

As for me and my house

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[0:00] Let's go to Joshua 24 and have a bit of a look at these thoughts around the theme of As! for me and my house. Really continuing that theme of family this morning. So Joshua 24! is where we are going to go to. And it's interesting the Old Testament name Joshua is Yeshua.

Which is as we know is the corresponding name Jesus. Yeshua. And Joshua means salvation comes from the Lord. We look at the man Joshua. Who was he? What did he know? Where did he come from? Joshua was a man who knew the slavery of Egypt. He'd come through the times of the enslavement of the children of Israel. He'd known the hardships there as they'd been in Egypt. As they'd endured their slavery there. The building of bricks. The making of constructions for the Pharaoh. The bearing of the whip. And the drudgery of slavery in Egypt. Joshua was the elder son of the family. The elder son. And he had himself been saved by the application of the blood on the lintel and doorposts at Passover time. And the death angel passed over and God gave shelter under the blood. Joshua was saved by the blood. Amen. As he would look forward we could reckon it was the looking forward to the blood of Christ that Joshua was saved by the blood. Joshua had seen God's great deliverance as the people of God had crossed over the Red Sea. And they were saved from Pharaoh's army in this dramatic victory. Then Joshua had stood on Mount Sinai while God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. Joshua had endured the wilderness wanderings of God's rebellious people. He had many times witnessed the work of God. God's miracle power. And God's leading through the fire and cloud. God's daily supply of food and water. God's miraculous wonder working power. Joshua had chosen faith. Not unbelief. When he had gone to the land to spy it out. He saw it as what God had made it to be. Sweet Canaan land. The promised land. He saw that. Not in unbelief but he saw that by faith. And he saw sweet Canaan land. No matter the giants there. He knew God would give them the land. Joshua had heard God say, be strong and courageous. And he had trusted in him. Trusted in his God. He had faith. Joshua led the people then across the Jordan River on dry ground to enter into that promised land. Then Joshua had seen the walls of Jericho come tumbling down with a shout as God gave the victory. God's great power brought those walls down. Joshua knew that he could trust in the promises of God. Amen. Now Joshua is here. Joshua 24. It's at that closing chapter of the end of his life. And here he is as it were as this old general. The old general Joshua. A hundred and ten years old. His time on earth was almost done. And this was his farewell speech. Now we would do well to hear the last words of someone. They say this great power in the last words of someone. There's people written books about that. The last words of an unbeliever.

So often shrieks and cries. A fire. Save me. Despair. Or the cries of a believer on their deathbed. Uttering scenes of glory. Uttering that faith that they'll see his face. They'll see him. They'll be with him soon. It's quite a contrast. It's light and darkness. It's day and night. And this was Joshua's farewell speech. I know I was sat at the bedside of Julie's father who was in the house next to us. And he said, in those closing He knew his time was short. He had been given the verdict that he only had days. Hours. And he summoned his family members to his bedside. And I can remember some of the words that he shared. As a godly man, Julie's father John would share with those that he cared about. His children. His grandchildren. And they remember those words still today. The farewell speech of a

[5:21] Godly man. And he said, Amen. And what a challenge he gave to his children. His grandchildren. In those closing days of his life. Hours. And I know Peter shared of that too.

That gripping moment of that gripping moment of this is life and death. And this is serious stuff. Because we're all going to come to that place where we must get ready for eternity. Are you ready? Joshua gave this farewell speech. So we do well to take heed. And he now stood here before the children of Israel one final time as their beloved leader. And he called the people to decision. He

says, make a decision today. He says, choose today. His call was deliberate. It was heartfelt. It was a deliberate call to a deliberate decision.

To consecrate. To consecrate. To dedicate ourselves by God's grace. And each one of us today still can hear Joshua's call. Joshua's voice. Joshua's beckoning to prayerfully choose wisely.

And seek that God may grant us his grace in our families. As we pray for holy households. And godly homes. Joshua says this. Ask for me and my house.

[6:47] As he came to prayerfully choose wisely. As he came to the end of his life. His heart was for his house. For his household. For his family. And he called the leaders of Israel together. To give them this telling message. This vital, vibrant message. For this one final message. He knew his time was short.

