey God by keeping His commandments the way He says they are to be kept when that way is given (5:2). God directed the circumcision to be done with flint knives, not iron.*
3. *God does not forget His Word just because we forget it. Circumcision was ignored for 430 years, but God remembered. For example, the Gospel and the literal following of Scripture was ignored by the mainline Eastern and Western Church for over 1000 years before the Reformers began to look at it again. But God did not forget (5:3-8).*
4. *Worship places change from time to time, but worship should be carried out according to the guidelines specified for the age in which we live. For the church, it's defined as presenting our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice (Romans 12:1) and confessing our sins (1 John 1:9), especially before remembering at the Lord's Supper Christ's death on the cross until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:28-32) (5:9-10).*
5. *God may provide an unusual deliverance from your sinful habits, practices or the consequences of them, but the normal spiritual life is not manna in the wilderness but eating the fruit of the life situation we are in. We must live through and in our situation, not look to escape from it (5:11-12).*
6. *Understand it is God who is in charge of His forces. We just work here (5:13-15).*

## Question

What's the best application of the circumcision described in chapter 5?

- A. All males should be circumcised.
- B. Everyone should be baptized with water.
- C. Everyone should be dedicated to God.

C is correct. Circumcision is applied as circumcision of the heart, which includes dedication. A and B are mechanical, not of the heart.

## Chapter 6

*Verse 1*—Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel. Gilgal was very close to Jericho.

*Verse 2*—God told Joshua that He had given Jericho into his hands.

*Verses 3-5*—Instructions of what they should do:

- (1) Men of war are to march around the city, once a day, for six days (which must have included the Sabbath, too)
- (2) The 7 priests are to carry 7 trumpets, in front of the Ark of the Covenant.
- (3) On the 7<sup>th</sup> day they were to march 7 times and blow the trumpets.
- (4) When they make a long blast on the trumpets, the people should shout.
- (5) The walls will fall down and the people should go straight ahead in front of them.

*Verses 6-13*—What Joshua did:

- (1) He gave God's instructions to the people.
- (2) He added two things: (a) the trumpets were to be blown continually (v. 9) and (b) that the people were to be completely silent until the last day. Neither violated what God commanded, but Joshua added them.
- (3) Joshua rose early in the morning and carried out the six-day march around the city.
- (4) On the 7<sup>th</sup> day they marched around it 7 times.
- (5) He commanded the people to break the silence and shout.

*Verses 17-19*—He gives the people two commands (apparently before the wall fell down):

- (1) Anyone in Rahab's house should be saved (allowed to live).
- (2) A ban on the city, things were not to be taken. Specifically, don't covet those things or take them, they are to go into the treasury of the Lord.

*Verses 20-21*—The walls came down, everyone (people, animals) were killed because:

- (1) Moses said these were wicked people being judged by God. Israel was to carry out the justice of God (Deuteronomy 9:5).
- (2) So the Canaanites' ways wouldn't be an influence on Israel (Deuteronomy 20:16-18).

*Verses 22-25*—Joshua sent the spies to Rahab's house, which had not fallen flat.

Verse 26—Joshua made them take an oath. Cursed is the man who tries to rebuild Jericho (see 1 King 16:34).

Verse 27—Joshua’s fame was in all the land because God was with him.

## Applications

1. Every command from God (like “go make disciples of all nations” and “love your enemies”) is like Joshua’s in that God gives us a command and He brings about the result (6:1-2).
2. The prophecy (short-term and long-term prediction) from God is given in order to let us know that God fulfills His Word literally. Therefore, He expected His commands to be kept literally (6:3-5).
3. We should never add or take away from the Word of God. But in applying it, we will add certain things to flesh it out, to fit our situation. Joshua didn’t change God’s Word but he applied it with some things God had not specifically said. The difference is, those who violate Deuteronomy 4:1-2 and Revelation 22:18-19 change the intent of God (6:6-11).
4. God involves all His people in His work. Joshua, the priests, the armed men, and all the people marched around the city—probably not women and children, but they were significant for the next generation. Today we all have spiritual gifts to be used some way, but no one is left without an essential task (6:12-16, 20-21).
5. Don’t covet what God has conquered. God has overcome the world, so don’t covet the things of the world. Living in luxury is taking things God has banned from us (see Luke 6:20-26 and James 5:1-5). Living in luxury is living with more than you need. What you need is what you need to fulfill your calling (opportunities, work, relaxing, etc.). The question is, what do you need to do your calling? It’s always a judgment call (6:17-19).
6. Be sure you keep your word, as Joshua did with Rahab. You are no better than your word (6:17 and 23-25).

## Question

The best application of 6:18-19 would be:

- A. Don’t own more than you need.
- B. Don’t own more than you want.
- C. Don’t own more than you can afford.

A is correct. Living in luxury is having more than we need, and need is defined as fulfilling your calling (your personality, life situation, talents, gifts, opportunities, work). B is incorrect because we may not want what we need. C is incorrect because you may be able to afford to live in luxury.

## Chapter 7

Verse 1—The sons of Israel acted unfaithfully (it’s the history of Israel!). Achan took things banned from Jericho. So the anger of God burns against all of Israel.

Verses 2-5—Unaware of what Achan did, Joshua sends spies to Ai. They said it would be easy to capture, so they just send 3,000 men, but the men of Ai defeat them, and 36 Israelites are killed. So the hearts of the Israelites melt.

Verses 6-9—Joshua tore his clothes in mourning before the ark. The elders did, also. Joshua was about to learn something about God. If we don’t learn and grow in our understanding about God and ourselves from every situation, we will eventually become discouraged and drift away from God and our calling. No matter how much we give our lives to good things and worthwhile efforts, unless we see our value enhanced in those efforts, we’ll eventually drift away. Joshua questioned why God brought them over the Jordan—He should have left them on the eastern side. Different than 6:27. God is with Joshua. His fame is throughout the land, but yet he is defeated at Ai.

