

**Joshua- Courage for Battle**  
**Life's Questions for Life's Big Decisions- Session #7**  
**Small Group Notes**

**Introduction:**

**What was something that you purchased because you saw it advertised to improve your life, but it did not fulfill your expectations? How did you respond in that situation?**

**Why are we inclined to believe false ads? What are other things that you feel people are deceived today?**

**Discuss:**

1. No one is exempt from foolish decisions

- Read Joshua 9:14-15
- Read Romans 3:10, 23

Explain: The fact that Israel did not seek the Lord's counsel shows where their heart was in making the decision. Yet while it can be easy to point the finger, the reality is that for all of us, we have made bad decisions from the smallest times that we angered our spouse for no reason or to making a bad financial decision that was costly for our future. Just as no one is righteous and we have all sinned, it shows even more of how much we relate to the children of Israel in this moment.

Ask:

**What are ways that we can easily be deceived into making bad decisions without seeking the Lord?**

**Why are some of the hardest lessons that we learn come from our bad decisions?**

**Is there a decision that you are considering right now? What lesson does this story reveal for you to pursue in making future decisions?**

2. Look for fruit versus listening to flattery

- Always be alert for lies. Read Joshua 9:3-13
- Deceit is the enemy's primary weapon.

Explain: The tone in their plea is one of deceit that is cloaked in flattery. Think about when someone is trying to “butter you up” to do something that they do not want to do or that you may not want to do, they will often use flattery as a way to deceive you into fulfilling their requests. The same type of deceit has been used throughout Scripture as people chose lesser things or even believed lies instead of trusting in the Lord's discernment or plan. For example, when Eve took a bite from the fruit in the Garden of Eden, she was deceived (and tempted) by the devil that when she ate it, she would be just like God. It's been the same lies over and over again.

Ask:

**Read 1 Peter 5:8, What difference does it make in your life to know that there is an enemy (the Devil) that tries to deceive you in whatever way he can?**

**What are fruits that we can look for in people or situations to help us know if we are being deceived or not?**

**Read Ephesians 4:11-14, what has the Lord given us to help in times of deceit?**

3. Your grandmother was right: “sleep on it”

- Read Joshua 9:14-15
- Read Proverbs 19:2-3

Explain: In the story, we see how the decision that was made to enter into a treaty with the Gibeonites (Hivites) was made quickly. The term “FOMO” stands for the Fear of Missing Out. We are easily drawn into making drastic decisions that have major consequences and implications based something just upon our fear of missing out on something in the moment. The implications of these decisions can lead to having multiple jobs, financial issues, insecurity, and doubts. Yet they are driven from a place of fear instead of from a place of discernment.

Ask:

**How have you let FOMO impact the decisions you have made? What have been some of the negative implications of letting fear drive your decisions?**

**Who are people in your life that help to provide discernment for decisions? What is the value of having people to help you slow down and talk things out?**

4. Check in with God.

- Read Joshua 9:14-15
- Foolish decisions are a result of trusting your senses more than the Spirit.

Explain: We see in these verses how the people sampled the provisions and then left the Lord out of their next steps. They were relying more on what they experienced instead of allowing the Lord to reveal to them the steps they needed to take. And like many of us, they were to hold true to their oath, no matter the cost.

**Read James 1:5, why do you think James affirmed that the Lord gives wisdom so generously? How is this counter to what the culture says about how to find wisdom?**

**Has there been a time that everything didn't make sense on paper and yet you trusted in the Lord's wisdom to take the next step? How did that build your faith for future decisions?**

**Review the steps below from the sermon on the questions to ask for making big decisions:**

What are the little questions for big decisions?

1. Has God already answered this in His Word? (3 times they were told to not make treaties)
2. Does it have God's fingerprints on it? (Read 2 Corinthians 10:5)
  - Partnerships built off of neediness typically leave you broken.
  - What does your owl (older wiser person) say? (Read Proverbs 12:15)

**Which one of these do you need to pursue more in your life today?**