

L-path Teaching
May 12, 2024

Title: **THE CALL TO COMMITTED SERVICE**

Big Idea: Joshua issues a call to his hearers to serve the Lord by means of his own example and resolve.

Text: Joshua 24:14-24

14“Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. 15But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

16Then the people answered, “Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods! 17It was the Lord our God himself who brought us and our parents up out of Egypt, from that land of slavery, and performed those great signs before our eyes. He protected us on our entire journey and among all the nations through which we traveled. 18And the Lord drove out before us all the nations, including the Amorites, who lived in the land. We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God.” 19Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the Lord. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you.” 21But the people said to Joshua, “No! We will serve the Lord.”

22Then Joshua said, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the Lord.” “Yes, we are witnesses,” they replied. 23“Now then,” said Joshua, “throw away the foreign gods that are among you and yield your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.” 24And the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.”

Introduction:

- **What do you mean by ‘Committed’?**
 - **In a relationship, marriage – it is a pledged to be together no matter what.**
 - **In the workplace – it is to deliver the work no matter what.**
 - **In an activity – it is to push forward no matter what.**
 - **In short, ‘Committed’ means no turning back. You are obligated to do it.**
- In our text for today, Joshua is presenting to Israel a choice, either they serve the Lord or serve other gods. They can only choose one!
- When it comes to our commitment to God, we can only choose one. Either Him or others.
- **Christian Service is a commitment. It is a major commitment.** It is not to be taken lightly.
- In verse 18, the people answered, v.18 ‘...*We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God.*’
- But Joshua was not very convinced,

- o v.19 Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the Lord. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you.”
- o Joshua is telling them, ‘Are you really sure?’
- **Serving God is a choice we have to make, whether now or some other time. But it is a choice we need to make.**
- **Not choosing God is always a wrong decision. It will just make our life a disaster.**
- Make it a choice to serve God.

A Call To Committed Service

1. **Committed Service is a commitment to faithfulness.**
 - a. v.14 *“Now fear the Lord and **serve him with all faithfulness.**”*
 - b. **Faithfulness comes from Hebrew word ‘emet’ which means ‘truth’, ‘right’, ‘sure’, ‘reliable’, ‘present’.**
 - c. **Christian service requires the servant to be true, sure, reliable, present.**
 - d. **We cannot be committed without being present. Being faithful is being present.**
 - e. Joshua set an example to Israel of being faithful to God. From the time he was an assistant to Moses, to spying the promised land, 40 years in the desert waiting patiently, to conquering the promise land. Through it all, he stayed faithful to God, doing what he needs to do.
 - f. **Being faithful means, we do not change. We stay true to our commitment.**
 - i. **Though there are challenges, go through it. Conquer it.**
 - ii. **Though it takes some time, pursue it until the end.**
 - iii. **Though it is hard, be strong and take courage. Don’t give up.**
 - g. **Christian service is never easy, but it is rewarding.**
 - i. *“Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that **not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.**” -Joshua 23:14*
 - ii. It was not easy. But as we remain faithful in serving God, He is faithful to fulfill all His promises.
2. **Committed Service is a commitment with our family.**
 - a. v.15 *“...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”*
 - b. v.24 *And the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.”*
 - c. This is a commitment beyond Joshua’s lifetime. It is a commitment up to his next generations. (Remember, Joshua is about to die when he said this)
 - d. **Many times, the most forgotten people when we serve God is our family.**
 - e. We always say, put God first. While that is true, it does not mean our family will be left behind.

- f. **In our Christian service, our family should be by our side.**
- g. Joshua stressed that point when he said, 'me and my household, we will serve the Lord.' He did not just tell them, 'I have served the Lord.'
- h. Joshua is concerned that after he die, the next generation of Israel will forget the Lord and serve other gods.
- i. What are the different gods he mentioned?
 - i. v.14...*Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt...*
 - ii. v.15...*then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living.*
 - iii. **The gods of their ancestors and the gods in the land they are living speaks of Heritage and Culture.**
 - iv. **Heritage speaks of the past. The next generation adopting the sins of the past.**
 - v. **Culture speaks of the influence of today. The next generation adopting the sins of the present.**
 - vi. These are the gods that Joshua is talking about.
- j. If we don't include our children in our service to God, then they will adopt the past or the present, or maybe both. Then their lives will be a disaster.
- k. **That is why it is important that, as Christians, we include our families in our Christian service. We cannot leave them behind.**
 - i. *Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. -Proverbs 22:6*
- l. **Remember, your family is part of your commitment to God.**

Conclusion:

- *37Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." -Matthew 9:37-38*
- **The church really need help.**
- **The Kingdom of God need everyone in the church.**
- As discussed last Sunday, everyone is part of the body. We play an important part.
- God is calling everyone to a committed service.
- *God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. -1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)*
- **Life is a gift. Use it well to serve God.**