Joshua prays, complaining to God, because he doesn’t understand his defeat. Israel is held responsible for the sin they are unaware of. Sin is sin and requires the judgment of God whether we are aware of it or not. Joshua was required to take action about the sin which he was unaware of. God then made Joshua aware of the sin.

Verses 10-13—God mentions four things about this sin:

- (1) Israel has sinned. (Probably referring to the coveting, which Achan admitted he did in verse 21.)
- (2) They have transgressed God’s covenant, namely, Achan took what was banned.
- (3) They stole the things under the ban. Therefore, Israel cannot stand before their enemies.
- (4) Being deceivers. Most sin is accompanied by some sort of lying or deception or cover-up.

It’s sin that keeps the church from standing before the world. It’s not a lack of strategy, it’s a lack of holiness.

*Verses 14-15*—God told Joshua how to catch the sinner. Come by tribes, family, and person. The who took the things under the ban is to be burned with fire, along with everything he possesses.

*Verses 16-19*—Achan was forced to confess. He offered to repentance until forced to confess. When Achan’s household was singled out, Joshua said, “Give glory to God and tell what you’ve done.”

*Verses 20-21*—Achan confessed his coveting and stealing, but that did nothing to erase the consequences of his sin. To erase the consequences would violate the justice of God.

*Verses 22-26*—Joshua sent men to find the stolen things hidden in the tent of Achan. Israel then stoned Achan and all he had and burned them with fire. God is just and expected His word to be kept literally. We are our brother’s keeper with respect to the laws of God and holding them accountable (see 1 Corinthians 5).

## Applications

1. *The sin of anyone affects all those around them. The consequences of sin are rarely restricted to the one doing the sinning (7:1).*
2. *If we focus on experience or circumstances instead of the Word of God, we will be confused about the work of God (7:2-5). Joshua concluded, by looking at the circumstances, that they should have stayed on the east side of the Jordan, something very different from what God was doing. Joshua did not understand the work of God until he received the Word of God. So never interpret your circumstances to determine the will of God. Only the Word of God can do that.*
3. *If we are confused about the work of God in our lives, we should express it to Him in prayer—realizing that the solution may be to learn about some sins we are unaware of (7:6-9).*
4. *Tell the truth, tell it soon, tell it yourself—don’t wait to be confronted of it by others (7:10-15).*
5. *Admission is not the same as repentance. To be forced to admit your sin when you are caught is not the same as repentance and confession from the conviction of sin (7:16-21).*
6. *Sin is never overlooked by God. Sin must always be paid for. Because of Christ’s death on the cross, sin is paid for so that people can be forgiven if they repent. But sin is never overlooked (7:22-26).*
7. *You cannot live for God with one foot in the world and one foot in godliness. You will end up slipping away from God and living like the world while calling yourself a Christian. If you add godliness to the world, it won’t change the world much. It’s like adding pure water to mud—won’t change it much. But adding worldliness to godliness (adding mud to pure water) it will make a lot of difference.*
8. *Reasons for suffering: (a) your sin, (b) your stupidity, or (3) you obeyed God. Every time we have problems, our first response is usually to say it’s because of our sin because we have so much sin. Sin is pride vs. humility, not smart vs. stupid. There is no evidence for a connection between intelligence and righteousness. Sin appeals to you to be your own person, be independent from God. But God calls for dependence on Himself.*

## Question

The Law of God

- A. Is always binding.
- B. Is only true for the age in which it is given.
- C. Must be kept literally.

C is correct. This chapter emphasizes the need to keep God’s law in a literal manner. A is incorrect because some laws—like the ban on Jericho—are just for one place at one time. B is incorrect because some laws (like the first commandment) are true for all ages. It depends on the nature and intent of the command.

## Chapter 8

*Verses 1-2*—God told Joshua not to fear but to go up to Ai. He would do to the king of Ai what he did to the king of Jericho. There is no ban on the city this time, but only take the property and cattle. Kill the people. They were to set an ambush behind the city. God gave Joshua only a basic idea of an ambush.

*Verses 3-9*—Joshua fleshed this out with a three-fold plan.

- (1) Draw the Ai army out of the city with a false retreat.
- (2) Destroy the city with the army of 300,000 hiding behind it.
- (3) Surround and destroy Ai while preventing Bethel from interfering.

Much of the spiritual life requires a strategy. God's commands require a strategy. God gives us some general commands, like in Romans 12:1-2, but the specifics are up to us. For example, it takes a lot of thinking and strategy to stay out of debt (Romans 13:8). It requires thinking and strategy for husbands to love their wives or for wives to submit to their husbands, or to manage your household well. "You shall do it according to the word of the Lord" (verse 8).

*Verses 10-29—The battle.*

*Verses 30-35—Joshua built an altar at Mt. Ebal. He wrote on the stones a copy of the Law, so anyone who wanted a copy of the Law could make one. He carries out a ceremony Moses had prescribed. Four kinds of leaders: the older elders of the tribes, the appointed officers, judges who helped with disputes, and the levitical priests (unelected official clergy). They read the blessings and the cursing according to the law. They were for this life in the land of Israel. For the church, there are no physical blessings promised for this life. All blessings are for heaven. The good things we have from God are due to the grace (unmerited favor) of God, not from the blessings (merited favor) of God. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read. It's important to not leave things out, things we may consider to be unimportant or inappropriate for our culture.*

## Applications

1. *Think of the ministry as involving all the people, not just the clergy or those who do jobs described by our organizations (8:1). Danger of missions is considering a person's ministry as insignificant if it's not something described by our organization.*
2. *Obedience to God requires strategy. We need to think through our life situation and plan how to be obedient (8:2-23).*
3. *The only way to deal with sin is to destroy it. That's impossible in this life because we have a sin nature, and the battle is within us (Romans 7), but each spiritual battle should have in mind the eradication of sin, not some compromise (8:24-29).*
4. *The Word of God is written for everyone to read, learn, and obey—make it available to others (8:30-35).*

## Question

The command to love our enemies requires:

- A. Telling ourselves all our enemies are to be like friends.
- B. Figuring out how to love people we don't like.
- C. Loving people whether we like it or not.

B is correct. This chapter emphasizes a strategy to carry out God's commands and B best represents a strategy. A and C may be helpful but don't involve a strategy as to how one should do that.

## Chapter 9

*Verses 1-2—The kings of Canaan in the middle and south area of the country gathered to fight with Israel. Usually spiritual victory leads to greater battles or challenges.*

*Verses 3-27—When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua did, they:*

- (1) They also acted craftily. They took worn-out wineskins, old clothes. Temptations will usually not appear as something wrong. Sin is clever, not stupid.
- (2) They had old bread. Temptation is usually deceptive.
- (3) They went to Joshua at Gilgal. Temptation comes to us. We don't need to go looking for it. It comes while we're minding our own business.
- (4) The men of Israel said, "Perhaps you are living in the land." Temptation is often given only a surface examination.
- (5) The men of Israel did not ask the counsel of the Lord. The pivotal point for our falling for temptation is when we do not get our counsel from the Word of God.
- (6) Joshua made peace and a covenant with them to let them live. Temptation is victorious not when we give in to it but when we make peace with it. It's making peace with something we should go to war with.
- (7) After their covenant, they found out they were neighbors. At a certain point, a good person (a man or woman of God) will realize that they have been taken in by temptation.
- (8) The whole congregation grumbled against the leaders. Temptation can usually be best identified and dealt with when a whole network of believers is looking at it. Moral and ethical sensitivity is best dealt with by a network of believers, not just leaders.
- (9) Joshua asked the Gibeonites why they deceived Israel. The response is that the Gibeonites will be slaves to Israel. After one has given in to temptation, then all that is left to do is damage control. But damage control is important. Once you've sinned, there are not too many good options. You just have to do the best you can then.

- (10) They give an explanation to Joshua. They said it was because they didn't want to be destroyed by Joshua. The explanation of sin from the standpoint of the one who is committed to it always sounds good from a humanitarian perspective. If you leave God out of the evaluation, it sounds good. For example, why shouldn't be women be elders? They're gifted, etc.

Comparing Rahab to the Gibeonites —

Similarities:

- (1) Both believed Joshua would conquer the land because God commanded it through Moses.
- (2) Both of them either hid the truth or lied.
- (3) Both of them had the motive of self-preservation.
- (4) Both were preserved.

Differences:

- (1) Rahab believed Joshua would conquer the land **before** Joshua began conquering. That is, the Gibeonites "saw and believed." Rahab believed without seeing.
- (2) Rahab lied to the enemies of Israel and helped Israel win the victory. The Gibeonites lied to the leadership of Israel and didn't help Israel at all.
- (3) Rahab was commended for her action in the New Testament. The Gibeonites were not.
- (4) Rahab became part of Israel. She was the grandmother of Boaz and in the line of the Messiah. The Gibeonites became slaves.

## Applications

1. *Spiritual victory will often be followed by even greater spiritual warfare (9:1-2).*
2. *Temptation to sin is usually not stupid but crafty. It's just as effective on intelligent or well-educated people as it is on ignorant unlearned people. It will include the ten points observed in the text (9:3-27).*
3. *Compromise with the world will always be our greatest ongoing challenge. For the maturing believer who doesn't commit adultery or lie or steal or kill or worship idols or get drunk, etc., the ongoing challenge will be to not make deals with the world.*

## Question

What is the most likely temptation for a maturing believer to give in to?

- A. A wealthy influential unbeliever wishing to join our group.
- B. An attractive person of the opposite sex flirting with you.
- C. Someone telling you something about someone that you are not suppose to tell anyone else.

A is correct. Of course, it depends on the individual, but the most subtle crafty temptation is to give in to worldly wealth. B and C are incorrect because they are usually easier identified as sin.

## Chapter 10

*Verses 1-5*—Five kings agree to fight against Gibeon because they made peace with Israel.

*Verses 6-11*—So people of Gibeon came to Joshua for protection because of their covenant. So Joshua traveled all night up from Gilgal to fight for Gibeon.

Chapter 10 is about Joshua recovering after his deception from the Gibeonites. It's an example of how a good man recovers after falling from temptation.

- (1) He kept his word to the Gibeonites.
- (2) God said to not fear the kings because He gave them into Joshua's hands. He acted according to God's Word.
- (3) He marched all night from Gilgal. He was aggressive.
- (4) He pursued the armies, and God threw large stones on them from the sky (hail?). Joshua's free will choices are combined with the sovereign intervention of God.
- (5) Joshua spoke to God and asked that the sun stand still in the sky. He prayed, asking God to help him do what God wanted him to do. (a) View that there was a slowing down of the earth to make more hours in the day. (b) View that there was no irregularity in the rotation but some strange reflection of the sun that allowed the light to continue. This would make more daylight hours but not more hours in the day.

- (6) They roll a stone over entrance of cave where 5 kings are hiding to entrap them and go finish the battle. Some things need to be done right away and some things need to wait. Most things can wait, however. For example, wait for 3 days before making a decision, especially if you are upset with someone. Most things look different after 3 days.
- (7) Then Joshua goes to the cave and kills those five kings. Then he begins the campaign against the other cities in southern and central Palestine. He left no survivor or evil influence behind.

## Applications

*Spiritual recovery after being deceived by temptation should include:*

1. *Keeping your word—you are no better than your word (10:1-7). The Gibeonites lied to Joshua, but Joshua didn't lie to them.*
2. *Be sure you act consistent with the Word of God. Don't let your past sin compromise the Word of God (10:8). Joshua's failure with the treaty with the Gibeonites did not keep him from obeying God's Word after that.*
3. *Be aggressive in pursuing God's calling, even if you are handicapped by the consequences of your sin (10:9-10).*
4. *Depend on the work of God to make your ministry successful (10:11).*
5. *Pray for God's intervention as you pursue God's program (10:12-15).*
6. *Finish what you start. Don't let your past sin keep you from finishing well (10:16-27).*
7. *Learn from your failure. Don't leave any other evil influence in your life (10:28-43).*

## Question

What should you do to recover after falling to temptation?