And he sounds a call. A call to revival. Because friends, revival starts in the home. Joshua. Joshua first recounts God's blessings. Joshua first recounts God's blessings. From verses 1 through 13. In chapter 24. He recounts God's blessings. Looking backwards. In the past. Of God's great provision. And care.

And then he challenges the people. Looking forward. To be faithful. To be faithful to God. For the here and now. For you and me.

And these words have been quoted and memorized. Often as plaques on a wall. For over 3,000 years. And they're still true. Amen.

It's still true now. Isn't it? It's true now. As it ever was. What does Joshua call us to? I put to you. He calls us to faith. He calls families to faith. We see that in Joshua 24. We're going to read from verse 11. It says Joshua 24. Verse 11. You can read along as we project the words here. Joshua 24. From verse 11. It says this.

[8:37] And Joshua's speaking to the people gathered. The leaders. He says. And you went over Jordan. And came unto Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you.

The Amorites. And the Amorites. And the Perizzites. And the Canaanites. And the Hittites. And the Girgashites. The Hivites. And the Jebusites. And all the otherites.

And I delivered them into your hand. He says. Verse 12. And I sent the hornet before you. which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites, but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

And I have given you a land for which you did not labor and cities which you built not, and you dwell in them of the vineyards and olive yards which you planted not, do you eat?

And Joshua's saying here, trust God. He's calling families to faith. He's saying, look at what God has done for you. Can't we all think, looking back, what God has done, how God has helped, how he's given us so many bouncies, all the blessings, even the difficulties.

[10:03] We can be grateful. He's led us through. He's kept us strong. And Joshua told the people here, you've seen God's work. You've seen the deliverance from Egypt.

You've seen the conquest of the promised land. God's been gracious to you. People have got here this morning. God is gracious, isn't he? God has been gracious to you. He's shown you his love. Battle after battle, there's many victories that have been won, he tells the people. And that's true for you, brother. It's true for you, sister. There's victories that have been won.

It's not been by your sword or your bow. It's God's grace. God's been gracious. Do we stop and bring to mind in thankfulness what God has done with much to be thankful for, people?

Much to be thankful. Much to give God the credit for. Don't think back and brag on about what you've done. It's God's hand on your life that's enabled you to do anything good.

[11:08] So let's praise God as families this morning. As we have this theme of family, if you like, we think of God's great blessings in the past. Amen. Thank God for it. Tell of God's grace to your children, to your family, to your friends, to your children, the folk that you can reach.

Tell them of the goodness of God. Give thanks. Give thanks. Thank God. Trust God. Joshua calls his families, these families to faith. Another thing he calls the families to, and the heads of families, he calls the families to worship.

He says, worship God. We see that here in verse 14. Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your father served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord.

You know, he's saying sometimes our fathers served the wrong God. You know, just because we might have been brought up in a particular religion or a particular kind of church, a particular kind of superstition.

If your father served other gods, then don't follow them. But we're going to serve the Lord. Serve the Lord. So Joshua's beckoning to the folk here. He says, teach your family to worship God.

[12:35] Teach your family to fear the Lord. To have that deep respect for God. To set your hearts unto him. In all that we do, we can have that fear.

And the fear of God, it speaks of that inner devotion. It says we're going to set ourselves apart unto him. It's that inner devotion that you want to honour God with your life. It's been said that family religion is better caught than taught.

You know, there's a sense where, rather than you telling, it's almost like they've got to catch it from you. That sense of faith, that they can see the example of your life. That you're a witness for Christ. They'll catch it, as it were. It's contagious, as it were, in a good way. Not like the COVID, but catch the contagious godliness.

That you can be a contagious Christian. That would be a good thing, wouldn't it? That they'll catch that. They'll catch that spirit, as it were. That we'll be, as parents, setting an example, a godly example.

[13:36] And that we, as parents, can truly fear God. And our children will see that. They'll notice that. They'll learn that from us. And when we love the Lord, it'll encourage them, likewise, to love him too.

And as we, as parents, sing the hymns and worship God, the children will watch and learn. And they'll see. And they'll remember. They'll recall that. They'll recall that.

Even if they're lost, they'll recall what they've heard. Amen. We can trust and pray that that will be a seed that will blossom one day. And when you pray as parents, they will quietly pray with you.

