

Are You Committed?

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Date: 28 May 2023

- [0 : 00] We're going to begin our worship by singing to God's praise. We're singing Psalm 115, the Sing Psalms version, page 152 of the psalm books. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 9, and the tune is Tiverton. Lord, not to us, O not to us, to your name be the praise, because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord, always. Why do the nations question us? Where is their God, they say? Our God inhabits heaven high, and over all holds sway. We'll sing from verse 1 to 9 to God's praise, and we stand to sing.
- Lord, not to us, O not to us, to your name be the praise.
- Because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord, always.
- Why do the nations question us? Where is their God, they say?
- Our God inhabits heaven high, and over all holds sway.
- [1 : 43] Their gold and silver images are crafted carefully, but they have mouths which cannot speak, and eyes which cannot see.
- Their noses have no sense of smell, their ears can hear no sound.
- They have no feeling in their hands, nor can they walk around.
- Although these idols do have throats, no word can they proclaim.
- Their makers and their worshippers will all become like them.
- [3 : 18] O house of Israel, please, your trust upon the Lord alone.
- He is the mighty help and shield of all who are his own.
- Let's come to God in prayer. Let us pray. Lord, our God, our Father in heaven, we continue to worship you this day, thankful that you have given us your day, given us this day set aside for that very purpose, to come away from the activities of the rest of the week, to come away from the busyness of life in so many ways, and to come and draw near to you in this way, to come and still ourselves in your presence, to come and offer up our praise and worship to you.
- And we thank you that your word has reminded us, even as we've sung, that we come not for our glory, but for yours. And we come seeking your face, seeking your presence in our midst, thankful that you are the God who is above all other gods, that you are not one who keeps silent or one who cannot speak.
- You are not one who does not have ears to hear or eyes to see. For as your word reminds us, you hear your people as they pray. You speak to us and call us to yourself.
- [5 : 08] And we thank you that you are our God and that we can call upon your name, that you have brought us from darkness to light to sea, that there is only salvation found in one God and one Savior, Christ Jesus.
- And we thank you that we come in his name, the name above every other name. And we pray, Lord, that you will help us to put away all other idols that may be in our hearts or in our lives, all the things that come between through worship of you.
- For we know that although we speak and read of idols as they were in days of long ago in these psalms or in the word that we will be reading, we know that there are still idols in our hearts today.

There are still things that we put first before you, things that need to be removed before we can truly come and worship you aright. But we thank you that just as you helped your people of old, how you spoke to them and reminded them and challenged them in the midst of idolatry that surrounded them, that so your word challenges us today, that it speaks to us about the idolatry that surrounds us, but it reminds us of the God who is able to do and able to do abundantly more than we ask or even imagine.

And so, Lord, help us to set our trust in you, that we will indeed place our trust upon the Lord alone, as the psalm reminds us, for he is the mighty help and shield of all who are his own.

[6 : 49] And so we thank you that we have these words in our hearts this night, that even as we come in prayer just now, that we have that confidence and assurance that you are the help and shield to all your people, that near and far you surround your people, that you are with them, Lord, that you hear those who rejoice in gladness and joy this day, but that you hear too those who are full of sorrow and sadness, those who mourn and grieve, those who need you in special ways.

And we thank you that you are the God who is there to be called upon, that you are the one who is near, that you are the one who is able to help, that you are the one who gives grace and that all-sufficient grace, grace that is made perfect even in weakness.

And so we thank you for your grace that extends to your people. And may it be so, Lord, for those even of our own number who need you in particular ways, those who are grieving and mourning, those who are unwell, going through periods of ill health, those who are recovering from operations, those who are laid aside because of other reasons of the body, mind, and soul.

We know the challenges that we face in these days are many, but we thank you that we have one who has overcome, one who knows every frailty and weakness, one who knows every challenge and temptation that we face in this world, one who was tempted himself and yet without sin.

And we thank you that even in our sin, as we fall short, that we have one who we can come to, one who is able to forgive, one who bore our sins on the tree, one who died in our place, that we might have life through him.

[8 : 43] And so help us to hear your word as it speaks to us anew and afresh this evening. Help us that we will hear what you're saying and consider what you are saying and even commit to what we hear, that we are to serve the Lord, that we are a people who are called to you to that end, that we would put our trust in you and serve you with all that we are and all that we have.

