

# *Mt. Lebanon Church*

Adult Sunday School Lesson

10.29.2023

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Below please find my sharable thoughts, so please allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that he would have you to see through the study of God's word to share.

Joshua's Final Exhortation

## Joshua 24: 1, 14 – 24

What do we see in our life as being good or bad, how do we determine what we believe to be right or wrong, and do we know when a circumstance is the right thing to do, and if so, when we know it, do we do it. All of these are good questions to ask ourselves, but they are pointless questions to ask ourselves if we are not serving the Lord, for without God we can find no truth in the circumstances that are happening in our life, we can only find self-righteous opinions and motivations. Therefore, the first question we must ask ourselves is: are we serving the Lord, and if so, how do we see ourselves in our service to the Lord? Are we living our life in Christ according to the purpose and plan that he has predetermined for us, even before the foundation of the world. One thing is sure, and that is, it is instilled within all mankind to serve, therefore, we will end up serving someone or something.

**Joshua 24: 1, 14 – 15,....**Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel....and they present themselves before God....fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth....put away the Gods....serve ye the Lord....if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve....as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord....

Can one person have an effect on many people, sure they can. In today's scripture we will see how that one person had a positive effect on the lives of many when it came to sincerely serving the Lord in spirit and in truth. In the same manner, those who are serving the Lord must continue to put their complete faith and trust in him, for there are also those that can have a negative effect on the lives of many.

**1 Peter 4: 10 – 11**,....as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another....if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God, if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ....

As believers, we are to see all that we have as gifts from God, and we are to use these gifts as God deems necessary for serving him and serving one another. In order to do so, we must not only use these gifts on Gods behalf, but we must use them through Gods strength, and we must use them for Gods glory. Being an example of Gods word to others means encouraging one another in the love of God. Our choice to use our lives to bring glory to God, is Gods eternal purpose and plan for our life.

**1 John 3: 10**,....in this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil, whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God....

A true believer will seek to live in accordance with the obedience of God's word, but there are those who will persist in deliberately living in their own self-righteousness, therefore having a negative effect on the lives of those around them. Sin involves rejecting God in favor of Satan, and desiring the lustful ways of the world which means that our attitudes and actions fail to show forth faith and trust in the Lord, so that we have no confidence, no security, always seeing things negatively with no positive attitude concerning the outcome of all circumstance in our life. Not only does this bring us into a state of depression, but it also has a negative effect on the joy and happiness of those around us.

**John 15: 11**,....these things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might remain full....

For this reason, Joshua said:

**Joshua 24: 15**,....as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord....

The most important choice that mankind makes is the choice to believe upon Christ and put their faith and trust in him for his eternal salvation. Once justified by the redeeming blood of Christ, then daily, we must continue to serve him, to have a willing desire to reject the negativity of the world, and follow after the truth, through obedience to the word of God, so that we might have a positive effect on the lives of those around us.

**Joshua 24: 16 – 18**,....the people answered....God forbid that we should forsake the Lord....the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up....from....bondage....therefore will we also serve the Lord, for he is our God....

Often time, out of obligation, and of necessity we will feel appreciation and gratitude toward the Lord for the blessings that he has bestowed upon us, but we are still not being completely obedient to God and his word. This is because we feel that we are trying to serve God, but we do not want to let go of those things in the world which we still desire. We must remember that God will not share his glory with other so-called Gods, those things that we have in our life that we put before God. We cannot serve God while we are serving the lustful desires of the world.

**Matthew 6: 24**,....no man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon....

**Romans 6: 16**,....know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether to sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness....

All of humanity has the free will to choose, either to accept, or to reject the saving grace of Jesus Christ. To accept means coming into the obedience of the word of God, which is laid out so simply that we should easily follow the instructions thereof. Yet to often we are unable or unwilling to apply the instructions of Gods word in our own lives. Therefore, we must submit our lives to the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we might be willing servants of the righteousness of Christ, so that we may grow in our faith, and increasingly gain wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the salvation that we have through Christ Jesus.

**Joshua 24: 19 – 24**,....Joshua said....ye cannot serve the Lord....if ye forsake the Lord....the people said....but we will serve the Lord....Joshua said....ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him....put away....strange Gods....incline your heart unto the Lord....the Lord our God we will serve, and his voice will we obey....

It is a contradiction to say that anyone can serve God, and at the same time have those things in our life that we put ahead of God. We might say that we would not forsake God, but we do forsake him when we persist to follow after our worldly, lustful desires. When we repeatedly promise to serve God but in reality, we reject him, then we are witnesses against ourselves, and we are making promises unto God that we never intended to keep. We cannot continually declare to serve God, and at the same time, repeatedly break the covenant that we have made with him through our salvation.

**Matthew 15: 8,....**this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me....

**Isaiah 29: 13,....**the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men....

**Ezekiel 33: 31,....**they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear the words, but they will not do them, for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness....

The promises of our faithfulness to God, we show by the works of our faith in him. This means a living faith, a faith by demonstration, a faith that honours God, a faith that demonstrates the characteristics of the indwelling Holy Spirit within us. We must never forget that Christ is our pattern for life, and it is only by his work on the cross that saves us. Therefore, we must live and work the works of God, in his power, and for his glory, and fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth.

Let us Pray.

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