

## 08.07.11 / Joshua 24

## Removing Idols

**Passage Insight**

Chapter 24 of Joshua finds God using Joshua to call Israel to ongoing faithfulness to the Lord and constant, unfailing remembrance of the covenant He has made with them. This call, as we've seen the past two weeks, is not a call to simply muster up some faith in something outside of ourselves, but rather a call to remember GOD's faithfulness to us, for faith in something is only as good as that thing's ability to make good on its promises.

In the preceding chapter, in Joshua 23, verse 14 shows Joshua once again reminding Israel of THE LORD's faithfulness to fulfill every last promise that He has made to His people. In Joshua 24:1-13 the Lord speaks through Joshua and recounts many of the promises and their subsequent fulfillment in the presence of Israel, thus revealing HIS faithfulness and giving Himself all glory for accomplishing that which could never be accomplished by mankind apart from God. We too would be wise to recount the specific ways that the Lord has demonstrated His faithfulness in our own lives. Following the specific exhibitions of God's faithfulness to Israel, verse 14 has Joshua sharing a "therefore" statement, in other words saying that God's faithfulness should direct us to some very specific action. So, what does God's faithfulness point the people of Israel (and us) toward?

- To fear (respect in awe) the Lord
- To serve Him from a sincere heart
- To serve Him FAITHFULLY (as He is faithful)
- To put away all other objects of worship
- To make a decision: will we serve God, or will we serve something else?

Jesus makes it clear for us in Matthew 6:24 that we cannot serve two masters. As he says, "... for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other." Joshua is saying the same thing here. If we serve anything apart from the Lord, then we despise the Lord. We are faced with a choice as we examine Jesus'. Will we serve the God who fought to save us while were still fighting against Him, knowing that we couldn't save ourselves, or will we serve the false gods that WE elevate to false stature, the false gods that are powerless and that have no capacity to fight for and save us?

**Application and Prayer**

## Seeing God's Faithfulness

- 1) Being faithful ourselves starts with knowing God as faithful. Joshua 24:1-13 lists clear examples of God's faithfulness to the Israelites. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and so He is STILL faithful. Share specific examples of God's faithfulness in your life.
- 2) When we see God's faithfulness, we are faced with a decision, "whom will we serve?" And the only appropriate response is, "the Lord!" Where are you giving credit for God's faithfulness to something or someone else (spouse, kids, job, money, hobby, possessions, pride of being right, your intellect, vacations, goals fulfilled, etc.)?
- 3) If we attribute God's faithfulness to something other than God, we will worship and serve that thing. What does ongoing repentance look like for you in this?
- 4) PRAY
  - a. That you would remember the faithfulness of GOD, giving credit only to Him

Putting Away Idols

- 1) When we're honest with ourselves, we don't know ourselves as well as we think we do, and we need one another to point out our areas of faithfulness AND faithlessness. Make it a practice to ask those who know you well what they see you worshiping that is not God.
- 2) Our idols can do NOTHING for us. When we believe they can do something, we are believing a lie. If this is a lie, then what truth replaces it?
- 3) Having identified some of your idols, practically speaking, what do you need to do in order put them away?
- 4) What are good things in your life that you have elevated to god-like status? Give credit and glory to the Lord for providing these things.
- 5) PRAY
  - a. That your hope would be solidly grounded in the PROVIDER, not in good provision
  - b. That you would clearly see what you worship apart from God
  - c. That you would see God's truth and His faithfulness in His Word, so that the lies you believe would have no place with you

**Sources**

- Prayer