

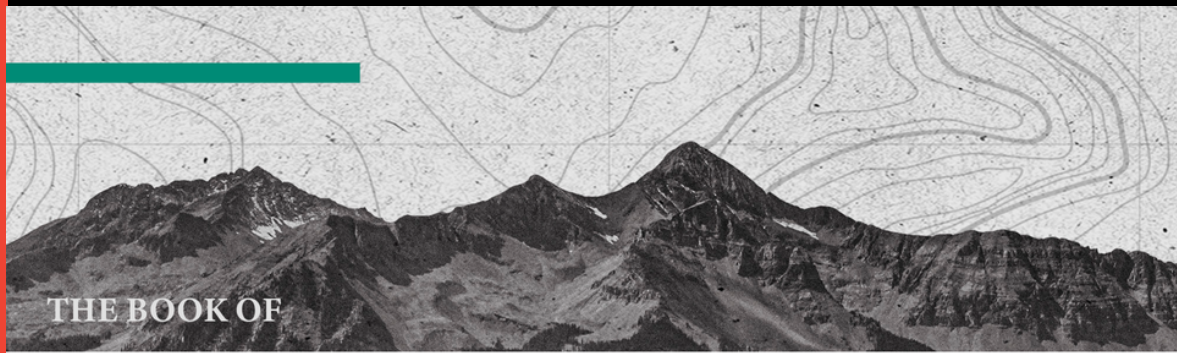


# LEADER GUIDE

Sept 14  
-  
Dec 28



## The Life of a Christian



# JOSHUA



# THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN

## A STUDY

*THROUGH THE BOOK OF JOSHUA*

---

**September 14 - December 28**

---

© 2025 City Church

Beijing, China

All rights reserved.

Written by TJ Johnson

Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

# Sermon Series Overview

This Sunday, we begin a new series in the Book of Joshua. I encourage you to take time to read through this book, as we will be spending the next several months working our way through the text. It will take you around two hours to read the entire book, which covers approximately thirty years of Israel's history.

The book is divided into four main scenes:

1. Crossing into the Land (1:1–5:15)
2. Taking the Land (6:1–12:24)
3. Dividing the Land (13:1–21:45)
4. Serving the Lord in the Land (22:1–24:33)

You will notice that a rather large section is devoted to which tribe settled in which part of the land. While these details may seem superfluous or—dare I say—boring, they serve a purpose. They remind us that God keeps His promises. Some 600 years earlier, God had promised Abraham a people and a land, and that promise finally came to pass.

Of course, the story of the land is about much more than a patch of dirt in the Middle East. It is about God's people in God's place under God's rule. It is a foreshadowing of a coming Kingdom that will endure forever. The people of God were to conquer the land so that they might enter God's rest. Joshua is a reminder that struggle comes before rest, suffering before glory, and war before peace.

It has been said that for every New Testament doctrine there is an Old Testament picture. Therefore, the Book of Joshua should, in some sense, be seen as a blueprint for the Christian life—our journey of sanctification. We must, as Hebrews 4 tells us, strive to enter into Christ's eternal rest. The Christian life is not a playground but a battleground. Until Christ returns or calls us home, may we fight the good fight of faith and be found worthy of our calling.

This Sunday, we will focus on Joshua 1, which functions as an introduction and overview of the entire book.

Striving with you,

Pastor TJ

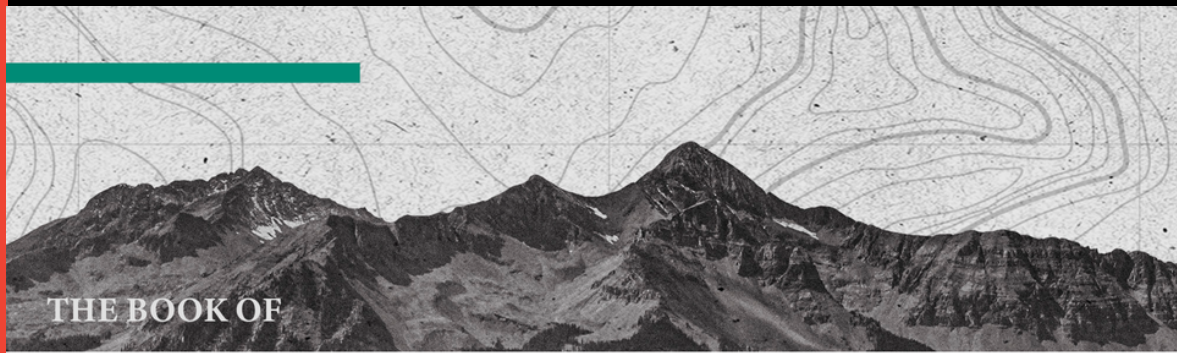


# LEADER GUIDE

Sept 14



## Courageous Obedience



# JOSHUA



## Sermon Outline

Title: Courageous Obedience.

Text: Joshua 1

Prop: God has called us to live a life of obedience to Him, living with courageous faith knowing that when this life is done we will rest eternally in His Kingdom.

### OUTLINE

1. God Keeps His Promises. Joshua 1:2-3
2. God Sends His Presence. Joshua 1:5-6, 9
3. God Confers His Precepts. Joshua 1:7-8
4. God Charges His People. Joshua 1:12-15
5. God Commissions His Person. Joshua 1:16-18

### Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

1. **List** some promises God made and fulfilled in the Bible. Then, discuss: what are some promises God has yet to fulfill, and how can we wait for them with hope?

- **Fulfilled:**

- God's covenant with Abraham: God promised a specific land, numerous descendants, blessings to Abraham and his descendants, and that a blessing would come through him to all nations.
- The end of a global flood: God promised never to destroy the earth again with a flood
- Covenant: The coming of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice brought a new covenant, fulfilling promises for a new way of living.
- Salvation through Jesus: God promised to provide salvation for all who believe His Son.

**Yet to Fulfill:**

- The coming kingdom: The establishment of God's eternal Kingdom on a new earth, has yet to be fully realized.
- Complete defeat of evil: While the power of evil and death has been broken with Christ, the final eradication of all evil will occur at the end of time.
- Final reunion with God: While believers have fellowship with God now, the promise of complete and uninterrupted intimacy with Him awaits the future.

