

Joshua- Courage for Battle

Backstory to History's Longest Day- Session #8

Small Group Notes

Introduction:

What are ways that we have been introduced recently to the reality of war? What are reasons that we can get anxious in these moments? What other feelings begin to reveal themselves during this time?

What are ways that going through battles challenges our commitments? How have you seen that in your family? How can understanding battles physically or spiritually help us to build our trust in Jesus?

When we read through the book of Joshua, you see a story of battles that happened from one chapter to the next. Soon however we see that rather than claiming a land in order to build an empire of personal pride, we see that they were taking what was promised to them from the beginning (Genesis 15: 12-16). In today's discussion (Joshua 9 and 10) we see God's sovereignty on display as He will control even the timing of the day to show that it is not about the power of Israel that the battle is guaranteed, rather, it is based upon God's goodness and purpose! The call for us is to stay committed to God's plan being fulfilled.

Discuss: How do we understand the fine print of commitment?

1. Keeping our commitments will take courage!
 - Read Joshua 9:18
 - In life, we will either keep our commitments or yield to our fears
 - Breaking a foolish commitment never solves a problem.
 - The courageous keep their commitments even after circumstances have changed
 - Keeping our commitments is never convenient.

Explain: Eventually we see how the Gibeonites confessed their motives to Joshua, knowing that it might mean their demise. However, Joshua showed the mercy of God to the Gibeonites by sparing their lives and entering into a treaty that meant he would help to protect them. Joshua showed grace in

this moment as well as a heart to remain committed even through the Gibeonite deception.

Ask:

What are the times that you find yourself quick to dismiss others because they lie or hurt us? Are there ways that we can sometimes see ourselves acting the same as the Gibeonites towards God?

How do you relate more to this story in seeing how Joshua kept his commitment even with someone else's sin impacting them? What are the times that you find yourself willing to work through tough times and stay committed?

2. Keeping our commitments matter to God!

- Read Joshua 10: 5-8
- When we keep our commitments, we show the world that our God is a Promise Keeper! (Exodus 20:7; Psalm 15:1-4)

Explain: The five kings had gathered to try and end the Gibeonites (and eventually Israel). Since Gibeon and Israel were united, the Lord defended the covenant Israel had made with them. Israel came to their rescue with the full power and blessing of God behind them. In this moment, not only was the national identity on the line, but the character of God was on full display for how He would demonstrate His power in this situation.

Ask:

What are the instances that you hear the statement, “put your money where your mouth is”? In this story, how was God's reputation and character on the line just as much as Joshua's?

What are other parts of our life that God reveals His nature as Promise Keeper? What impact does it have in your family, marriage, relationships, or circumstances?

According to Joshua 10:8, what was the essence of the message Joshua was sharing to the people? What is something in your life that you view as an impossible situation? How does Joshua's message speak into that situation as well?

3. Keeping our commitments allows us to have “days like no other!”

- Read Joshua 10:9-15
- Keeping our commitments unleashes the power of God!
- Commitment makes even our mistakes work for us (Psalm 2:1-4)
- The greatest danger in life is taking our spiritual commitments lightly!

Explain: The Lord further displayed His power by controlling the motion of the universe at Joshua's request so that Israel would have more time to defeat their enemy. It's incredible to think about the fact that God stopped the motion of the planet for His people! In this event, God showed His power and ability to do anything, even the seemingly impossible, for His people.

Ask:

How does knowing that God is in control help you with the call to live on mission for Him? What sense of confidence does it give you to keep your commitments in your life?

Is there something that you have been taking lightly that God wants you to grow in your commitment of?

Is there something in your life that you view (or viewed) as an impossible situation? How did you actively submit that situation to God to be used for His purposes?