They'll see. They'll learn. They'll catch it. Amen. In a good way. And through life, we can learn those values and ways of living. We're all setting a pattern. We're setting a course for life.

And God helping us prayerfully. Our children will be influenced in a good way, in a godly way. Of course, we know they've got to make their own decision. We're not saying you can kind of inherit your mother or father's faith.

[14:42] It's got to be your own. It's got to be your own. And, of course, we can pray and yet not always see that result. At least not for now. But one day, perhaps we will.

So keep praying. Keep believing. Joshua understood the power of parents. The power of parents. And really, men bear that heavy responsibility too in this area.

You know, Joshua addressed the men. And, you know, when you think of it as men, men here today, that means dads, husbands, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, uncles. It means young men too.

Teenage men. Young single men. Older single men. Men of every age. God speaks to men, especially as in the sense of that. The buck stops with you.

It starts with you. Now, here's a quote. For too many years, we've delegated spiritual leadership to the women. While we went out into the world to make a living, we've laid a burden on the women God never intended them to bear all alone.

[15:44] God never meant spiritual leadership to be a shared burden, but the men. Sorry, I'll say that again. God meant spiritual leadership to be a shared burden, but the men must take the initiative if we truly want God's blessing.

And men particularly challenge the men here today, myself included. And, look, here's a little picture of a family going to church.

Hopefully you can see that clearly enough. We're going to zoom in shortly. It shows a suburban family heading off to church, and they're led by the older sister who's followed by mom, and then she's followed by the younger sister.

And all these three women are dressed for church, and following them as a young boy. He looks like he's a bit reluctant. What's the problem? At the centre, we see this man.

We see the man. We see the father. The old dad slumped in his chair, still in his pyjamas, reading the paper with a cigarette in his hand, and as Junior walks by, he sees dad.

[16:49] Now, Junior, the junior boy, he's going to church, but he'd rather be with his dad. Now, men, our actions speak louder than our words. So, men, now put your pants on, as it were.

Now, be the man. Be a spiritual leader in your home. God helping you to be. But we set the direction. The buck stops with us men. Be challenged today. Be that man of God to set the direction for your family.

It's really incumbent on us in that way. Of course, parents too. It's wider than just the man, but there's a sense where we call to be that godly pattern.

Set the godly pattern. Amen? So, Joshua says, families. He says, trust God. Follow God in faith. He says, worship God. Have that spirit of worship in the home.

And he says, also, serve God. We see that in verse 14 where it says this. Joshua continues. He says, now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him.

[17:51] Serve him, it says, in sincerity and in truth. And put away the gods which your father served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt and serve ye the Lord.

Joshua's saying here, fear the Lord. And he's also saying, fear him and serve him. Serve him, it says, with all faithfulness. Now, it's kind of when you actually read between the lines of this verse where Joshua is saying, put away the gods, you know, throw away the gods that your ancestors worship.

It makes you wonder whether they might have had some secret pocket in their robes. They have their little idols. They kind of snook them away.

These false gods. But despite the care and provision of God, despite the miracle, wonder-working power of God on their part, despite his constant supply in their travels, the children of Israel still clung on to their idols.

Maybe they had cherished them so that they would have clung so tightly to their idols that they had them snook away, as it were, and they still were worshipping false gods through all their wanderings, through all their journeys.

[19:09] And what a telling picture that is for us as God's people. Have we rooted out, as it were? Have we torn from our hearts those cherished idols, those false gods that we know are not worthy of him?

And the word serve here is used some six times in various forms in two verses. The burden of Joshua's heart was serve God.

He's saying family, serve God. He's saying fathers, lead your family to serve God. And do that willingly to serve. To come under his lordship. When we think to serve, it means to come under lordship, doesn't it?

That he would be master, that we would be his servant. And the call here, it says, serve the Lord with sincerity. He's saying serve the Lord with all faithfulness.

May your heart be surrendered wholly and solely and totally under his command. May every area of our life be surrendered to the lordship of Christ.

[20:10] Now that's a big call, isn't it? We can say that. We can sing it. I surrender all. If we're honest, we might say, I surrender 70% or I surrender most or a fair bit.

No, it says, I surrender all. A double L. People, this morning, that if we could but have that heart, that that song, those words would be true for me, for you.

That we would serve the Lord in all areas. We'd surrender all. And I know it's a big call, really, but moment by moment we can, can't we? Moment by moment, God helping us.

And Joshua's saying here, may we put aside all the false gods worshipped by the pagans. Friends, there's pagans all around us. This is a heathen land. You know, Australia is a pagan nation.

And we are God's people. We should shine out as something contrasting to that. And these gods, these false gods, they've got no power to save. They will only corrupt.

[21:15] Think of the gods that our fathers worshipped, as it were, the ungodly of our heritage, the ungodly of this land. It's a pagan, idol-worshipping nation, isn't it?

I know I was talking with someone lately about the, down at the footy field. You know, the idol worshippers are there. And not to, I know there's people that are involved with football. I know, not meaning to attack football per se.

But it's just that example of, there's a stadium of worshippers. And they're so religious, you know. They're so fanatical, you know. They're singing the songs. And they're jumping up and down. And they're shouting and screaming. And so worshipful of that ball being kicked from one side of the field to the other. And when it goes through those wooden sticks, they just go ballistic. It's such an exciting thing. And yet we as church, we sometimes miss that, don't we? We should be worshippers, shouldn't we? And we should get rid of the old gods. You know, that's a poor substitute to worshipping the true and living God.

[22:16] That we would see the genuine work of God's spirit in our heart. So we as parents, as God through Joshua is exhorting us, even now, even here and now, today, it boils down to choose God.

As parents, as families, we want to trust God. We want our families. We want to be faith-building families. God helping us. And you might be the only Christian in your family unit.

It's going to be hard yak it. But God will help you. God will give you grace to be the faithful one. If it be the one, that you'll be that one. You'll trust God no matter what. And as parents, as families, we'll trust God.

As parents, as families, we'll worship God. We'll have that heart to worship, that desire to worship, that wanting to come and worship. And that we'll want to serve God. That he will be our master. We'll surrender. God helping us, we'll surrender all. And it boils down to this last thing, is Joshua calls families to choose God.

[23:16] Choose God. We see that in Joshua 24, verse 15, where this is the one that we would reckon is a really blessed scripture to hide in your heart and to recall to mind.

It's a call to choose God. Joshua says this, And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day, today, whom you will serve.

Whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood of the river Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Friends, Joshua offered the people some series of choices here.

He says, first, the true God. Choose you this day. Are you going to serve the living God? Or are you going to choose those ones, the gods that you used to have? The gods that your fathers used to have? The gods of the heathen?

[24:19] The gods of Australia? Will you serve the gods that were beyond the river? The river Euphrates? You know, perhaps referring to the gods of Ur of the Chaldees. These were the gods of ancient tradition.

You could reckon it was the moon god and the sun god. Gods beyond the river. And then he says, are you going to choose the gods of Egypt? Now, the gods of Egypt, maybe they could be the gods of the sun, the rain, the darkness, of natural disasters.

The gods of Egypt. You know, they would manufacture all kinds of false idols that they would bow down and venerate. Are you going to choose the gods of Egypt? Or you could choose the gods of the Amorites.

Now, the Amorites apparently had gods of fertility, of sexual pleasure. You know, it was immorality, effectively. Joshua says, make a choice. Make a stand.

Make a decision, he says. And notice, we can't force people to serve the Lord. Joshua said, here's a smorgasbord. Take your pig. Make your choice. If you don't want to choose the living and true God, then who are you going to worship?

[25:23] Which false god are you going to worship? Is it going to be you're going to go back to the false gods you used to worship? It's as if Joshua was saying, go all the way back to Ur, if you like.

Go back to where you came from. Go back to Egypt. Some people prefer the gods of this world, don't they? They prefer the gods of this world rather than the one true living God. Their eyes are so blinded by sin, their hearts so given to the flesh and its ways, they'd rather drink from that cesspool of sin than to drink from the water of life. You know, like a pig going back to the mire. You know, you get that pig so lovely and clean. Almost as clean as this car detailer makes those cars outside. This pig is so shiny and clean, so squeaky clean. And then he just goes right back and jumps in the mud puddle, in the stinking pit of mud. What a picture.