- A. Take some time to pray and meditate on God's Word.
- B. Aggressively pursue your calling just as you would have before falling to temptation.
- C. Establish an accountability partner to be sure you aren't tempted again.

B is correct. Joshua aggressively went about doing what God had commanded. A and C are incorrect because they cannot be found in the passage.

## Chapter 11

*Verses 1-9*—The northern campaign around the Sea of Galilee with many horses and iron chariots. Armies as many as the sand of the seashore. After defeating them, Joshua burned their chariots and hamstringed the horses (they could no longer run). It seems the best strategy would be to use their technology (horses and chariots) to strengthen Israel's army, but God would not allow it because then they would depend on their own military might rather than on God. They could use the horses for pack animals or plowing but not for fighting. It's tempting to strengthen ourselves from others rather than from God. When you're strengthened by God, then you can't give glory to your own strength.

*Verses 10-23*—Joshua burns Hazor. They kill all the people and destroy the cities but only burned Hazor. Then the land had rest from war.

*Verse 15*—Joshua still connected to Moses and his commands.

*Verse 20*—They didn't make peace with any city except Gibeon because God hardened the hearts of the enemy so they would not seek peace with Israel. So Israel would not be tempted to show mercy to the enemy. This helped keep Israel from idolatry and to keep God's commandments. If there is some conflict we cannot resolve with someone, God may be hardening their hearts to protect you from their influence. What's destroying the church is a friendship with the world which is entanglement and yoking to the world. The best way for Christianity to disappear is to compromise with the world.

## Applications

1. *Don't gain power for yourself by your victories. For example, if you are successful in business or ministry or sports or whatever, don't use that to strengthen yourself. Never use your success to move in a direction of independence from God. Strengthen yourself with the knowledge and obedience of the Word of God (11:1-9). Israel didn't strengthen themselves with the chariots of the Canaanites.*
2. *Expect to always see God and the work of God, at least to some extent, through the eyes of your mentors. So be careful who you listen to (11:10-15). So Moses commanded Joshua and so Joshua did.*
3. *We should practice conflict not compromise with the ways of the world. We are not to destroy or go to war with worldly people as Joshua was. We are to be in the world (John 17:15, 1 Corinthians 5:10). But we are not to be of the world. As much as we can, we should be at peace with all men (Romans 12:18). But some sin is carried to us by people*

*and is inseparable from those people. A clear teaching of the Word of God will usually create a distancing from those people which must sometimes be maintained.*

## Question

Should I continue to be friends with an unbeliever living in adultery?

- A. It depends on whether or not the unbeliever is making progress toward ending his or her adultery.
- B. It depends on whether or not the unbeliever is influencing me.
- C. It depends on whether or not the unbeliever is repentant of his or her adultery.

B is correct. The issue here is the influence of the world. A and C are incorrect because they would be true for believers we are helping, not unbelievers we are friends with.

## Chapter 12

*Verses 1-6—First are the kings Moses defeated on the east side of the Jordan River.*

*Verses 7-24—The kings Joshua defeated on the west side of the Jordan River.*

## Applications

*Speak about what God has done in your life as a testimony, in your family or business or ministry. But never speak about what you have done. And don't try to subtly try to promote yourself or your organization by talking about what God has done through you or how God has used you. Remember, God used evil kings, false prophets and spirits, and a donkey.*

## Question

Should a person, church, or missionary organization tell people how many people they have led to Christ or taught or disciplined or how many groups they have or churches they have started?

- A. No, because it can't be done without claiming some of the credit.
- B. Yes, because it lets people know what God is doing.
- C. Sometimes, when it can be done without taking some of the credit.

A is correct. Joshua listed the kings conquered because it was clearly miraculously done by God as a direct command from God and as part of the objective of physically conquering the land. Today, physical numerical statistics which can be measured always lead to or come from an attitude of personal or organizational accomplishment. B is incorrect because we let people know what God is doing by spiritual quality, not numerical success of ourselves or our organizations. C is incorrect because numerical measurable success always involves taking some of the credit.

## Chapter 13

*Verses 1-7—Joshua is old. There is more land to be possessed—it was conquered but it was not possessed. God noticed what remained. It's also true of the sin in our life. It's not a failure on Joshua's part. It did what he could in the time he had. Now God wanted Joshua to divide up the land among the 9 1/2 tribes west of the Jordan. It would then be up to them to dispossess the Canaanites and possess their inheritance. We could probably argue it is not possible to remove every last Canaanite, nevertheless, that is what was needed, and leaving them alone is their downfall. The solution is to be committed to a lifestyle of spiritual warfare. Compare verse 6 with verse 13. The Canaanites continued to live among Israel.*

*Verses 14 and 33—The Levites did not have an inheritance. They were part of the priesthood of God. They lived from the sacrifices and gifts from the people. They had 48 designated cities throughout the land (see chapter 21). They also had pasture land (14:4).*

## Applications

1. *There are always sins in our lives left unconquered. Therefore, the spiritual life is a constant spiritual warfare if we are progressing. No warfare—no progress. (13:1-7) So the spiritual life is a constant spiritual warfare if we are progressing. No warfare usually means no progress.*
2. *All believers have been given a certain portion of the work of God (or talents, in the sense of Matthew 25:14-29). It's our calling, and it's determined by (a) our gifts, (b) our talents and abilities, (c) our opportunities, and (d) our life situation.*

*It's our job to determine the depth of our ministry.*

## Question

Let's say you have the gift of evangelism. You should

- A. Study and apply the Bible to your life.
- B. Witness to as many people as possible.
- C. Find opportunities to lead people to Christ who show a leading from God.