### Waiting in hope

Cultivate an attitude of gratitude for the blessings and provisions God has already given and remind yourself of promises fulfilled knowing God is faithful and will fulfill His promises in His timing. Use the waiting period to serve others and bring glory to God, which will allow us to grow in our faith.



## Discussion Questions

2. **How** was God “with” Israel in the book of Joshua? In what ways is He “with” us as believers today?

God's presence was not an abstract concept; firstly, He spoke through the Book of the Law (living and active). There was a personal presence through Joshua's encounter with a mysterious man with a drawn sword who identifies himself as the "commander of the army of the LORD." (Theophany). He acted through His miracles (parting Jordan, walls of Jericho, etc). His glory rested on them through the Ark of the Covenant and tabernacle where the priests would enter to minister before the Lord, etc.

Today, believers receive the Holy Spirit, who guides, comforts, and empowers them (Joh 14:26). God still speaks through the Word of God and acts through His miracles and sovereign ordering of the affairs of the world. He is present through the Lord's Supper and every time the body of Christ gathers together.

3. **What** practical steps do you take to meditate on, speak about, and obey the Bible? Why does God place such a strong emphasis on His Word?

Choose a specific time each day for reading. Focus on a few verses that reveal something about God, self, or humanity. Write down thoughts, insights, and prayers related to passages to deepen understanding.

God's Word, being without error, serves as the primary means of revealing His nature, will, and purpose for humanity. It provides insight into His character and the relationship He desires with His people. Without it we are merely guessing at who He is and what He demands from the world. Without it we make God into our own image rather than being conformed into His image.



## Discussion Questions

4. How can we, like the Transjordan tribes (Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh), help our brothers and sisters in Christ find spiritual rest? Alternatively, share a time when someone helped you in your sanctification.

Offer emotional and spiritual support through prayer and fellowship. Share uplifting scriptures and personal testimonies of faith. Engage in acts of service. Create a loving community where individuals can confess sin and struggles. Provide opportunities for growing in our knowledge and love of God.

5. In what ways does Joshua foreshadow Jesus (particularly in Joshua's role to lead Israel into the land)?

Jesus is the true and better Joshua. They share the same name, meaning "Yahweh saves." Joshua saves the people from Canaanite enemies; Jesus saves His people from a spiritual enemy, sin and Satan (Colossians 2:15). Joshua gave Israel a temporary land, Jesus gives us an eternal Kingdom. Joshua brought temporary rest (peace), Jesus bring eternal rest (see Heb. 4:9). Joshua intercedes for Israel on behalf of their sin (Joshua 7:6-9), Jesus intercedes for us on behalf of our sin (Romans 8:34). Joshua secures a physical inheritance, Jesus secures a spiritual inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-4).

### SUMMARY:

Israel needed a person to lead them into the land and God gave them Joshua. We need a person to lead us into eternity and God has given us the greater Joshua, Jesus!

As the people were to do all that Joshua commanded, we are to do all that Jesus commands. As the people were to go wherever Joshua sent them, we are to go wherever Jesus sends. Whoever rebelled against Joshua faced death. Whoever rebels against Jesus faces eternal death.



## Prayer & Praise

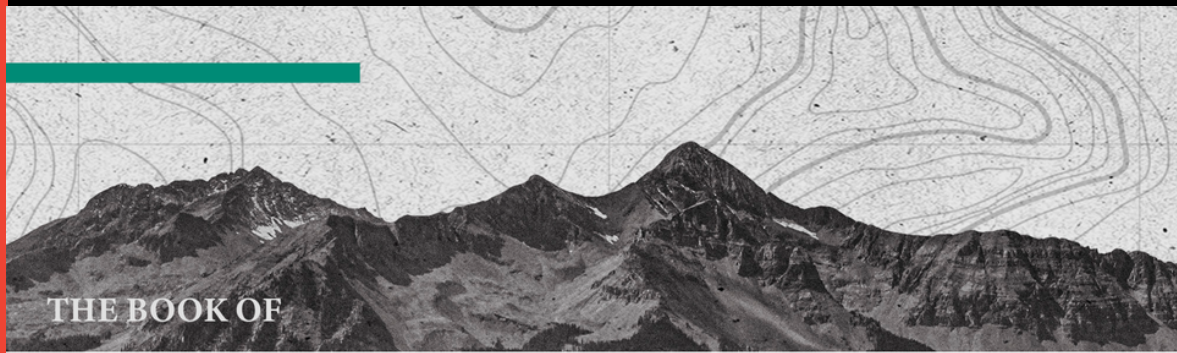
End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



# Remember His Deeds



## LEADER GUIDE

Sept 21

# JOSHUA

# Sermon Overview

In preparation for Sunday take some time to read Joshua 3-4. As you do, you will notice that chapter three focuses on God's miracle of parting the Jordan River. While reading this chapter, ask yourself why God performed this miracle, what it teaches us about miracles as a whole, and most importantly, how it connects to the bigger storyline of Scripture.

When you move to chapter four, while it might seem like a superfluous rereading of the story, note how the miracle is meant to be memorialized. Israel is to take twelve stones from the river and place them at Gilgal as a way for future generations to remember that God has acted on behalf of His people.

Just as Israel was called to remember God's mighty acts, we too must be intentional about remembering how God has worked in our lives of His people. Just as future generations were to trust reliable testimony rather than experience their own personal miracle, so too we are to trust the reliable testimony of faithful witnesses to God's greatest miracle (that of the Resurrection).

Joshua is a reminder that sometimes our faith moves forward by looking backwards. Future sanctification is enacted by remembering a former event (Christ has risen). In our darkest times, in the seemingly silence of God, when it feels as if God is not present or God does not care, faith is sustained through the act of remembering.

Remembering with You,

Pastor TJ

Note: Don't worry, we will come back to chapter 2 in a few weeks.



## Sermon Outline

Title: Christianity is a Lifetime of Remembering

Text: Joshua 3-4

Prop: God, through Jesus Christ, has worked powerfully in our lives, therefore we must be sure to regularly remember His mighty acts, lest we forget and our faith falter.

