

Foundations for the Family



“... But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”
Joshua 24:15 NLT

- Why do so many families, today, struggle?

God brought Israel into the Promised Land, yet they were in danger of turning from God and following the immoral life styles of the surrounding nations. Joshua gave Israel a warning about staying faithful to God.

Today, families are faced with the temptation and pressure to follow the world’s sinful ways of life. **Families that have adopted the world’s evil ways have deteriorated and fallen apart.** However, the family can be saved. The key is found in twelve words that Joshua spoke: “... But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.” Our families need to be built on a solid foundation.

Central Lesson

Devotion to God is the glue that holds the family together.

1. Joshua was the spiritual **LEADER** of his family.

“... But as for **me** and my family, we will serve the Lord.” NLT

Joshua modeled spiritual commitment for his family. His family was influenced by his example. They, too, were going to serve God.

God calls all Christian men to be the spiritual leader of their homes. They are to model commitment and devotion to God. Their family should see integrity in the way they do business, discipline in the way they manage their time and finances, Godly wisdom in the way they make decisions, respect and love in the way they relate to their wife, the children, and other people. They should be an example in their prayer life, devotional life, church attendance, service to others, and witness to the lost. *Are you a spiritual leader to your family?*

2. Joshua focused on the importance of **SERVING** God. “... we will **serve** the Lord.” NLT

The word “serve” in the Hebrew Old Testament has the idea of “**honor, worship**” as well as “**work for, labor for.**” Joshua was not content with only knowing about God and talking about God, he was passionate about being active in serving God and honoring Him with his life. Serving occupied his time, energy, and affection. *Do you understand the concept of “serving” God? Is your life focused on serving and honoring God?*

3. Joshua refused to allow the world to **SHAPE** his priorities and values (cf. Romans 12:2).

“... But as for me and my family, **we will serve the Lord.**” NLT

Romans 12:2 NLT

“**Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think....**” NLT

1 John 2:15-17 NLT

“**15 Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. 16 For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. 17 And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.**”

Joshua clearly demonstrated that he had made his choice to whom he would serve—God. The surrounding nations would have no influence on his priorities and values. God’s ways would be his ways. He wanted to honor God with his life.

Too many Christians have been influenced by the world’s business practices, morals, values and priorities. The world is shaping their character, thinking and behavior. *Who is shaping you—the world or God?*

4. Joshua challenged others to stop **STRADDLING** the fence and make a **CHOICE** to who they would serve.

“*But if you refuse to serve the Lord* [NIV - “...if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you], **then choose today** whom you will serve. *Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live?....*” NLT

Joshua challenged Israel to make a **choice** about whom they were going to serve. He told them to settle the issue, stop being undecided, be decisive. If there was something undesirable about serving God, **choose** whom they will serve.

Apparently they concluded that serving God was NOT “undesirable” because they responded with a pledge to live for God (cf. vs. 16-27, 31).

We will serve someone—either God, or our own self-centered desires, pleasure, money, greed, ego, career, etc. The question we need to consider is the same one Joshua presented to Israel—*what do you find undesirable about living for God? How will you be better off by rejecting God and living for something or someone else? If you are better off living for someone other than God, who is it and how will they benefit you over God?*

Have you been straddling the fence spiritually? Have you been trying to live for God and self or something else?

Be decisive. Make a **choice** to commit your heart to living for God. Determine that from this day on for the rest of your life you and your household will serve the Lord. Be a spiritual leader!

Central Lesson:

Devotion to God is the glue that holds the family together.

► Accept Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday’s study. ► Attend a small group. ► Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus.