

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Joshua 24:1-2, 14-18

August 27, 2017

**Daily affirm your total devotion to Yahweh
noting his total devotion to you.**

Joshua's affirmation in v. 15: *As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.* is among the most familiar Bible passages, written on home decor. The resolve, declaration, affirmation: *No matter what everyone else does - our household will worship and serve Yahweh alone.*

For Joshua, that's a bold statement for a man who is about to die. He had prepared his household as he prepares Israel here at Shechem - the very same place where: Abram first confessed Yahweh in the Land of Promise (Gen. 12:6,7), Jacob purified his household of idols (Gen. 35:2-4), and years earlier under Joshua Israel affirmed Sinai's blessings and curses as Moses commanded (Joshua 8:30ff; Dt. 27). Such events are not mere moments in time. They affirm who we are and how we live every day. Here we're encouraged to

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What does it mean to *fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness.* v. 14

- ❖ **Start:** See his faithfulness to you, so you gladly put your faith in him.
 - The meat of Joshua's message - reviewing Yahweh's work (24:3-13)
 - ♦ Yahweh calls and claims his people. He chose them!
 - ♦ Yahweh protected, provided, and gave them the Land of Promise.
 - ♦ Yahweh's faithfulness, mercy, loving kindness, power to protect
 - ♦ This is what creates faith. Faith wisely stands on and with Yahweh.
 - The Holy Triune God is Yahweh - the Living God of Promises
 - ♦ He kept all his promises in sending Jesus.
 - ♦ Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, defeat of our enemies, and rising to life
 - ♦ His gospel that called us to be his own - his faithfulness ⇒ our faith
 - PTL - his devotion to us is **not** conditioned on our devotion to him!
 - ♦ *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit — fruit that will last...* John 15:16
 - ♦ *We love because he first loved us.* 1 John 4:19

**To daily affirm your total devotion to Yahweh,
starts by noting his total devotion to you.**

- ❖ **Continue:** a determination that I don't want any other master/lord/god.
 - Yahweh's track record: He is the real God, faithful, forgiving, merciful
 - He alone saves. He alone offers what we need: life, blessings, good
 - To appreciate him - consider the defeated alternatives.
 - ♦ The *gods* defeated and humiliated by Yahweh
 - ♦ They're either make believe man-made gods or demons in disguise
 - To appreciate Yahweh consider the cruel alternative masters.
 - ♦ career, job, family, cause, service, hobby - Gifts, but not good masters!
 - ♦ additions that rule and ruin lives - all consuming and destructive
 - Drugs and booze, porn, possessing/shopping, eating, body image
 - Ruled by the *god of pleasure*, worship of self - living for self
 - ♦ cult leaders preying on the search for purpose and meaning & guilt
 - When you compare Yahweh and the alternatives - the choice is obvious
 - ♦ And there is **no room** for *Yahweh and*. **Only Yahweh only!**

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- ❖ **Reside:** Yahweh's word is our home - the atmosphere we breathe
 - Only Yahweh's word is life-giving, life-sustaining, life-enriching.
 - ♦ He is the Source of Life. In him is life. Apart from him is death.
 - ♦ Breathe in his word. It opens our eyes to reality - discover our identity and purpose in our God - giving wisdom that is life.
 - Devoted to Yahweh = devoted to his word
 - ♦ trusting it totally: breathing it, living it, devoted to live its mission
 - ♦ taking its warnings and promises seriously, knowing it is truth/reality
 - Anything that contradicts the Word of Truth is a deception, no matter how much it makes sense or feels right.
 - A Confirmation Pledge is not a restrictive cage!
 - ♦ It's confident wisdom: Yahweh alone offers life - now and forever.
 - Devotion to Christ is not just an idea or talk. It's our walk - serving him.
 - ♦ *Fear Yahweh:* revere and respect Yahweh - a life of worship/devotion
 - ♦ Dedicate time to sit at his feet to hear, worship and praise
 - ♦ Devoted to God's sacraments, God's family, God's mission - grow as disciples & share (family, friends, neighbors, across the world) - natural for all who value life in Yahweh

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That's not a burden. It's life! It's peace, hope, love, joy - liberating to live.