### OUTLINE

#### **1. The Miracle**

- A. It's Nature
- B. It's Purpose

#### **2. The Memorial**

- A. Public
- B. Private

## Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

1. **Give** a biblical definition of the word miracle, and provide examples of what is and is not considered a miracle.

*Be sure that your definition includes what constitutes a miracle (deviation of natural law) and the purpose of miracles (display God's power and love, to authenticate God's messengers like prophets, apostles, or Jesus).*

*Far too often we misuse the word miracle, this only lessens the acts of true miracles. For example, to recover from cancer by taking chemotherapy, while being a gracious act of God, is technically not a miracle since this is not a deviation of natural law.*

2. **What** are some of the most meaningful miracles in the Bible to you, and why?

*Various answers, depending mostly upon felt needs. For example, if a couple is struggling to conceive, they will likely resonate with God opening the womb of Hannah. A person who feels unloved might resonate with Jesus' healing of the man with leprosy because of the personal nature of the miracle...Jesus touching the man, showing compassion, etc. Another way of answering this question is to focus on miracles that get retold in the Bible. The parting of the Red Sea is retold dozens of times, by prophets, psalmists, and NT writers. It's a meaning miracle because it is a foreshadowing of the salvific work of Jesus.*

3. **What** were God's purposes in dividing the Jordan River, and what are the New Testament truths this Old Testament story illustrates?

*The text lists three specific reasons for God performing this miracle: To identify Joshua as God's servant (3:7), to strengthen Israel's faith in God and His promises (3:10, 4:6), to reveal God's power and glory to the nations (4:24).*

14



## Discussion Questions

3. **What** were God's purposes in dividing the Jordan River, and what are the New Testament truths this Old Testament story illustrates?

Jesus' miracles, like this one, are signs identifying Jesus as God's servant Messiah (See John 1-2).

4. **Have** you ever witnessed a modern-day miracle, if so share with the group?

*The point of this question is to facilitate discussion on the acts of God today. Does God still perform miracles, if so why and how? Does the miracle mentioned pass the Biblical test for a miracle or should it be considered something else?*

5. **While** technically not a miracle, share a sacred experience you've had with God and explain why it was meaningful to you.

*Various. While not everyone will have seen a miracle, hopefully all those who have repented and believed in Christ do have stories to tell of how God revealed Himself in a special way.*

6. **What** are some modern "memorials" you have built that help you remember and share God's faithfulness with friends, family, or children?

*Various: Decor like Bible verses or a mezuzah; jewelry like a cross or ichthus; Objects like an "Ebenezer stone;" journal entries, prayer books, special events like Passover or Christmas, etc.*



## Discussion Questions

### Going deeper:

7. **How** does one discern true miracles from false miracles (aka Moses vs Egyptians magicians)?

*It's important to note that while miracles are meant to identify God's prophets and apostles, it's possible that false prophets and false apostles perform false miracles. Pharaoh's magicians were able to perform some of the same miracles Moses performed.*

*Miracles from God seek to glorify God, affirm His message, and promote Biblical truth. Satanic miracles glorify human (or demonic) power, oppose God's will, deceive people, and lead people away from Biblical truth. Jesus gave a universal principle for discernment: "By their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:16).*

8. **What** are some dangers to avoid concerning miracles?

*There are certainly two extremes when it comes to miracles. The first extreme is rationalistic skepticism, denying the possibility or continuation of miracles. This response says that the miracles of the Bible or today can be explained away through science, human interaction or circumstance. The other extreme is credulous super-naturalism, an uncritical acceptance of all claims. This response is so obsessed over miracles that they make the pursuit of signs and wonders the center of Christian spirituality. God can perform miracles, God does perform miracles, but God has not promised that He will perform one for you. Our faith is not based on miracles today, but on the most important miracle in History, the resurrection which is confirmed to us through the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself warns us against seeking after additional signs other than what has already been given.*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports

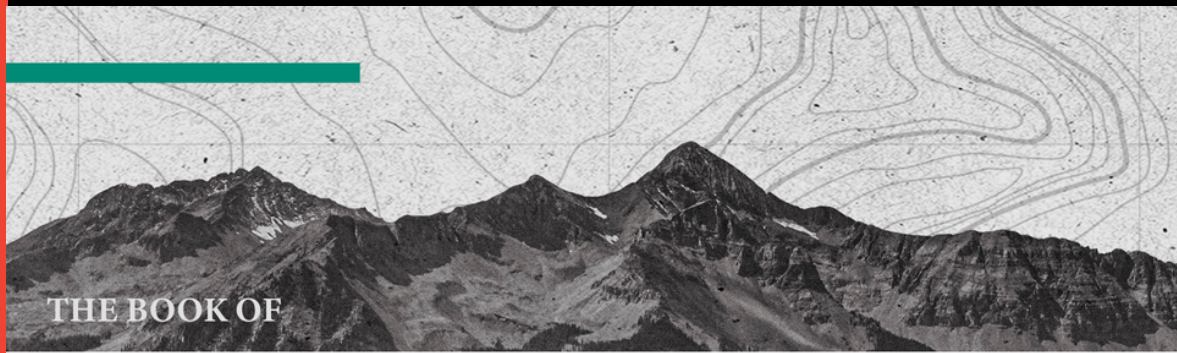


# LEADER GUIDE

Sept 28



# Confession Through Sacrament



# JOSHUA

# Sermon Overview

Before their first battle in the Promised Land, God commanded Israel to perform two surprising rites: circumcision and Passover. It was a reminder that the taking and keeping of the Land was not through human effort, but total dependance upon the Lord. In the same way, God has given His church two ordinances—baptism and the Lord's Supper. This Sunday, we'll discover how these gifts powerfully remind us that our victory over sin is found not in our own strength, but through faith in Christ's finished work.

In Him,

Pastor TJ



## Sermon Outline

Title: Confession Through Sacrament

Text: Joshua 5

Prop: Through the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, God graciously provides the means for our sanctification, reminding us that victory in the Christian life comes not by our own strength but through faith in the finished work of Christ.