[26:21] Friends, are we going to go back to the false gods? Or are we going to serve the living and true God? What a choice. We all have to make a choice. We have to decide. We have to decide to serve the Lord. Friends, it boils down to individual choice. And it has to come from you. No one can force you to follow him. As has been said, there's a saying, a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still. You know, we can kind of browbeat people or manipulate, twist their arm, you know, pray this prayer. But if you're convinced against your will, you're of the opinion still. Friends, you've got to come to a place where you actually say, I believe. I believe. I believe. And as parents, we can't force our children to believe. We can't force them. You know, God helping Rick and Rosemary, they can't force Daniel or Aaliyah to believe. Those little ones have got to come in their own time and place. We can't force any of those that we love and care about to be a Christian.

[27:27] I've got loved ones in my own family circle. I'm worried about them. I think they're going the wrong way. We can only point them to the Lord, people. Be the godly example in your home, in your family circle. Everyone must make their own choice. God gives people the opportunity to make up their own minds. And Joshua says this, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. Joshua expresses the heart of this great spiritual leader at the end of his life. And friends, these words are true now as they were then. It's the will of God for you. Serve him, isn't it? It's the will of God that you would know him. God's not willing that any should perish, but we should come to know the Savior, to know him as Master, as Lord. God helping us. We want to do everything in our power to see our families. Follow that example. A commentator, Matthew Henry said, serving the Lord involves serious godliness.

[28:40] When you think about it, this Master that we serve is our loving Savior. He is our great God and friend, our Father, our loving Lord. And we ought to get serious about our claims of faith, serious about where we stand with God. Take it seriously. This is life and death. More than that, this is hell and heaven. This is time and eternity. This is forever stuff. This is reality. And every one of us and the ones that we love and care about, our friends, our family, our children, our grandchildren, all must make their own choice for themselves. But we as parents, we've got a special obligation to set the right example. And you might be a son, a daughter in a family that your parents do not believe. You can be the shining light in that darkness. For Christ's sake, we all have that power of example. And fathers, we have the highest obligation, really.

[29:48] As we know, I know it's been said when our sons were growing up, people often said that they reminded them of me. And it's a heavy burden as a father. Have I always been that example that I ought to have been? It's been said that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. There's a sense where we better make sure that we set the best example. Of course, my dad's been a perfect example to me. But we have this sense where everyone's looking at us, aren't they? Our children, our grandchildren, they're looking up to us. Men, mums, dads, we've all got that opportunity to choose. Notice Joshua's boldness. He says, this is his public statement. He says publicly, but as for me, he's doing what Rick and Rosemary have done today. They've come forward and say, we're making a stand.

We're making a decision today. We're going to stand for Christ today. We're going to stand as a godly family. God helping us as a godly dad, as a godly mum. And Joshua's saying here, I'm going to stand here.

[30:56] As for me, it doesn't matter about everybody else. I don't care what the rest of you do. He was saying to the crowd there. He's saying, I am going to serve the Lord. As for me, me.

And it boils down to you personally. Each one. You know, the me, myself, and I. All of us. Each one. Are we going to be the leader in our home? A leader of our nation as Joshua?

That we would be a glowing and shining light. That we would be the one who stands out from the crowd and says, as for me, I'm going to make a personal decision.

And we all have to say that sooner or later. And it can happen in the work setting too. You know, I know there's one telling me lately that there's quite an ungodly environment where they're working. Oh, none of you are there.

There's that ungodly environment where they're working. Friends, that's life. That's life. In the work site, you're going to be the 1% Christian. 1% just about, isn't it?

[31:54] One in a hundred. It's just about the way the proportion, I reckon, is about the ratio. Maybe half a percent sometimes. That there's so many, you're outnumbered. A hundred to one.

But maybe that's just where God wants you to be. Maybe that is the case. And you're going to say, as for me. You know, in that work setting, when we're dealing with colleagues and friends and family, with neighbours, we can be standing as Joshua stood.

And if you follow Christ, there's going to come a time when you're going to have to say, it's me against the crowd. It's me against the multitude.

