

## Essentials

### Joshua Celebration Week of August 30

Give one point or verse that spoke to you personally from the teaching video, sermon or Scripture this week.

Read Joshua 24:14-31

What questions do you have after reading this passage?

At the end of his life, Joshua asked the Israelite people if they wanted to serve the Lord or serve other gods. Joshua did not force them to do anything. First, there was a reminder of all that God had done for His people, and secondly there was a strong warning if they chose not to serve God. Joshua created a decision point for them to respond, not just in word, but in action and deed. He also created a reminder (v. 26) so they would remember what they had covenanted. The people chose to serve the Lord because they had seen His goodness and power firsthand in their lives.

How have you witnessed God's goodness or power in your own life?

If you were in the place of the Israelite people, what idols would tempt you to choose them over your service to God? As a reminder, idols are anything that replaces God. For example, if you stress-eat then you are seeking comfort from something other than God. Food, or eating, has become your comfort, instead of God. Other idols that could provide you with temporary comfort, security, provision, or identity include but aren't limited to: career, family, marriage, sex, sports, money, hobbies, shopping, etc. Our relationship with God should be the only thing we truly *need* to be joyful, at peace and content.

Even after the people had answered Joshua about whom they wanted to serve, Joshua reprimanded the people in vv. 19-20, "You are not able to serve the Lord, for He is a holy and jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. If you abandon the Lord and serve other gods, He will turn against you and destroy you, even though He has been so good to you." Joshua's warning is reminiscent of a drill sergeant haranguing his soldiers, "You can't win this fight! Just lay down and give up!" and the soldiers responding, "No, SIR! We will fight and we will win!" It is a call to arms, and in the Kingdom of Heaven, a call to serve diligently and without wavering.

Have you, or when did you make a decision to not just believe in God, but to serve and follow Him?

What did you intentionally choose to do differently so you could make time for serving?

What makes it difficult to serve faithfully and how do you make serving a priority in your own life?

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Paul is speaking to the Corinthians about how he does, "everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings." Serving can sometimes feel burdensome, especially when the people we are serving are demanding or rude. However, Paul saw the temporary trouble or discomfort of serving as something worth entering into if it brought more people to Christ in eternity. He went so far as to say that he would serve wherever and however he needed (even if it was outside of his gifting) because he knew God would provide!

How can you serve right where you are following the model that Paul set?

Think of someone who has served you well. How did their act of service inspire you into closer relationship with Christ?

For the remainder of your time together, discuss how you could serve together as a group once a month. Could you adopt a Strategic Partner to serve with ([christnc.com/strategic-partners](http://christnc.com/strategic-partners)) or serve at Celebrate Recovery or on Sunday morning together? You can be creative. What does it look like for your group to serve? Don't just talk about it. Make a plan and choose a "Service Leader" from your group who can coordinate and remind everyone.

# ESSENTIALS

Text: Joshua 24: 5-15

## The Plain Truth:

\_\_\_\_\_ follows self and  
\_\_\_\_\_ follows God.

Why were people focused during Joshua's leadership and then lost their way after his death?

- 1) With no \_\_\_\_\_, people chose to lower the bar of discipleship and follow their own self-centered desires.
- 2) People chose \_\_\_\_\_ over living into God's redemptive \_\_\_\_\_!
- 3) People chose to live in a place called "\_\_\_\_\_" instead of a land called "\_\_\_\_\_".

### One Year Bible Reading

August 30: Job 34:1-36:33, 2 Corinthians 4:1-12, Psalm 44:1-8, Proverbs 22:10-12

August 31: Job 37:1-39:30, 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:10, Psalm 44:9-26, Proverbs 22:13

September 1: Job 40:1-42:17, 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, Psalm 45:1-17, Proverbs 22:14

September 2: Ecclesiastes 1:1-3:22, 2 Corinthians 6:1-13, Psalm 46:1-11, Proverbs 22:15

September 3: Ecclesiastes 4:1-6:12, 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:7, Psalm 47:1-9, Proverbs 22:16

September 4: Ecclesiastes 7:1-9:18, 2 Corinthians 7:8-16, Psalm 48:1-14, Proverbs 22:17-19

September 5: Ecclesiastes 10:1-12:14, 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, Psalm 49:1-20, Prov. 22:20-21

August 29 & 30, 2015