### OUTLINE

#### **1. In Circumcision something is removed.**

*Circumcision points to Baptism*

#### **2. In Passover something is received.**

*Passover points to The Lord's Supper*

### Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

1. **What** was the Abrahamic covenant and how was it fulfilled through Jesus Christ?

*The Abrahamic covenant is God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-6; 17 where God promises Abraham a People (father of many nations), a Place (promise land), and Purpose (blessed to bring blessing to all nations).*

*Jesus is the ultimate descendant (seed) of Abraham (Galatians 3:16) through whom the entire world is blessed and saved. It is through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus that a People for God from every nation is adopted into God's family and given an eternal Place in God's Kingdom (New Heaven and Earth).*

2. **What** was the purpose of circumcision and in what ways does that relate to baptism today?

*Circumcision was the external sign of being part of God's covenant people (Genesis 17:9-14). It marked a separation for God and reminded them of God's covenant promise and their covenant obligation. Baptism is the New Covenant sign of belonging to God's people. It's about an internal, spiritual reality (Colossians 2:11-12)—a "circumcision of the heart," foretold in Deuteronomy 10:16, Jeremiah 4:4, and Ezekiel 36:26-27.*

*While there are parallels between circumcision and baptism, there is disagreement among Christians as to how extensive these parallels are. Those who find a very strong connection see justification for pedobaptism.*



## Discussion Questions

3. **What** role does baptism play in the life of a believer today?

*Baptism is an outward declaration (to self, God, and the world) of an inward faith. It signifies union with Christ in his death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). It visibly illustrates that you have died to sin and have been cleansed by the work of Jesus. It's a public entry into the family of the church. It serves as a reminder that we are not our own, but have pledged our allegiance to Christ alone.*

4. **How** did the Passover festival point to Jesus Christ, and what connections can we draw between the Passover and the Lord's Supper?

*The Passover festival was a reminder that God withheld His righteous wrath against the sins of Israel because He accepted, as substitute, the death of a male lamb, one year old, without spot or blemish. In John 1:29, John the Baptist calls Jesus the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus is the true substitute for sin. He lived a life without sin and then died a death in which our sins were placed upon Him, thereby taking on Himself God's righteous judgment against sin. Like the Passover meal remembered deliverance, the Lord's Supper remembers our deliverance through Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7). It was at the Passover meal that Jesus instituted The Lord's Supper as an ordinance for the church.*

5. **What** is the significance and purpose of participating in the Lord's Supper for a Christian today?

*The Lord's Supper is a powerful tool God has given a Christian to fight sin and grow in their sanctification. It is a time to remember Christ's sacrifice on the cross (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), fellowship with Christ and with other believers, and remind ourselves of His second coming.*



## Discussion Questions

6. **What** personal practices or reflections can help us prepare for the Lord's Supper?

*A powerful way to prepare is to slowly and intentionally read one of the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion (Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, or John 19). As you reflect on Christ's sacrifice, move beyond vague feelings and engage in specific confession. Ask yourself: "What have I done this week that dishonored Christ?"—such as harsh words, dishonest actions, or indulging anger. Also consider, "Where have I failed to do the good I knew I should?"—like neglecting prayer, withholding forgiveness, or failing to show kindness. To further focus your heart, listen to or sing a hymn about the cross, such as "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" or "In Christ Alone." Finally, actively remind yourself that your standing before God is secured solely by Christ's life, death, and resurrection, not by your own efforts to be holy. This prepares you to receive the elements as a gift of grace.*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

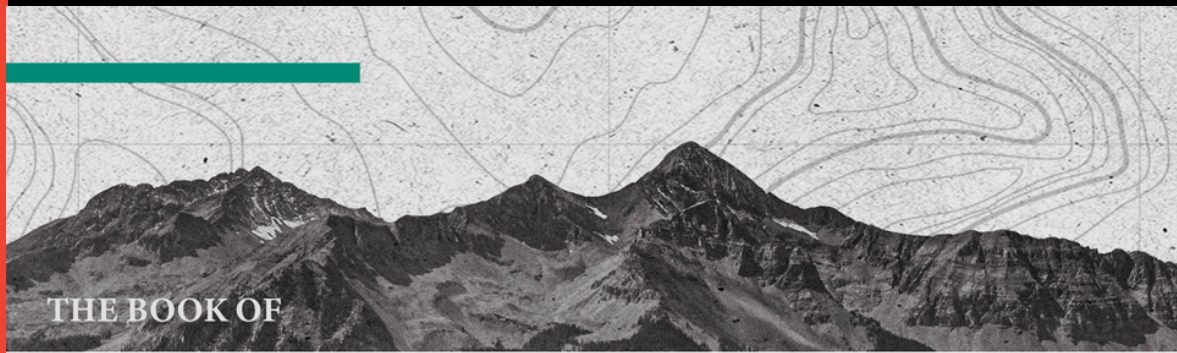
### Praise Reports



# LEADER GUIDE

Oct 5

## Walk By Faith



THE BOOK OF

# JOSHUA

# Sermon Overview

The Christian life begins by faith, and it must continue the very same way. The stories of Rahab and the fall of Jericho show us that faith often looks foolish by human logic, trusting God's promise over our own strategy. This Sunday we will look at what it means to daily walk by faith and not by sight in every area of life.

In Him,

Pastor TJ



## Sermon Outline

Title: Walk By Faith

Text: Joshua 2, 6

Prop: As the Christian has begun their life in Christ by grace through faith, we are to continue to walk by faith and not by sight.

## OUTLINE

## Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

1. **Rahab** acted on her faith by hiding the spies, a risky decision. What is one practical, "risky" step of obedience God might be calling you to take in your family or workplace this week?

*Faith often requires action that involves personal risk or cost. This could be initiating a difficult conversation to pursue reconciliation, taking a stand for biblical ethics when it might be unpopular, generously giving when finances feel tight, or sharing the gospel with a colleague. The "risk" is the potential for discomfort, rejection, or loss, but the call is to obey, trusting that God is sovereign over the outcome.*

2. **What** does the story of Rahab (consider her profession and ethnicity) teach us about God's power to save sinners? How does her story encourage you?