Do what you want, whatever you want to do. I mean, I'll still be your friend, but I'm going to serve the Lord. I am going to serve the Lord. As for me. Now, choosing the Lord, it doesn't happen by accident.

It's a personal decision. And in the end, it's going to come down to this. For instance, notice, see, you must choose to serve the Lord. It's not going to happen by accident. You know, you don't become a Christian by osmosis.

[33:04] You know, you come to church and you suddenly kind of soak it up. And you don't inherit it from your parents.

You might have godly mums and dads and godly brothers and sisters. It doesn't happen by inheriting it. It's got to come by you saying, as for me. It's got to make your own stand.

So, friends, Joshua speaks by faith as the God-appointed leader of his family. And he claims to write now, it's interesting how Joshua speaks for me and my house.

There's a sense where you can speak for your house. Man of God, while you've got children under your roof. You can say, as for me and my house, as for me and my family, as for me and my household.

And it's like Joshua's claiming the right here for the father to say, I'm going to stand as the priest of my home. I'm going to stand as the godly representative for my home.

[34:07] I'm going to stand and speak for my wife, my children, my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren, even for my servants. And I know the son that thinks, well, as the Philippian jailer was told, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house.

It's got to come to that place where we can be an influence on our household. And Joshua, it's as if he's saying here, I'm the leader here. I hold the proxy in my hand.

I declare my entire household will serve the true and living God. He had a heart that he wanted his household to follow the Savior. And, friends, every Christian man ought to make that statement about the family God has given him.

Be that godly example. Joshua was willing to take an unpopular stand. His choice was based on what was right. It wasn't about the decisions of others. The decisions others had wrongly made. And, like I say, Joshua was kind of outnumbered here. The world around us is going to choose the false gods. They're going to choose the flesh.

[35:17] They're going to follow what is wrong. But Joshua stood for what is right. He took the road less traveled. And God's people here this

morning take the road less traveled.

Say, I'm going to be like Joshua, and I'm going to take that personal step of faith and obedience. He thought it better to live in the grace of God than the popularity of men.

He was committing his own family that they would be worshippers of the true God. What a blessing. Joshua taught his family well. And he says, Now, Joshua does not say, My house without me.

As that picture that we showed before, Joshua wasn't saying, My house without me. Like the man in the painting, who would just sit in the sofa and let his family go to church without him.

Nor did he say, Me without my house. He stood with his family in this confession. I will serve the Lord. And my family joins me in this confession.

[36:25] How can a man be so certain about his family? You know, Joshua had invested into his family. He'd spoken to them. He'd taught them the word. He'd given them that godly example.

So his personal commitment, they could go along with it. They could see him as being real and true. About his profession of faith. It wasn't some token thing.

And God helping you, godly men here this morning, to set the example and keep on setting the example such that your children, when that decision time will come, they'll say, I'm going to stand with my dad, my godly dad.

Godly parents. Might be a Christian mom in an ungodly setting. God will help you to find grace. And he'll help you to be an influence, to be a contagious Christian, to have that serious godliness.

Take it seriously. Your faith isn't just some glib, token, throwaway line, or some empty profession, but it's a heart-deep, heartfelt confession.

[37:35] It's a deliberate choice that you make your mind up. Friends, it's decision point. You know, I like to think, as we talked about on Thursday, D-Day, Decision Day, Choose You This Day, Him You Will Serve.

Maybe you come here today and you've yet to trust the Lord as your saviour. Maybe you could say, Preacher, I'm not sure that I'm going to heaven. I don't know that I'm saved today.

I don't know that I've been born again. You can know today. You can choose today. God helping you to choose. You can say, Yes, Lord, I believe. I trust that you died on the cross for my sin.

I will choose you this day. That you I will serve. That you will be my Lord. That I will be your servant. That you will be my master. That I will serve you as my saviour.

That I will stand with God. That can be your choice today. God helping you. And when you think, really, we've all got to serve somebody. Whether it be God or Satan. If you're not serving God, then you're serving the other one.

[38:42] Whatever that be. In all of these guises. Whether it be the gods of Egypt, the gods of the Amorites, the gods beyond the Euphrates. It's all the same God. It's Satan.

If you're not following the living and true God, you're following Satan. We cannot sit on the fence. It's got to be one or the other. And friends, I urge you today. God, woe to me if I don't urge you enough.