We thank you for every blessing that you extend to us, for every perfect gift is from above as your word reminds us. And we have so much to be thankful for, for your goodness to us and blessings that are new day by day.

And we do pray that in the days ahead as we go on in this week, that you will guide our every step and help us along the way to honour you in all that we do, whether it be in school or in our workplaces, in our homes, in our communities.

Whatever we are doing, we would do it as unto the Lord, remembering that we are your witnesses, that we are your people, and that to those around us who know you not, to those who are still in darkness, that we would be the light of this world, shining your glory through us.

We pray, Lord, that you will help us to be your witnesses, to be people who live aright and are people who do good unto others as well.

[10 : 12] And we thank you for every opportunity that we have to serve you in every way, from working with our young ones, as we think even of the week ahead with the toddler group tomorrow and the explorers later in the week, the YF tonight, and the youth fellowship meeting in the coming week as well.

We thank you, Lord, for every way that we are able to help and serve in these ways. And we pray that as a congregation here, as your people, you will strengthen our number and strengthen our faith, that you will help us to go on in your strength, seeking blessing and goodness for us as a people, but also for the people around us too, that we would compel others to come in, that we would remember the good news of the gospel that we have, that it is not something to be contained to these walls or to our own lives, to our hearts, but that your word and your message is a public message, one that speaks to all around us and the one that we all need to hear and to hear afresh and to share with others.

So, Lord, may you enthuse us in our hearts. May you convict us, even in our own witness for you, that we would ask, oh Lord, what can we do for you?

For we know that you have done so much for us. And we pray, Lord, that you will build up your kingdom here in our community and throughout our islands, throughout our nation, throughout the world, that your kingdom and glory would come in power.

We thank you for your church that is far and wide throughout this world. And we thank you for the witness of the gospel. We thank you that it extends to the north and south, the east and west.

[11 : 58] It is so far reaching. The gospel bears witness to all ends of the earth. And we thank you that your gospel is bearing fruit, that there are lands and peoples who are being reached with the gospel, many even for the first time, who may be hearing it and marveling at it, that you have sent your word to them, that they have heard of a Savior so precious, so lovely.

And we pray, Lord, that as your word goes out, it will be blessed by you. It will be mighty and powerful to save from every tribe and nation throughout this world, from leaders on high, Lord, that they would come to know you as their Lord and as their King, to serve you as servants to you as their true Master.

We pray that even for our own nation, Lord, that we would see a turning in our land, that we would see a turning to you, a turning to faith and your word and truth, and that we'll be led by it.

We pray, Lord, for your goodness then over us as a people. We pray for your mercy to be upon us. We pray that you will cleanse us from all our sins, and we commit all into your care, even for the days ahead.

For the wake and funeral of Professor McLeod, we commit that to you. We commit the family once again, and friends, to your care and keeping. May you bless in the midst of grief.

[13 : 28] May your words bring comfort and convict us all, Lord, of our need of you. Thankful for all that we have heard over many years of the glory of Christ.

We pray that Christ will be glorified even in these days ahead as well. Remember the WFM meeting this Friday as well. Bless that and be with them there on our communion weekend as well as we look forward to it.

Be with us in all these things, and may you encourage us and build us up, and may you come in a day of your power. So hear our prayers. Continue with us.

Continue to bless your word and the singing of your praise. The one who leads us in it, Lord, be with him and help us all to sing to your glory with all our hearts. So we thank you, Lord, for your goodness anew each day.

We thank you for the hope and assurance of forgiveness of sin as we ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Again, sing to God's praise this time in Psalm 15.

[14 : 35] Again, in the Sing Psalms. Psalm 15, in the Sing Psalms, we'll sing the whole of this psalm, page 16 of the psalm book.

Psalm 15. Lord, who may stay within your tent, your sacred dwelling place, and who upon your holy hill may live before your face.

Whoever walks a blameless path, who acts in righteousness, and who will always, from the heart, sincerely truth express. We'll sing from verse 1 to 5, the tune of Free Church, and we stand to sing.

Lord, who may stay within your tent, your sacred dwelling place, and who upon your holy hill, may live before your face.

Whoever walks a blameless path, who acts in righteousness, and who will always, from the heart, sincerely truth express.

[16 : 23] He has no spark on anyone, nor does his neighbor roam.

He has no spark within his heart, or stander on his tongue.

He honors those who fear the Lord, the worthless heal his spies.

He keeps the oath which he has sworn, however high the price.

He lends his money, he hath no charge, no pride can he endure.

[17 : 48] Those who meet him in life like this, will always stand secure.

We'll turn to read the Word of God now. In the Old Testament, in the book of Joshua, we're going to read in chapter 24. Joshua chapter 24, the last chapter of the book of Joshua.

We're going to take up our reading at verse 11, and read down to verse 28. Just to set the scene at the beginning of this chapter, you see Joshua has gathered all the tribes of Israel together.

He's gathered them to show them, and explain to them what the Lord has done for them, how he has brought them out of Egypt and into the promised land, and how God has been good to them.

And in the midst of this, the people have their hearts pulled in different directions, just like their fathers in Egypt had been pulled towards worshipping the gods of Egypt. Now they're going into the land, the promised land.

[19 : 05] There's this challenge that they may turn to the gods of that nation. And the great challenge is to them, who will they serve? So up to verse 11, he's explaining to them what the Lord has brought them to.

And we take up our reading at verse 11. Verse 11. And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perisites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Gergesites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

And I gave them into your hand, and I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites. It was not by your sword or by your bow.

I gave you a land on which you had not laboured, and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of the vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.

Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods of your fathers, that your fathers served beyond the river and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.

[20 : 19] And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Then the people answered, Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods.

For it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed.

And the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore, we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.

But Joshua said to the people, You are not able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.

[21 : 29] If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you after having done you good. And the people said to Joshua, No, but we will serve the Lord.

Then Joshua said to the people, You are witnesses against yourselves, that you have chosen the Lord to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

He said, Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel. And the people said to Joshua, The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God.

And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said to all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us.

[22 : 47] Therefore, it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God. So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

Amen. And may God bless that reading from his word. And again, sing to God's praise before we turn back to that passage. Singing in Psalm 50 in the Scottish Psalter, the first version of the Psalm, page 276 of the Psalm book.

Psalm 50, and that verse one. The mighty God the Lord hath spoken and did call, the earth from rising of the sun to where he hath his fall, from out of Sion Hill which of excellency and beauty, their perfection is God's shine it gloriously.

We'll sing from verse one to five to God's praise. The mighty God the Lord hath spoken and did call, the earth from rising of the sun to where he hath his fall.

From out of Sion Hill which of excellency and beauty the perfection is God's shine it gloriously.

[24 : 47] Our God shall surely come, His silence shall not be, Before him fire shall with great storms Shall round about to me, Unto the heavens clear, He from above shall fall, And to the earth like my sanity, May judge his people all.

We turn back to our reading in Joshua chapter 24.

We can read again at verse 14. Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the river and in Egypt and serve the Lord.

And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, Choose this day whom you will serve, Whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river, Or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.

But as for me and my house, We will serve the Lord. These will be familiar words to many of you.

[26 : 46] I'm sure the words are often found on plaques, Put pictures that found in homes throughout our island. A very common verse to see.

As for me and my house, We will serve the Lord. But maybe what we don't often notice is the midst, What was in the midst of that statement, What the challenge was that Joshua was putting out to the people.

And what the setting was when they were being pulled in so many different directions. But here is Joshua when he gathers the children of Israel together.

They've come into the promised land. They're being seeing all these good things that are around them. They're looking back on what the Lord has brought them through.

And looking ahead to what the Lord has in store for them. And they're being reminded once again of the need to be faithful to the Lord God and Him alone.

[27 : 47] And it's one of these occasions where, As we see a people gathered together. So a day that they would remember for the rest of their lives, I'm sure.

And a day and a statement that was made that resonates right through the Old Testament into the New Testament And stays with us to this day. Because it's such a powerful challenge.

Choose this day whom you will serve. And then the challenge is Joshua put it, As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

It would have been something that would have spoken about for a long time afterwards. We hear this statement sometimes, Where were you when?

And then it's followed by something important that happened in life. Where were you when? For example, if you look back maybe many years in your life to the time when John F. Kennedy was shot.

[28 : 50] Some of you maybe recall where you were when you heard that news. It was something dramatic. Something powerful had happened. And very often when that is the case, we remember where we were when we heard that news.

And over the years perhaps there have been times and moments when we've had that kind of statement asked of us, Where were you when? For example, maybe when Princess Diana was killed in a car crash.

Where were you when you heard that? Where were you when you heard the Queen had passed away? Where were you when you heard as a nation and as a people, We were going into lockdown.