*Rahab's story demonstrates that no one is beyond the reach of God's saving grace. Her profession (a prostitute) and ethnicity (a Canaanite under judgment) highlight that salvation is not earned by our pedigree, morality, or status. It is received by faith alone. This is profoundly encouraging because it means our past sins, present failures, or social standing do not limit the power of the gospel to fully forgive and redeem us for God's purposes. This is especially encouraging when one considers that the Messiah will come from Rahab.*

3. **The** Israelite army marched and shouted, acting in faith that God would deliver the victory. What is a situation in your life where you need to stop relying on your own "strategy" and simply obey what God has already said?

*This often applies to situations where we are tempted to rely on human wisdom or control. Examples include trying to solve a child's rebellion through sheer force of rules instead of prayer and gospel patience, manipulating circumstances at work to secure a promotion rather than working with integrity and trusting God with the results, or worrying incessantly about a problem instead of proactively praying and casting our anxieties on Christ. Obedience in these cases means doing what God has commanded (praying, serving, trusting) while relinquishing control of the outcome to Him. Try to get people in your group to give specific examples from their own life.*<sup>28</sup>



## Discussion Questions

4. Faith is not passive. Israel still had to march and shout. In sanctification, what is the difference between passive waiting and active striving in faith?

*Passive waiting is a form of spiritual inactivity that expects God to change us without our engagement. Active striving in faith means obeying the clear commands of Scripture—"put to death" sinful deeds (Colossians 3:5), "pursue" righteousness (1 Timothy 6:11), "work out your own salvation" (Philippians 2:12)—all while relying completely on God's power that works within us (Philippians 2:13). It is our diligent effort empowered by God's Spirit, not a substitute for it. Practically this means we read our Bible, come to church, pray regularly, confess sin, attend small group, etc.*

5. Read Hebrews 11:30-31. Rahab's faith saved her entire household. Who in your circle of influence needs to see the hope of the gospel through your faithful actions and words?

*Our faithful obedience has a ripple effect on those closest to us. This question invites personal reflection on specific relationships—such as an unbelieving spouse, children who need to see authentic faith, extended family, neighbors, or friends. The call is to consider how our courageous trust in God's promises and our Christ-like actions can serve as a powerful testimony to the hope we have in Jesus.*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

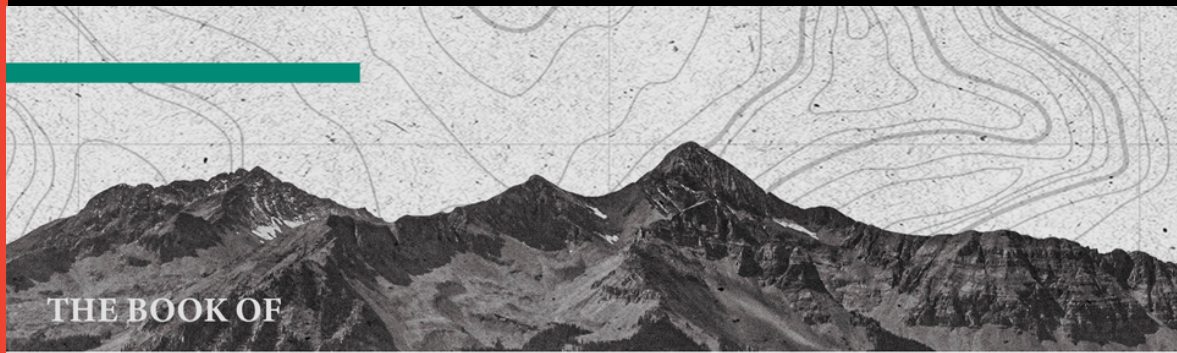
### Praise Reports



# LEADER GUIDE

Oct 12

## Fight Sin



# JOSHUA

# Sermon Overview

The story of Achan's sin in Joshua 7 is a powerful warning: sin is a serious rebellion that affects not only us but everyone around us. This Sunday, we will be reminded that the journey of sanctification is a lifetime of fighting sin together as a church, removing it from our midst. But we will also see how this story points to our ultimate hope—the forgiveness and victory found only in Jesus Christ.

Fighting with you,

TJ



## Sermon Outline

Title: Christianity is a lifetime of fighting sin

Text: Joshua 6:18-8:29

Prop: As Christians, we must take seriously the call to remove sin from among our midst, be it public or private, individual or corporate.

## OUTLINE

## Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

***Read Joshua 7-8, summarize the main idea of the text, and share a few key truths from the sermon.***

1. **As** a group, create a Biblical definition of sin.

*Sin is as any thought, word, or deed that goes against God's commands and moral law (which is a revelation of His character). It is a wrong act done or a right act left undone. It is not loving God with our whole heart and not loving our neighbor as ourselves.*

2. **Joshua 7:1-5.** What effect did Achan's sin have on Israel and why (Notice God's language of Israel and not just Achan)? In what ways do we see the "sin of one" affecting the "whole body" today?

*Achan's sin caused Israel to suffer military defeat at Ai because God's covenant anger burned against the entire nation. God's language implicates all of Israel, teaching that the disobedience of one member breaks faith and defiles the whole covenant community, compromising its holiness and God's divine presence among the community. This is an important truth to consider in the church today. The church must take sin seriously (see Acts 5:1-11, Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:13).*

*Practical examples of sins impact can be seen in a drunk driver (individual sin) hitting another car and killing all passengers. A father's decision to divorce his wife (individual sin) causing emotional harm to the children. A CEO's decision to commit fraud can lead to the company's collapse, causing thousands of employees to lose their jobs. no sin is truly isolated; its consequences inevitably ripple out to impact the wider community.*



## Discussion Questions

3. **Joshua 7:6-15.** What is both right and wrong about Joshua's response to the defeat at Ai and his prayer to God? What can we learn about how we should and should not respond to tragedy today?