A is correct. 1 Peter 4:15 says to first sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart. B is incorrect because God will supply the people to witness to. This idea can burn you out fast. C is not too bad, but the first is to deepen yourself in who God is, then respond to those who ask you to make a defense of that hope.

## Chapter 14

Dividing up the land, beginning with Judah, and the family of Caleb, a man who followed God fully.

### Applications

1. *The most basic social unit is the family, and the most basic leaders are "the heads of households." If there are no men willing to be heads of households, all other order structures are meaningless—governments, churches, or missions. (14:1-2)*
2. *We do not have an inheritance on earth. We can temporarily use certain parts of the earth in a utilitarian way, that is, to live and function according to our calling. But we should never see them as our reward or as something belonging to us. The Levites and Levitical priests had no inheritance in the land. They had some cities and pasture land in order to live but no inheritance. Today, believers of the church age are all priests (1 Peter 2:7-9, Revelation 1:6). (14:3-5)*
3. *Although we will never follow God perfectly, we can choose to follow God fully. That means we recognize anything contrary to God is sin, confess it (1 John 1:9), and decide to follow Christ (Galatians 2:20). We can make the basic decision to follow God fully as Caleb did. (14:6-15) To not follow God fully is to disagree with God about what sin is.*
4. *Most Christian leaders don't choose to follow God fully but choose to make compromises in the commands of God because of their fears of taking on the world culture, say, in the work place by telling the truth and keeping your word. They are the ones responsible for causing other believers to compromise and fear the world rather than God. (14:8)*

### Question

To follow God fully means

- A. To eliminate all known sin.
- B. To repent and confess all known sin.
- C. It's impossible to follow God fully.

*B is correct. To follow God fully is to keep God's Word, which requires constantly dealing with our sin. A is not possible. Following God fully is possible. C is incorrect because it equates perfection with intention.*

## Chapter 15

*Verse 1*—The locations of Judah's borders are given.

*Verses 13-19*—Caleb's inheritance near Hebron. He drove out the giants there. He possessed his inheritance. Caleb offers the challenge that whoever conquers Kiriath-sepher and captures it, Caleb will give his daughter Achsah as a wife. So Caleb's nephew Othniel does it. Then his daughter asks Caleb for springs to water their land. Observations:

1. Caleb took possession of the land and drove out the enemies. He was obedient.
2. Caleb motivated others to do the same. He motivated others to be obedient.
3. He was involved in finding a suitable husband for his daughter. As parents today, we can expose our children to other families and family networks in our own towns and other places.
4. He helped them get started in their marriage.
5. He was available and approachable for his daughter to come to him with her request.

*Verse 63*—The sons of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem. So this was written (or edited) before David, who did drive them out (2 Samuel 5).

## Applications

1. *Once again we see that the family is the basic unit of society. (15:1, 20)*
2. *The church is not Israel. Its call is almost the opposite of Israel. Israel's call was the land, not the people of the land. The church's call is the people, not the land. (15:2-12, 21-63)*
3. *We should take possession of our spiritual gifts, our position in life, our gifts, talents, and opportunities, and develop them as Caleb took possession of Hebron. (15:13-15)*
4. *A family patriarch should follow Caleb's lead in:*
  - a) *helping our children find a godly spouse. (15:16-17)*
  - b) *helping our children get started in marriage. (15:18-19)*
  - c) *being available by being approachable for our children's needs after they are married. (15:19)*

## Question

A family patriarch should

- A. Give things and advice to his married children.
- B. Put his children in a Christian environment (school or college) where they can meet a Christian spouse.
- C. Create a giving environment so that his married children feel like they can come to him with needs.

*C is correct. Caleb's daughter felt comfortable asking him for help. A is incorrect because they may not want his things or advice. B is incorrect because Caleb didn't do that. He created a situation for a godly man to come forward.*

## Chapter 16

*Verses 1-10—Inheritance of Ephraim. They did not drive out the Canaanites, so they lived with them and made the Canaanites their slaves.*

## Applications

*Don't justify friendship with the world by saying, "I don't serve it, it serves me." The Ephraimites didn't drive out the Canaanites from Gezer. Instead they made slaves of them. And in the end, the Ephraimites worshipped the Canaanite's gods. You can't make sin serve you.*

## Question

Which statement would be an example of the above principle?

- A. An evangelist who tells people Jesus wants them to be wealthy.
- B. Buying a new car when your old car is good enough.
- C. Thinking it's okay to drink alcohol because I can make it serve me by relaxing me.

*A is correct. If you lie to people for good reasons, you are still a liar. B and C are incorrect because buying a new car and drinking alcohol are not, in themselves, sinful or part of friendship with the world.*

## Chapter 17

*Verse 1—The reward was to individuals, being a man of war. Quite often God's evaluation is corporate (as a group), and we may have to obey the command as a group, but the reward or virtue is always individual. In the end, there are nothing but individuals.*

*Verse 3—This man had no sons, only daughters, who wanted an inheritance, so they received one. Daughters have just as much right to inheritance as sons.*

## Applications

1. *God rewards individuals who obey His commandments. Virtue may be carried out collectively (as a group), but virtue is always individual. There is no such thing as group virtue. (17:1)*
2. *Don't favor sons in dividing the family inheritance. The fact that husbands are to support those daughters has nothing to do with dividing up the inheritance. That doesn't mean it has to be equal—just don't favor the sons. It should be just, that is, according to the same standard. Don't be "fair" which has to do with equality. "Justice" is from the same standard. (17:2-6)*
3. *Keep property clearly defined as to who owns what. Partnerships rarely work. There are some which do, but it's rare, so be careful. American poet Robert Frost said, "Good fences make good neighbors." (17:7-11)*

4. *When you are strong, use your strength to drive out things which will cause you to sin. If you are presently healthy and generally on top of things in your life, ask yourself, “How can I use this time to advance my life spiritually and deny myself of sinful habits I have become comfortable with?” (17:12-13)*
5. *Develop the depth of whatever you have been given. Let God be in charge of the breadth of what you are given—more people, more talents, more gifts, etc. (17:13-18)*

## Question

What is the best thing to do to develop your ministry if your gift is pastoring?