We had to stay at home because of Covid. We often remember those important things. And we remember maybe exactly where we were when we heard or saw these things taking place.

And they stay with us in some ways. But as time goes on, we can maybe often forget. And the longer time goes on, the more we have to think about these kinds of things.

[29 : 55] Where were you when? And you have to think a bit more about it. And what's interesting is when we come to the scriptures, it's often the case as well. The people here, where were we when they heard this?

They were gathered at Shechem. They were there hearing Joshua putting this challenge before them. But then as you go through the Old Testament, you find these people forgetting what they heard, forgetting what had happened, forgetting the commitment that they'd made and moving on in their own lives.

It doesn't have the same impact. But it shouldn't be the case with the Word of God. We should never allow it to become something that we could just forget about.

Where were you when you heard the minister preaching on that passage? Maybe when you were first converted, where were you when the Word of God spoke powerfully to you at that moment?

And you can remember the church, the very seat you were maybe sitting in when the Lord opened your heart. But now maybe it's not having the same impact.

[31 : 00] Maybe now it's just not seeming as powerful as it did just then. But that's often the case. But we often have to be challenged and convicted in what we are believing and what we're hearing week by week, month by month, year by year.

To be reminded that it's still the same word that is so powerful. To not allow us to be distracted by other false gods as is the setting here.

The idols, the things that come between us and God. And take away the joy of our worship. Rob us of that joy. Just to be reminded what God has done for us.

And what we owe to Him. A right service. A true commitment to Him. And that's what is good about going into a week when we will have a communion time in our own midst.

It's always a powerful reminder to us. We hear the Word of God week by week, but then as we come to the Lord's Supper, it seems to just add something to it.

[32 : 10] It reminds us as we do that in remembrance of Him, as we have the bread and the wine before us, as we come to remember what the Lord has done. It reminds us of what He has done for us and what our commitment to Him should be as well.

And in some ways, Joshua is reminding the people of that here as well. It's a significant moment. He's called the nation, the people to Him, reminding them of what they have been brought out, of this bondage and slavery in Egypt, what they have been brought to in the promised land, and the fruits that are plenteous around them, as you see in verse 13.

But all that the Lord has provided for them. They are being reminded of this. And some will listen and others won't.

That's the reality of it. It may be the reality even here this evening. Some will listen, some will not. But our prayer is that God will speak.

God's Word will resonate in our hearts, that it will remind us of what He has done for us. Maybe even God's Word is speaking to you today.

[33 : 29] It is challenging you. Whether it's to recommit, that maybe you've grown cold in your commitment to the Lord, to come back to Him with a full sense of commitment.

Perhaps it's the fact you've not committed in the first place. You're being challenged to commit. But that's what the Word of God is saying to us. It's asking of us, are we committed to serving the Lord?

Joshua's words in verse 15 are like a summary for us. In all that we move on in life with, all the changes all around us, all the distractions that come our way, are we listening to God?

Are we committed to Him? These words, they still speak to us today. Verse 15, In this message to the people that Joshua is giving, he's giving them three things that I want us to hear this evening as well.

He's asking them, first of all, to consider, to consider all that the Lord has done for them. He's then giving them a comparison.

[35 : 04] He's comparing the gods that are around them, whether it's the gods of their fathers back in Egypt or the gods of the Amorites in whose land they now dwell, to compare these gods to the Lord and what comparison is there.

And then thirdly, as we'll see, he's challenging them to commit. So we've got consider, compare, and commit. Well, the first thing we want to look at here is consider.

And really from verse 1 through to verse 13, Joshua is there asking them to consider all the things that they have seen that the Lord has done, how He has brought them out of the land of Egypt, how He has brought them through the wilderness, how He has brought them into the promised land.

There are all these things that they have seen of God and are being asked by Joshua, consider what God has done for you, how He has led you to this point, how He has provided for you all along the way.

Read through the beginning of chapter 24 in your own time, maybe even this evening, how He brought them out of Egypt, how He brought them through so many battles, victorious, without even having to lift a sword or a bow.

[36 : 28] He won the battle for them. And how He brought them into cities and with vineyards and orchards, that the cities they didn't build, the orchards they didn't plant, everything was provided by God.

In Psalm 116, the psalmist there speaks of how his soul finds rest because God has been good to him. Consider all that the Lord has done, how He heard His prayer, how He was with them, and he comes to the conclusion, his soul finds rest because God has been good to him.