*In tragedy Joshua turned to God immediately rather than rally his troops or devise a new strategy. He and the elders sought out the Lord. He humbled himself before God (tore his clothes and fell face down). He was most concerned for God's honor, not Israel's situation (Joshua 7:9). However, Joshua's prayer includes that surprising accusation that God brought them across the Jordan only to be killed by the Amorites (Joshua 7:7). In tragedy he was willing to settle for less than God had for Israel (Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan).*

*When tragedy happens in our own lives, we too, like Joshua, should go to God and not to despair or devise our own solutions. Tragedy can be an opportunity for deep introspection. We should humble ourselves before God, admitting our frailties and mistakes. We must be careful not to make assumptions as to why this tragedy happened. Perhaps God will give us an answer, perhaps not. Perhaps it was due to our sin, perhaps not. Our primary concern should be how a tragedy affects God's honor in the world. If there was sin, we repent. If there was doubt, we have faith. If, like Job, tragedy is a mystery, then we trust God and mourn in community to a God who has told us to cast our cares on Him.*

4. **Joshua 7:16-21.** What was the progression (pattern) of Achan's sin, do you see this pattern in other places in scripture or your own life? How can we go about breaking this pattern? What are the Biblical steps one should take when they sin?

SEE NEXT PAGE



## Discussion Questions

### 4. Joshua 7:16-21.

*The progression of Achan's sin is: seeing, coveting, taking, and hiding. This sin pattern is seen in Eve's sin in Eden, David's sin with Bathsheba, etc. See James 1:14-15 and 1 John 2:16*

*To break this pattern, we must flee temptation and take sinful thoughts captive. Replace: Sin is often replaced not by will power alone, but by cultivating a greater and more satisfying relationship with God. Renounce: Confess and renounce the false promises that sin offers. Achan believed the plunder would bring him gain, but it brought him and his family to ruin. Relationship: Secrecy allows sin to fester and grow. Confessing sin -both before God and in community-is vital for healing. Biblical steps for when we sin include: immediate confession to God (1 John 1:9), repentance (turning away from the sin), and where necessary, making restitution to those we have wronged.*

**5. Joshua 7:22-26** What does the severe outcome for Achan and his family teach us about God's perspective on sin? In what ways might we think of sin too lightly today?

*If one was to rank the severity of Achan's sin, it probably wouldn't be seen as severe. He took something that was just going to be destroyed anyway. What's the big deal? But God's punishment highlights the absolute holiness of God, which cannot tolerate sin. All sin, even small sins, are infinitely offendable against a holy God and therefore deserves infinite punishment. While we might think of the punishment as severe, it is a light punishment compared to eternal death.*

*It might be helpful to lead your group into a discussion on "acceptable sins" today. While we are quick to denounce and fight against certain sins (murder, adultery, incest, rape), are we just as diligent to fight sins like gossip, anger,<sup>36</sup> lust, etc.*



## Discussion Questions

6. **In** what ways does this passage prepare us for and teach us about Jesus?

*This passage prepares us for Jesus by revealing humanity's fundamental problem: we are all, like Achan, covenant-breakers whose sin incurs a death penalty. It teaches us our need for a substitute who can bear that penalty for us. In contrast to Achan who died for his own sin, Jesus, the true Israelite, died for the sins of his people. He absorbed God's wrath against sin, not to contaminate the camp, but to purify it, taking the curse of the law upon Himself so that we could receive God's blessing. In many ways this passage is a reminder of Adam's federal headship (Genesis 1-3) whose one sin brought consequences for all humanity, which prepares us for Jesus' ultimate federal headship (Romans 5:12-19), whose righteous act brought consequences for all of God's elect.*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

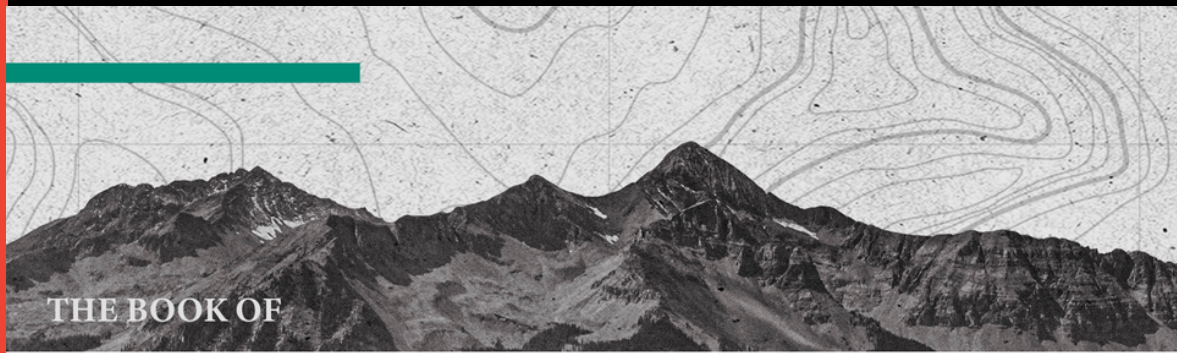
### Praise Reports



# LEADER GUIDE

Oct 26

## The Assembly



# JOSHUA

# Sermon Overview

Church Family,

Many of us have likely heard that Christians can and should consider themselves sons and daughters of God who have been adopted through Christ. I couldn't agree more, but have you ever considered yourself a Son or Daughter of Abraham? As a kid in a rural Mississippi church community, it was fairly common to be taught a kid's church song called "Father Abraham". I will not list the lyrics here, but they can be searched online. As an adult, I've not really sung that song much; however, I have come to a better understanding of how modern day Christians have a strong connection to the saints of the Old Testament and in particular to a claim of being a Son or Daughter of Abraham.

I encourage you to read Galatians 3:5-14 and the fuller context of that chapter and at least ponder how the faith of a modern day Christian connects to the faith the believers in the Old Testament had in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I promise I'm not setting you up for a trick question! The answer is we serve the same God and are called to have the same faith in Jesus.

Yes....we are still in the Joshua sermon series and this week's sermon will focus on the text of Joshua 8:30-35. I hope you can begin to ask how your faith and our weekly gathering is related to the Assembly we read about at the end of Joshua 8, which involves a ceremony marking the fulfillment of God's promised land to Father Abraham.

We are called this Lord's Day to hear from God's Word together. I hope you will join.