Look, take stop. Don't delay. I know there was a testimony lately of a man who missed. The opportunity was lost.

Friends, I don't want you to miss the opportunity this morning. That you would trust him now. And just as we wrap up, think, verse 31 here says that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua. It's an interesting kind of end story here. Verse 31. Because they said, we will serve the Lord. That was their response. They said, we will serve the Lord.

[39:44] His voice we will obey. And verse 31, it says that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua.

So Joshua challenged the people. He said, choose you this day. And they did. And they chose wisely. They said, we will serve the Lord. We will trust God.

We will believe. We will get rid of the false gods. We will serve God. Now, this was the greatest legacy of Joshua. And, you know, brothers and sisters, God helping you, godly parents, mums, dads, we can have a legacy that there'll be something behind us when we're gone.

When we're in the ground, we will know there's something for the life we've lived. The godly influence we've had. What about you? Every person needs a God.

God. And every person must serve the God they choose. Now, just to illustrate this, there was a time, it was a wedding day, and there was a little boy named Robert, and he just wanted to help out. [40:53] As there was a wedding, he acted as an usher. So he stood at the door with his little bow tie on, you can imagine, and he said, I want to help. And this older man took him aside and told him the etiquette of a wedding.

That, well, when you're an usher at the door, you're welcoming people in, you've got the job of escorting people to their seat. And he said, Robert, you first have to ask them, are you a guest of the bride or of the groom, to determine where you need to seat them?

Are they with the bride or with the groom? So Robert seemed to understand that pretty well. So Robert was patiently waiting on the first person to come walking in the door, and he said very politely, as he offered the lady his arm, he said, ma'am, whose side are you on?

Whose side are you on? You know, everybody's on one side or the other. You know, at a wedding time, the groom's family and friends, the bride's family and friends, whose side are you on?

Now hopefully a marriage won't be like that where there's a competing side, as it were, but there's that sense where we've got to decide whose side are we on. And as Moses called the people in Exodus 32, verse 26, as Moses came down from the mount and the people were worshipping a false god, the golden calf, he called them to a decision.

[42:15] Here's the people of God playing up again, worshipping a false god again, bowing down to this golden calf creature that they'd fashioned, out of molten gold.

And he says, who is on the Lord's side? Are you on the Lord's side?

Choose you this day, whom you will serve, friends. And if you choose not to choose, you've already made your choice because you might say, oh, I'm still thinking about it.

I'm still deliberating. I'm still, I'm going to get around to it. By not choosing, you've already chosen.

And Joshua boils down to commitment, really, doesn't it?

And this concept, commitment, is so not 21st century, isn't it? Commitment, it's not 21st century. No one's committed anymore. You don't commit. You don't commit to getting married. You don't commit to a church.

[43:14] You just wander and float and flit around as a butterfly.

Commitment. It's not 21st century. That's so old-fashioned. Yes, it's Bible. Commitment.

Choose you. Choose. Make a choice. We all must choose. Reach that moment of decision for yourself. Make up your mind. You have freedom of choice too.

Christianity is reasonable. Our Lord says, come now, let us reason together. Friends, God is reasonable. He doesn't twist our arm or force us.

It's voluntary. It's voluntary. So, make your choice. Cast your vote. And not a, what's it called?

A dummy vote? A donkey vote? Make your vote. Say, I vote number one. One and only. My God, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

[44:13] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for the challenge you give us to choose, choose wisely. Help us, Lord, in these choices of life, in this ultimate choice of life that we would choose for me and my house.

We would choose to serve the Lord. Pray for each one here present that each one might know the saving grace of God that we can know our trust is in the work of Christ to the cross for our sin.

And there we can find eternal life by simply trusting you and your saving power. Lord God, we thank you for that. We pray for each one to come to that decision personally.

And Lord, as families, we pray for families here, whatever their situation, that, Lord, we know you're in charge. You are the head of every house that claims your name.

And, Lord, fathers do their part, but we're all under your head as the head of the house. And, Lord, help us as godly mums, as godly dads, as godly children in a household that we will all determine, as Joshua did, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

[45:25] Amen. Amen.