- A. Ask, “What does the Bible say about shepherding people?”
- B. Ask, “How can I find people to shepherd?”
- C. Ask, “What other gifts should I pray for to help me shepherd people?”

*A is correct. We should develop the gifts we have by studying and applying God’s Word. B and C are incorrect because they have to do with expanding the size, instead of the depth, of our ministry.*

## Chapter 18

The whole congregation gathered at Shiloh and set up the tabernacle there, probably because it was more or less in the center of the land. They (the men) had to come there twice in the spring and once in the fall. They begin with unity and then Joshua will make divisions by casting lots before the Lord. Three men from each tribe walked throughout the land, making a description of it.

## Applications

1. *First understand the unity of the whole body of Christ. Our different callings are in the context of one church. The whole nation gathered at Shiloh and established one central temple location there. The divisions of their inheritance was in the context of their unity before God. (18:1)*
2. *Some (maybe most) people will be slow or hesitant in getting started in possessing their inheritance—that is, developing their calling, their gifts, their abilities, and opportunities. These people need (a) exhortation or encouragement (Romans 12:1; Ephesians 4:1) and (b) a specific plan to get started. (18:2-28)*

## Question

What should you do with someone who says he or she wants to follow Christ but never seems to get started?

- A. Invite them to join you in attending your church or missionary organization’s efforts.
- B. Encourage them to study the Bible on their own and apply it to their lives.
- C. Start them on a program that gives them somebody’s plan for studying the Bible.

*C is correct here because we see Joshua giving the people who had not yet possessed their inheritance a specific four-step plan to get started. A is a good idea, but too vague to get people going personally with God. B is the goal but incorrect here because the hesitant person usually needs a plan to get started. Chaos needs order before creativity is possible.*

## Chapter 19

*Verse 9*—The shares of the sons of Judah was too large, so Simeon got an inheritance in the middle of Judah. What if what we have to do is too much? God may give part of it to someone else. It’s not a reprimand or criticism, it’s just the way it is. We should not see it as competition.

*Verses 49-50*—They gave Joshua a special city of inheritance. (It’s near Ariel, in the West Bank.)

## Applications

1. *Don’t be jealous or regretful if you have an abundance of ministry and God gives some of it to others. Nobody can do everything for people. Let the different gifts of the body work—even if they are not part of your organization or group. Only be sure they are not false teachers. (19:1-9)*
2. *We should be sure we support our teachers and leaders if it means allowing them to have more time to pray, study, prepare, and teach. Don’t muzzle the ox while he is threshing. But we are not told to have them live materially higher than the ones they serve. It’s best if they are not much richer or poorer than the average of those they serve.*

## Question

How much should a pastor be paid?

- A. Enough so people can see the church is taking care of him.
- B. Enough for him to comfortably live but no more.
- C. Enough for him to have time to study and teach without financial distraction.

*C is correct. When Paul received a gift large enough to live on, he stopped making tents and devoted himself to prayer and the Word of God. A is incorrect because it doesn't matter what people think. B is incorrect because it is not for us to determine what is enough for a pastor to live comfortably. For example, what if I told you what it should mean for you to live comfortably? You would rightly say it is none of my business. It's between you and God.*

## Chapter 20

Six cities of refuge. If a man kills someone unintentionally:

- 1. Flee to one of this cities and stand at the gate.
- 2. Make his case to one of the elders of the city. Then they take him into the city.
- 3. When the blood avenger comes, the elders will not deliver the manslayer into his hand.
- 4. He lives in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment (trial).
- 5. If he is proven innocent of intentionally killing, he lives in the city until the death of the high priest.
- 6. When the high priest dies, he can return to his own city.

## Applications

- 1. *Premeditated sin is worse than other sin because it involves our intention. It assumes we know what is sin (in the Old Testament, via the Law of Moses; in the New Testament, via the conviction of the Holy Spirit—through the Old and New Testaments) and do it anyway. That causes the loss of assurance of salvation (1 John 2:4). But the believer who sins unknowingly should be informed, not disciplined. (20:1-3)*
- 2. *People who claim to be unaware of some particular sin should be informed, not disciplined or punished. (20:4-5)*
- 3. *All people accused of anything who claim to be innocent should be assumed to be innocent until proven guilty. (20:6)*
- 4. *Provisions should be made to protect unknowing sinners—such as new believers—from the attacks of other believers. (20:7-9)*

## Question

Why is premeditated sin worse than sin done in ignorance?

- A. Because sin done in ignorance is not really sin.
- B. Because premeditated sin is two sins: the sin and the intention to sin.
- C. Because premeditated sin is usually a worse sin than sins done in ignorance.

*B is correct. Premeditated sin is both the sin and the refusal to listen to God's Word and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. A is incorrect because sin done in ignorance is really sin. C is incorrect because premeditated sins might be lesser sins as well—like deciding to break the speed limit before you travel.*

## Chapter 21

The six cities of refuge are Levite cities (so the men making decisions about the manslayers are Levites). There are 48 Levite cities. These cities were dispersed among the other tribes, donated from the tribes. They were partially supported by the gifts from the temple, but else they worked the pasture land on which they would shepherd animals for food and clothing.

*Verse 44*—The Lord gave them “rest” on every side. Freedom from war, in a context of contentment.

*Verse 45*—“Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.”

## Applications

1. *There is no clear formula for how much financial support to give pastors and missionaries. It depends on their role and the amount of involvement they have in teaching the Scripture. But we, in the church, are all like levitical priests in that we are to have pasture land to support us and we are to minister to one another. (21:1-42)*
2. *Whatever one's reason for not having an active ministry, it is one's own fault, not God's. God has kept His promise to gift every person (1 Peter 4:10). (21:45)*
3. *God has promised us a heavenly (not earthly) reward of an eternal possession, life in the New Jerusalem, and rest from our struggles. (21:43-44)*
4. *"The land had rest from war" is for us in the church age "contentment." The Israelites lived in the land and possessed it, but many Canaanites remained and much trouble lay ahead. Contentment:*
  - a. *Contentment is getting out of every situation all that is in it.*
  - b. *Contentment is not getting what we like but liking what we get.*
  - c. *Contentment is making the most out of the least.*
  - d. *Contentment is not connected to where you are but who you are.*
  - e. *Contentment is realizing that God has given me everything I need for my present happiness (Hebrews 13:5).*

## Question

Which statement would be the best application of Joshua 21:44 today?

- A. If we obey God, we will have rest in heaven.
- B. If we obey God, we will have rest on earth.
- C. If we obey God, we will have a sense of rest in the midst of persecution.

A is correct. 21:44 is God's promise of rest from their enemies as a reward for Israel. For us in the church age, that's in heaven. B is incorrect because both Christ and the Apostles said we would have no rest on earth in the sense of the reward of 21:44. C is incorrect because the context here is rest after the battle, not rest during the battle.

## Chapter 22

*Verses 1-9*—The transjordan men who have fought for Israel gather to Joshua at Shiloh. Joshua praises them—they have not forsaken their brother Israelites and they have kept the commands of the Lord. So now he sends them home to the east side of the Jordan. He also warns them to be careful—

1. Love the Lord your God.
2. Walk in God's ways.
3. Keep God's commandments.
4. Hold fast to God.

*Verses 10-14*—When these men came to the Jordan, they built a large altar by the Jordan River. The rest of the Israelites hear about it and are suspicious, thinking it is rebellion against God. The whole congregation gathers at Shiloh to go to war against the Transjordan tribes. Before they go to war, they decide to send representatives to inquire about the altar.

*Verses 15-20*—The prosecution speaks (Phinehas and other leaders in the delegation). They accuse the tribes of an unfaithful act against God. They know that God will hold all Israel responsible, and they will all suffer. History:

- In Numbers 25:1-9 Phinehas put to death an Israelite and a Midianite woman who caused Israel to worship idols.
- And remember Achan, how 36 "innocent" people died because of Achan's sin.

*Verses 21-29*—The defense—They were afraid that future generations of the Israelites would not include the Transjordan tribes, so they built an altar of remembrance, to show unity in Israel. It's not for sacrifices.

*Verses 30-34*—This explanation satisfies Phinehas. He brings the news back to the other Israelites. So this altar becomes an "altar Witness" between the east and west side people, a sign of unity.

## Applications

1. *We should recognize the faithfulness of the faithful, even when they are not part of our group. Joshua made a special point of recognizing the contribution of the Transjordan 2 1/2 tribes. (22:1-3)*
2. *Our application of Scripture to people who are different from us culturally or racially or geographically should have nothing to do with those differences but only that they (a) love God, (b) walk in His ways, (c) keep His commandments, and (d) serve Him with heart and soul. (22:4-9)*
3. *If you build a place of worship or prayer or remembrance of God, it will always cause confusion as to whether you are worshipping God or worshipping the place. The Law required Israel to sacrifice at only one designated temple (then*

at Shiloh). When they built another altar, it caused confusion. Jesus said that worship for the church is not in places but in Spirit and in truth (John 4:21-24). So if we build a place, it will cause confusion. (22:10-12)

4. Never judge someone else's motives. If you believe their actions are representing sinful motives, go talk to them. You can only judge action and what people say their motives are. Statements about motives should be taken at face value—like an action. (22:13-33)
5. Our faith and worship of God can be expressed in a variety of ways, so long as they do not violate the commandments of God in the Word of God. (22:34)

## Question

What should you do when you think some believer you know well is doing something from impure motives?

- A. Don't do anything because their motive is between them and God.
- B. Assume their motive is good and look only at their actions.
- C. Go tell them you think they have a bad motive.

C is correct. Here Phinehas and a group of representative leaders went to the Transjordan 2 1/2 tribes and told them they thought their motive was to set up an alternative place for sacrificing to God. A is incorrect because if it's someone you know well, it's good to discuss it with them. B is incorrect because, even though we are not to judge motives, God will, so it's good to help close friends examine that, if possible.

## Chapter 23

Verse 1—Joshua calls the leadership of Israel together (but not the priests or Levites).

Verse 3—He reminds them that God has been fighting for them.

Verses 4-5—Joshua has apportioned the land to them. Those still left in the land, the Lord will drive them out.

Verses 6-12—Three commands:

1. Keep what's written in the law of Moses
2. Do not associate with the nations that remain among them
  - a. Don't even mention the names of their gods
  - b. Don't make any oaths by the names of their gods
  - c. Don't serve their gods
  - d. Don't bow down to their gods
  - e. Don't intermarry or associate with the people
3. Cling to the Lord your God

Verses 14-16—Joshua is about to die. Know that not one good word of God has failed. He has literally fulfilled every word. Therefore you should keep his commandments literally. But the Mosaic Covenant (condition) is not like the Abrahamic Covenant (unconditional). God will also bring upon Israel the threats He said when (not “if”) they don't obey.

This chapter explains why God brought a curse upon Israel. It begins in Judges 2 and continues to 2 Kings 17, when the Northern Kingdom of Israel is taken captive to Assyria in 722 B.C. and to 2 Kings 21:1-16; 23:26-27 where the curse is finally realized when Judah is taken captive to Babylon in 586 B.C. So this chapter is a pivot point. It takes up themes from Mt. Sinai and casts light into the period of the Judges, the divided monarchy, and finally into the Babylonian Captivity. As such, this chapter is the theological explanation for the history of Israel.

## Applications

1. Leaders need teaching. Most teaching in the church (the Christian world) is aimed at the lowest level of knowledge and understanding. The more mature you become and the more of a leadership role you assume, the less instruction there is available for you. Joshua, however, first addressed the leaders, including the elders. (23:1-2)
2. The way to learn about God is to look at what He has done—as recorded in His Word. What He has done is indicative of what He is doing and what He will do. Don't assume something is of God if it is not something He has done—like being slain in the Spirit, healing meetings, and large mega-meetings. (23:3-5)
3. What leaders need to keep on doing is: (a) be firm about keeping the Word of God—nothing more, nothing less, nothing else; (b) not become like the world, marry its people, or flirt with its gods; and (c) cling (that is, depend only on) the Lord, the God of the Bible. (23:6-13)
4. God keeps His Word literally, so be sure you take His Word literally. (23:14)

5. *Salvation is unconditional (like the Abrahamic Covenant), but the spiritual life and its heavenly rewards are conditional (like the Mosaic Covenant). (23:15-16)*
6. *The Bible is a call to intimacy with the living God. You're on a journey which leads you toward knowing God. The spiritual life is learning to think God's thoughts. That's why Christianity is cross-cultural. There are three things which keep us from knowing God intimately:*
  - a. *Letting culture define or influence your definition of God.*
  - b. *Letting circumstances interpret what God's doing.*
  - c. *Letting your wishes define God, that is, defining God by how you want Him to be. Only Scripture defines God.*

## Question

What do leaders in this church age need to be instructed in—if we are applying Joshua 23?

- A. Shepherding the people of God.
- B. Avoiding worldliness.
- C. Teaching the Bible.

B is correct. Joshua here instructs the leaders to “not associate with these nations which remain among you” (23:7). A is incorrect because nothing is mentioned about shepherding God’s people. C is incorrect because the leaders are told to keep the book of the Law of Moses, but there is nothing here about teaching it.

## Chapter 24

*Verses 1-13*—Joshua gathers all the people at Shechem and goes through the history of what God in His sovereignty did for Israel.

*Verse 14*—Now we change to the free will of man. “Now, therefore ...” (like Romans 12:1 and Ephesians 4:1).

- Fear the Lord—This is what will keep you from sinning. We promise according to our hopes, but we perform according to our fears.
- Serve Him in sincerity—This word is used for animals without blemish given in sacrifice (Exodus 12:5; Leviticus 1:3, 10). The only person this word is used of is Noah (Genesis 6:9).
- Serve Him in truth, or trustworthy manner
- Put away the other gods, which their fathers served

*Verse 15*—The people can choose, but for Joshua and his house, he will serve the Lord. He’s calling for a proactive decision, not as a reaction to circumstances they will encounter.

*Verse 16-17*—God is righteous and jealous, so decide now if you are going to serve Him, now while you can think it over, not waiting until a crisis, but on the basis of who God is and what He has done and what He requires.

*Verse 18*—The people answered that they would serve God.

*Verse 19*—Joshua replies that they will not be able to serve the Lord because He is holy and jealous and will not forgive sins. If you forsake Him, He will consume them.

*Verse 21*—The people think they can serve Him.

*Verse 24*—Joshua told them to get rid of the foreign gods.

*Verse 26-27*—So Joshua wrote the covenant on a stone as a witness to the people. Then he dismissed the people.

*Verse 29*—Joshua died at age 110. They buried him in his city.

*Verse 31*—Israel served the Lord for the days of Joshua and the elders who survived Joshua.

*Verse 32*—They buried the bones of Joseph in Shechem (a mummy made in Egypt some 400 years earlier).

*Verse 33*—Eleazar (the son of Aaron) died, and they buried him at Gibeah.

## Applications

1. Give people an overview of what God has done throughout history (in the Bible), and remind them of it periodically. (24:1-13)
2. Show people that God was involved in real time history (in the Bible). He did real contrary-to-nature miracles in the real natural 3-dimensional world. (24:1-13)
3. Remind believers that they would be lost without the work of God in their own personal history. (24:1-13)
4. Understand that who you are and what you have is because of what God gave you. Never think you earned what you have. God gave a personality, intelligence, education, talents, gifts, opportunities, and a life situation which you did not earn or choose. (24:13)
5. “We promise according to your hopes, but we perform (act) according to our fears” (author unknown). That’s why we are continually told to fear God. (24:14)
6. Service to God must begin with personal purity. But “sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts” precedes “being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks” (1 Peter 3:15). Don’t minister in a context of unconfessed sin. (24:14)
7. Our decision to serve God should be thought through. It should not be based on a personal experience, a felt need, or a crisis in our life. It should be based on (a) who God is and (b) what He has done through history (24:1-12), and (c) what He requires of us (24:14). It should be a decision to serve a righteous God, not to get a genie in a bottle to give me my wants. (24:15-18)
8. If you decide to serve God fully, understand that you will not serve God fully—because He is holy (and you are not), He is jealous (not tolerant), and He is just (not forgiving sin)—that is, all sin must be paid for, not just overlooked). Because of Christ’s death on the cross, we have a sufficient payment for sin, so we can return, confess our sin, and be forgiven—but understand that will be an essential, continual process as we are conformed to the image of Christ. (24:19-20)
9. If you decide to serve God, even though it’s impossible because He is holy, jealous, and just and you are not, then: (a) put away your other gods—the things of this world you look to for security and pleasure and (b) “incline your heart to the Lord,” not just your actions. (24:21-28)
10. We need to disciple people. But leadership for the next generation will require not just disciples but an understanding of the need for ongoing discipleship as a means for reproducing the Kingdom of God. There is no evidence that preaching, teaching, counseling, pastoring, or even good godly leaders will provide spiritual leadership for the next generation. (24:29-33)

## Question

We should commit ourselves to serve God based on:

- A. What He has done throughout history.
- B. What He has done in our own lives—who we are and what He has given us.
- C. What He will do in the future—with us personally and with the world and the Kingdom of God.

A is correct. In this chapter Joshua makes the point that the people should decide whether or not to follow God based on who God is and what He has done through history. B is incorrect because this is why we should not be proud of our accomplishments, not the basis of our decision to serve God. C is incorrect because nothing about God’s future work is mentioned in Joshua 24.