Sincerely,  
Elder Grant Jones



## Sermon Outline

Title: The Assembly

Text: Joshua 8:30-35

### OUTLINE

- 1. Verses 30 - 32: The Centrality of the Altar.**
- 2. Verses 33 - 34: The Centrality of the Word.**
- 3. Verse 35: Surrounded by the Assembly.**

### Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

**1. Read v. 30 - 35: Consider some examples such as Galatians 3:5-14 & John 5:46. Have you ever considered your faith as one connected to the same beliefs and teachings of Old Testament figures such as Abraham and Moses? What implications does this have for understanding who is truly Israel (Romans 9:6) and the value of the Old Testament for New Testament era believers?**

*Christianity affirms a deep connection to the faith of old Testament figures like Abraham and Moses, seeing it as part of single, continuous story of God's redemptive plan. According to Christian theology, believers are in Christ are connected to Old Testament figures through a shared reliance on faith and God's promises, not adherence to the Mosaic Law.*

*John 5:4-6: In this verse, Jesus confronts the religious leaders who revered Moses but rejected Jesus. Jesus states, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me." This establishes a direct link between Moses' writings and Jesus, indicating that the Old Testament itself points forward to Jesus. Jesus confirms that true adherence to the teachings of Moses would have led them to recognize him as the Messiah, showing a fundamental unity in divine revelation.*

*Children of promise: Romans 9 clarifies that being a child of Abraham is not a matter of flesh but of promise, illustrated by God choosing Isaac over Esau. The children of promise, both Jewish and Gentile are counted as offspring through faith in Christ, creating an anti-typical Israel that transcends ethnic boundaries.*



## Discussion Questions

**2. Read v. 30 - 31: Israel and their leaders organized and carried out the events of this ceremony in accordance with God's commandment to Moses in Deuteronomy 27. In other words, the ceremony at the end of Joshua 8 was not the result of a man-made ceremony that was thought to be a good idea after a great victory, but rather this was a ceremony carried out in accordance with God's instructions. Do you think this has any bearing on how we ought to approach the Lord for the weekly assembly of public worship in modern times (the regulative principle)?**

*Joshua's actions in Joshua 8:30-31 have a significant bearing on the regulative principle of worship. This event demonstrates that worship must be done to God's explicit commands, not human commands, not human invention, establishing a precedent that modern worship should follow the instructions in Scripture rather than adding elements deemed desirable.*

*The ceremony at Mount Ebal was not a spontaneous human idea to celebrate victory. It was a direct and deliberate fulfillment of God's instruction to Moses in Deuteronomy 27. This is the core of the regulative principle: God dictates the terms of worship, and any additions are considered man-made and potentially illegitimate.*

*The passage highlights that both what is offered (burnt offerings and fellowship offerings) and how it is offered are divinely regulated. The regulative principle applies the same logic to modern worship, requiring that the elements of service, like singing, prayer, and preaching, be based on biblical principles.*

*By emphasizing to a specific, pr-ordained command, the passage underscores a worship model centered on God's will, not on human capacity or cultural appropriateness. This stands in contrast to worship shaped by what is perceived as pleasing or relevant to people today, a tendency the regulative principle seeks to guard against.*



## Discussion Questions

**3. Read v.32 - 34: Consider reading the curses that were read in this ceremony from Deuteronomy 27:14-26. How could God's people rightly say "Amen" even to the curses? Saying "Amen" to curses seems a bit counter-cultural in our modern times, right? Can this show us anything about our understanding of God's holiness? Have you become less comfortable with the curses our Lord proclaims over unrighteousness? If so, why? From a worldly perspective it seems easier to only say "Amen" to the blessings. What is the benefit of remembering the curses our Lord proclaims?**

*In Joshua 8 the Israelites were able to say amen to the curses from Deuteronomy 27 because they were affirming God's righteousness, holiness and just character, not agreeing with evil. Their assent signified a binding commitment to the covenant, acknowledging that disobedience would justly incur a curse, even among themselves.*

*The benefit of remembering the curses of unrighteousness is that it highlights the consequences of sin, motivates a desire for faithfulness, and provides a more complete understanding of God's character as both just and merciful. This theological understanding helps believer see the blessings as a gift made possible by God's love and justice, rather than as an entitlement.*

*Additionally, the curses serve as a powerful reminder that everyone is subject to the consequences of their actions. This can prompt a deeper, more urgent self-examination and greater appreciation for the forgiveness offered through faith.*



## Discussion Questions

**4. Read v. 35: Maybe you have heard there is no “I” in Team. Regardless, let’s play on that thinking and be reminded that there is no “I in Assembly! Why do you (or also why should you) attend public worship? Is it merely a convenience for our conscience, a checklist, a WeChat moment, a break from a hard work week, a social time with friends? Gathering each week is not chiefly about you. It’s about being obedient to the Lord and being with the gathered Assembly. Notice who is assembled in Joshua 8:35 and consider: When preparing and arriving to public worship do you ever just focus on yourself and how you can be benefited? When you consider missing public worship on any given Lord’s Day, do you ever consider how this could impact others? Do you see any danger’s in a me-centered mindset for the weekly assembly of believers?**

*A me centered mindset in worship runs counter to biblical teachings and can harm both the individual and the church body. The purpose of gathering is not just to receive a personal blessing but to collectively worship God and minister to others.*

*The author of Hebrews calls believers “to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together”(Hebrews 10-24-25). When someone voluntarily misses a gathering, they fail to provide and receive this mutual encouragement, which is a key part of loving other believers.*

*Corporate worship is a time to minister to others, not just to be ministered to. An absent member cannot encourage a struggling peer, welcome a visitor, or support the pastor with their presence.*

*The body of Christ works together to build itself up in love (Ephesians 4:11-16). When believers withdraw from this community life, the entire body is weakened. Every Christian has a God given gift to use for the edification of the church, and when they are absent, the church is denied that gift.*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