Do you have that rest in your soul this evening? Because God has been good to you. Consider what the Lord has done.

He shows us here what He has done for the children of Israel. But what about ourselves? As you consider your own life, as you look back over it, as you see all your journey through this world, consider the things that the Lord has done.

There will be very personal things for yourself. There will be times when you felt maybe you couldn't go on in your own strength, but He gave you strength.

[37 : 51] He gave you courage when you were afraid. He gave you boldness when you were full of fear. Consider the things that the Lord has done for you.

That's what Joshua is challenging the people, ourselves today with. Consider what the Lord has done and the cost that is in serving Him.

Look at the way he says to the positive response of the people when you go down to verse 19. In verse 16, the people answered, Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods.

For it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. He did all these things. And they say at the end of verse 18, We will serve the Lord, for He is our God.

But look at the response of Joshua to that. But Joshua said to the people, You are not able to serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God.

[39 : 01] He will not forgive your transgressions and your sins if you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods. What's he saying here?

Consider what you're saying. Consider the commitment you are making here. It cannot be just mere words. You cannot pay God platitudes in that way with just mere words.

He's calling them here to consider seriously. To seriously consider what is their commitment to the Lord. Is it mere words, just a gesture to the Lord?

Oh yes, I'll serve the Lord. But their heart's not in it. Or their hearts are divided, as is the case here. They're divided between serving the Lord and serving other gods.

He's saying there is a cost to this. Consider that. Jesus and His disciples in Matthew 16, verse 24, Jesus reminds the disciples of the cost of following Jesus.

[40 : 10] He says, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it.

But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. This is similar to what Joshua was saying here too. There is a cost as you consider what it means to following the Lord.

But you see, all along the way, how the Lord provides, how He gives, how He helps. And that is above all what we consider.

The Lord will not fail us. So as we commit ourselves to the Lord, He will be with us. There's a poem called, Hitherto the Lord Has Blessed Us.

And it goes like this, When our soul is much discouraged by the roughness of the way And the cross we have to carry Seemeth heavier every day.

[41 : 13] When some cloud that overshadows Hides our Father's face from you, O'tis well then to remember He has blessed us hitherto.

Looking back the long years over, What a varied path and yet All the way His hand has led us, Placed each hindrance we have met, Given to us the pleasant places, Cheered us all the journey through, Passing through the deepest waters, He has blessed us hitherto.

Surely then our hearts should trust, Though the clouds be dark overhead, We've a friend that draweth closer, When all other friends have fled, When our pilgrimage is over, And the gates we're sweeping through, We shall see with clearer vision How He's blessed us hitherto.

It's a reminder to us of the Lord Being with us all along the way, Especially through those times of challenge, Those times of difficulty.

He will give us a clearer vision, A vision of Himself. And that's what Joshua is asking the people here To consider.

[42 : 34] As he's saying when he says, Choose this day whom you will serve. It's to consider where you are. To consider what has been done for you.

And especially now as we know in light of Jesus Christ, And what He has done for us at the cross. To consider what that means.

To consider the cost For the forgiveness of our sins. To consider the cost Of fully serving Him.

As he is challenging the people here, There's a sense of it being, There will be things that you will have to let go. There will be things that you will have to put away from yourself To fully serve God.

Consider your life. Consider all of these things. And see if there are things that need to change. And that's true for ourselves.

[43 : 37] There may be things in our lives we have to put away. Things that are coming between us and God. They will have to go. But consider the cost If they don't.

Consider, Even as Joshua goes on to say here, If you will not put away the gods, He says in verse 20, If you forsake the Lord And serve foreign gods, Then He will turn away And do you harm and consume you After having done you good.

There's a serious challenge there. He will consume you. Even after He has done you good. If you forsake Him. So consider all of these things.

The second thing we see here is He's asking us to compare. To compare God the Lord And to compare the other gods That they've had in their lives.

So Joshua gives them some advice. And in many ways, It maybe seems like strange advice to us. The problem is there for us in verse 14.

[44 : 53] He says, Now therefore fear the Lord And serve Him in sincerity and faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served Beyond the river and in Egypt And serve the Lord.

But then He says in verse 15, If it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, Choose this day whom you will serve. Whether the gods of your fathers Served in the region beyond the river Or the gods of the Amorites In whose land you dwell.

He puts this choice before them. And initially it maybe seems like a strange choice to us. Either choose to serve, If it seems evil to serve the Lord, Then choose whom you will serve.

Either your fathers' gods Or the gods of the Amorites. But they're both false gods. So what is the point of what he's making here?

The people were beginning to see the God of the Amorites. And they were beginning to see an appeal To go to these gods. Not quite fully forsaking the Lord.

[46 : 04] They were going to try and keep Him in their lives. But it's almost like they were just trying to be fully covered. We'll have God the Lord on one side.

But maybe we'll need the gods of the Amorites. Or perhaps even the gods of our fathers That they had back in Egypt. We'll leave every option opened. Believing that this would help them To be almost fully covered.

That is why he says here, Serving the Lord seems evil to you. It seems evil in the sense that They're putting all their eggs in one basket.

If they only rely on one God, Well, that would be stupid, would it not? When there's all these other gods Who may be the answer for us as well. Being accountable to one God Just doesn't seem the right way to go.

And we say, well, how stupid is that? That sounds just crazy to us. And we say it should sound crazy to them as well. And yet how easy it is for our own hearts To be pulled in different directions.

[47 : 13] How easy it is for ourselves To have idols that will come into our lives. Things that we will rely on and trust on And depend on That we think we can help ourselves with.

When all our trust is to be in God. The point he is making is this. The choices are just as bad And just as absurd And of no use to you.

He's saying if you will not serve God You must at least serve another God And this is your choice. The God of your fathers Or the God of the Amorites.

But neither can help you. Neither can save you. Just like we sang in the psalm earlier About the idols.

They have no eyes that they can see. They have no mouths that they cannot speak. They have no ears that they can hear. But God the Lord does. What Joshua is saying is It's nonsense to think that these gods Can do anything for you.

[48 : 24] Remember what the Lord has done for you. How he has brought you Out of the land of Egypt Away from these gods And into the land of the Amorites And protected you from them and their gods.

There is no comparison. Nothing compares to God the Lord. And that's for ourselves too.

When you compare God the Lord in your life. Is there anything else that you can bring in That's going to add any benefit to you. Is there anything else that you can do That's going to make it better for you.

No. Because only God the Lord can help. So he's saying Don't turn back. Don't go back to the gods of your fathers.

Don't turn to the God of the Amorites. He's saying Make sure that you are fully committed. Because if you're divided He'll consume you.

[49 : 23] And again he reminds them Later on in verse 23. It's almost like he's saying You are Well in verse 22 You are witnesses against yourselves That you have chosen the Lord To serve him.

Then put away the foreign gods That are among you And incline your heart to the Lord The God of Israel. You see they had them. They had the gods The foreign gods Because he's saying Put them away.

It wasn't even that the danger was there That they might bring them in. They were already there But he's saying Put them away. Because nothing compares To God the Lord.

The Lord our God We will serve The people said. And so Joshua Made a covenant. That is how serious It was.

A full commitment To the Lord. Because there is no one Nothing That compares To God the Lord. And when we know Christ Jesus When we truly know him The one who saves us From our sins There is nothing That compares.

[50 : 35] Nothing Compares to it. They thought They would be Fully covered By bringing in All these other gods. Fully comprehensive In insurance terms.

They weren't even Third party. Third party. Because it was a scam. It was a fraud To think That these gods Can do anything for them. And yet that is What the world Seeks to do to us.

To pull us away From God. But it's a fraud. It's a scam. Because only God The Lord Can save us. And so then Thirdly and finally We see here Joshua is calling them To commit.

He is calling them To commit. When he says Put away the gods Of your father Serve beyond the river And in Egypt And serve the Lord.

And if it is evil In your eyes To serve the Lord Choose this day Whom you will serve. Choose this day. But then he makes This statement.

[51 : 42] He says But as for me And my house We will serve The Lord. There is this Commitment.

God the Lord Is a mighty God Who saves. He is the one Who is to be feared. He is the God Who is gracious And concerned For his people.

And having looked At other gods And how they compare There is no contrast. He says As for me And my house We will serve The Lord.

Isn't that a bold And courageous statement? And isn't that What we all need To be like? It doesn't matter What others Are saying Or what the rest Think. How the world Says Where is Your God?

We can say Our God Is in the heavens High He is ruling We can rest And trust In him Even when the world Laughs And mocks us For it But our God Is the Lord And that is The statement That Joshua Is making Have you Made that statement?

[52 : 59] Have you made That commitment Yourself? As for me And my house We will serve The Lord.

His commitment Is because He knows The God Who is committed To him. And when it comes To commitment How committed Are you?

I'll share What sounds Like a silly story But it has A very Serious Application For us It's about Our commitment And the story Was about A pig And a chicken A pig And a chicken Who were walking Down the road And the chicken Said to the pig Hey pig I was thinking We should open A restaurant And pig replies Well maybe What will we Call it?

And the chicken Responds How about Bacon and eggs? The pig He thinks For a moment And says No way For that For you That only means A contribution But for me That means A total Commitment It's a silly Story in many Ways But the application Of it is this Are we merely A people Who are like The chicken Just a contribution To the Lord Or are we Like the pig That it means Full commitment For us We are to be Fully committed Jesus experienced The same things With his own Disciples Many followed Jesus when he Was doing miracles And all kinds Of things All kinds Of teaching They were hearing And seeing Great things But then it Became too Hard

And many Of his Disciples Turned back It says in John 6 Verse 66 After this Many of his Disciples Turned back And no longer Walked with him So Jesus said To the twelve Do you want To go away As well Simon Peter Answered him Lord To whom Shall we go You have the Words of eternal Life And we have Believed and Have come to Know That you are The holy One Of God Are we Committed Like Simon Peter's Response To whom Else Can we go You alone Have the words Of eternal Life There is no One who Compares To God Our Lord Do you want To go away Do you want To just turn Away From him The way May be hard As we follow Him But it is

[55 : 55] The only way It may not Be an easy Way But it's The only way To eternal Life And that's What Joshua Is challenging Us Choose This day Whom You will Serve A missionary Society once Wrote to David Livingston The famous Missionary And they Asked him Have you Found a Good road To where You are If so We want To know How to Send other Men to Join you David Livingston Wrote back And said This If you Have men Who will Come only If they Know There is A good Road I don't Want them I want Men Who will Come If there Is no Road At all He was Looking for A people Who were Fully committed To serving The Lord Not having The easy Way to Go on Not having Everything Done for

Them But those Who were Willing To serve The Lord With all Their Heart There is No easy Option In serving God But there Is every Blessing In it To know God With us And to Know him On our Side To know The victory That we Have in Christ The hope Of eternal Life No other God compares No other God Can offer Us The blessings That are Found In God The Lord And so The challenge To us All This evening Is to Choose This day Whom You will Serve May it Be our Response Is the Same as Joshua That we Would say With boldness And with Gladness But as For me And my House We will Serve The Lord Let us Pray Our

Father in Heaven We do Thank you For the Verses in Your word That we Maybe know So well But we Thank you Lord How they Both Convince us And also Challenge us They remind Us that We as a People Have maybe In the past Made a Commitment To you A commitment That at Times has Grown Cold A commitment That is being Distracted By other Things In this World Or perhaps Even We are At a Point Where we Have not Committed But we Thank you That your Word shows Us that There is No God Who compares To you You have Done all For us You have Provided for Us every Step along The way And you Have been A God Who has Been good To us But even As your Word reminds Us this Evening If we Forsake you You are The God Who is Able to Consume Us But we Thank you To that There is Mercy That there Is Mercy As we Commit To you And as We seek To serve You With all

Our heart That we Would know Your blessing And your Favor Your goodness And your Mercy So help Help us Lord That we Would commit To you And serve You As the Only true And living God As we Ask it All In Jesus Name Amen We're going To conclude By singing To God's Praise In Psalm 9 In the Scottish Psalter Page 209 Of the Psalm Books Psalm 9 At verse 9 Sing Three Stanzas To verse 11 God Also Will a Refuge Be For those That are Oppressed A refuge Will he Be in Times Of Trouble To Distress We'll Sing From Verse 9 To 11 To God's Praise In the Tunis St.

Andrew God Also So Will Our Refuge Be For Those That Are Oppressed Our Refuge Will Leave In Time Of Throttle To His Rest And Thee That Know Thy Name In Thee Their Confidence Will Place For Thou Has

[60 : 50] All For Forsaken There That Truly Seek Thy Name O Sing Ye Praises To The Lord that dwells In Zion Hill And All The Nations ■■■■■■■■ and His Now I'll go to the main door after the benediction now may grace mercy and peace from God Father Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with us all now and forevermore

Amen Amen