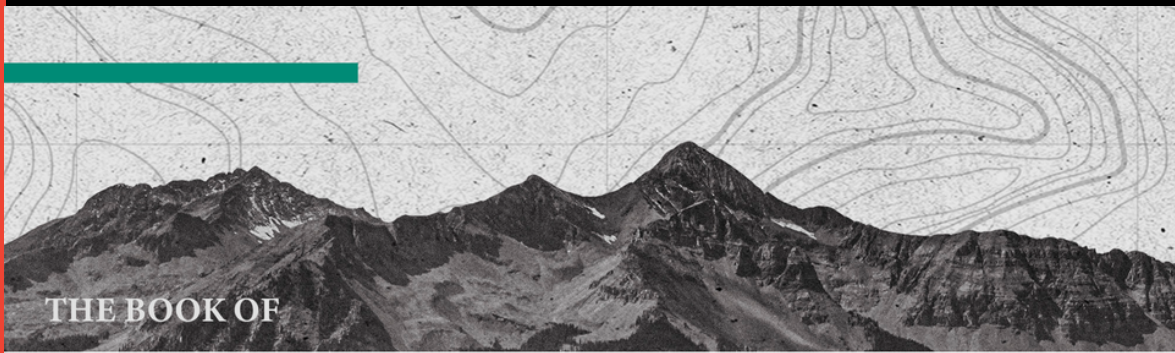
### Praise Reports



# Keep your word

## LEADER GUIDE

Nov 2



# JOSHUA

# Sermon Overview

Have you ever made a decision that looked right in the moment but later realized you hadn't stopped to consult God first? In Joshua 9 and 10, we find Israel deceived by the Gibeonites, an encounter that reminds us how vital it is to seek God's wisdom before acting. Yet, even in the aftermath of their mistake, Joshua's faithfulness to keep his word became a living testimony of God's own covenant-keeping nature.

This Sunday, we will unpack what happens when discernment gives way to assumption and how God still turns our missteps into moments of mercy and mission. Come ready for a word that will challenge our decision-making process, deepen our integrity, and draw us closer to the heart of a promise-keeping God.

Elder Raphael Moffett



## Sermon Outline

Title: Christianity is a lifetime of integrity - keeping our word.

Text: Joshua 9:1 - 10:15

Prop: The Christian is called to be people who keep their word even when it is difficult.

## OUTLINE

## Sermon Notes



## Discussion Questions

***Since this is a rather complicated narrative, taking time to individually walk through the COMA method before the small group will help you understand the text well and be ready to make proper application during the Small Group meeting.***

### **C — Context**

1. What has just happened in Israel's story prior to chapter 9, and how does that shape the events that follow?
2. How does this story connect to God's command about the nations in the land (Deut. 7:1–6; Num. 27:21)?
3. How is God's mission to bless the nations (Gen. 12:1–3) and the theme of covenant visible in this passage?
4. How does the Gibeonite covenant continue to shape Israel's history in later Scriptures (see Joshua 21:17, 25; 1 Chronicles 9:2; 2 Chronicles 1:3–6; Ezra 2:43–58; Nehemiah 7:46–56; and 2 Samuel 21:1–9), and what does this teach us about the long-term impact of promises made — even those made unwisely?

### **O — Observation**

1. Who are the main characters, and what motivates each group (Israelites, Gibeonites, kings of the land)?
2. Identify verbs that show the Israelites' process (or lack thereof) in discerning God's will — what did they *not* do in v. 14?
3. What repeated ideas or phrases point to the narrator's perspective on the events?

### **M — Meaning**

1. What does this passage reveal about God's expectations for His people in decision making and leadership?
2. Why does God insist Israel keep their oath, even though the covenant was made through deception?
3. How does this episode show both the seriousness of sin and the surprising grace of God?



## Discussion Questions

### A— Application (*To be discussed during Small Group*)

#### 1. What principles guide you when deciding whether you should or should not make a commitment? What key verses help shape those principles?

*Here are a few guiding questions I ask before making a promise:*

- *Does keeping this promise require me to break God's commands?*
- *Is this promise coming from love for God and neighbor or my own pride or self-service?*
- *Is this promise outside of my control to keep? (I often differentiate between **Reasonable promises** (I'll meet you next week for counseling) vs. **Unreasonable promises** (I promise nothing bad will happen to you). With reasonable promises, I often clarify, "Lord willing".*
- *Is this promise, as far as I can discern, honoring and pleasing to God? (While it may not break a specific command, does it align with God's character and the way in which He relates to His sons and daughters)*

*See Psalm 15:1–4; Ecclesiastes 5:4–6; Matt. 5:37; James 4:13–15, 5:12.*

#### 2. What principles help you discern whether a person or a report is trustworthy? Share some everyday examples where you've needed to use these principles of discernment.

*Here are some guiding questions I ask when evaluating trustworthiness:*

- *Are they known for Biblical character and integrity?*
- *Have they shown consistency over time? I want to see repeated patterns of integrity.*
- *Does what they are saying seem strange? Goes against the character of the person they are talking about, feels sensational, dramatic, or exaggerated, lacks clarity or detail, is second-hand information, benefits the one sharing the information, etc.*
- *Is the information confirmed by reliable witnesses? (Deut. 19:15).*



## Discussion Questions

*Examples: evaluating workplace gossip, news stories, online/social media chatter, Christian testimony (not all testimonies are reliable), friend advice, etc. This seems to be an increasingly important skill to develop as AI advances.*

*See Proverbs 14:15; 1 Thess. 5:21; Ephesians 4:14–15.*

**3. Share a time when it was difficult for you to keep a promise. What made it difficult and how did staying true (or failing to stay true) shape your character and relationships?**

*Various. Remind the group that faithful obedience is often costly, but God uses those moments to grow us in Christlike integrity.*

**4. Where might God be calling you to live with greater integrity — especially in commitments you have already made?**

*Examples might include: marriage vows, church membership, parenting, financial stewardship, work responsibilities, and serving others in the church. When good intentions become neglected over time, God invites confession, renewed obedience, and reliance on His strength.*

*See Ecclesiastes 5:4–6; Luke 16:10; Philippians 1:6.*

**5. Share a time when you made a poor decision that God ultimately used for good. What did you learn about His grace and sovereignty through that experience?**

*Various. If members are struggling to come up with examples remind them that a poor decision might include: a sinful decision (marrying a non-Christian), an unwise decision (marrying in college without a job or long-term plan), a rash decision (committing to marriage after a week of dating), or a pressured decision (choosing a spouse you don't really like but you know your parents will approve of).*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports