

# Be Intentional

Joshua 24:15

## Sermon Outline

### A. A Call to Action (vs. 15a):

1. Disagreeable; Distress; evil – Joshua challenges the people that if they believe their ancestors had a negative attitude in respect to the principles of God then they need to make a choice as to whom they will serve.
2. Disagreeable; Distress; evil – Since they saw what the forefathers did in worshipping other gods as an evil attitude, and that it violated the standards of God, they must come together and make a public decision to serve the one and true God with ‘sincerity and truth.’
3. In your sight; Eyes – If based on their understanding, as they reflect on their nation’s history, violating the standards of God is evil, they need to come together in the presence of all and willfully decide to serve God.
4. Serve the Lord – They must willfully decide to have an opposite attitude of being disagreeable with an exhilaration to come before the Lord.
5. Serve the Lord – Coming before the One who has all authority should be with a heart to work with the mindset of a slave.
  - a) **God is normally the subject, having chosen Israel (Deut 4:37; 7:6, 7; 10:15; 14:2; 1 Kgs 3:8; Isa 41:8–9; 43:10; 44:1–2; 49:7; Ezek 20:5; Ps 33:12; 47:5 [=Eng 47:4]; 135:4; Neh 9:7). Yet His very choice forces a decision on Israel, for it is made in the midst of many attractive “religions.”** The doctrine of election may well have been formulated precisely in the battle against the Canaanite religion (cf. Seebass, *TDOT* 2 [1975] 83–84. 2) The only choice for Israel’s neighbors was which god to serve at the moment, in the present crisis. **Polytheism, the worship of many gods, was the natural presupposition in Israel’s environment. Ultimate choice was unnecessary, heretical, basically stupid.** Cultic activities presupposed that the god of the cult was known and chosen before cultic worship began. The task of the cult was celebration, not choice. [□](#)
6. Serve the Lord – Sacrificially obeying the One who has all authority is to serve the Lord with ‘sincerity and truth.’ (vs. 14)
7. Choose – The decision to serve God must be decisive with no room for turning back to worshipping other gods.
8. Choose – The decision to serve God is an excellent decision but it must be

well thought out because there needs to be no turning back.

9. Whom you will serve – Even though there is a lot of rituals within the Levitical Law to implement it is not just about fulfilling these obligations that matters most, it is more about the heart of the worshipper and the respect they offer the Lord God.
10. Whom you will serve – There is no middle ground, it must be completely one way or the other (no lukewarm; Rev. 3:15-22).
11. Whom you will serve – They must come before God to once and for all, with a completely surrendered heart, labor like a slave with an exhilaration as they obey all His Levitical Laws.
12. Whom you will serve – Worshipping God was a completely surrendered life-style. In their case it had to be a decisive decision because it was obedience to His commands. Preparing the animal was a daily process. Preparing ourselves is a 'presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice' (Romans 12:1) that is then 'holy sacrifice,' 'your spiritual service of worship.'

## **B. The Choice to Make (vs. 15b):**

1. Whom your father's served - The complete surrender to God; Joshua is requesting the same complete surrender that their fathers had in Egypt. In other words, follow their commitment to worship but not to the god the Egyptians worshipped.
2. Whom your father's served - Their fathers did not leave them a good example, which is especially bad when they are now dwelling among pagans. Maybe this is why Moses taught them to be different (Deut. 6:4-9).
  - a) One cannot 'fear him' and at the same time serve other gods (*cf.* 2 Ki. 17:32–34); these idols must be thrown away (14b; *cf.* Gn. 35:2–4). Israel's jealous God tolerates no rival. Neither does Jesus (*cf.* Mt. 6:24; Lk. 14:26). The reference to Egypt (14b) adds to the Pentateuch that Israel's redemption from Egypt was spiritual, not just political (see Ezk. 20:5–10; 23:1–4). God demands that the people chose where their allegiance lies, either with the old gods of Terah, the new gods of Canaan, or with Himself (15; *cf.* 1 Ki. 18:21; Rev. 3:16), an offer of options that assumes Israel's freedom before God.<sup>[2]</sup>
3. In whose land you are living – Even though Joshua knows this land was given to God's people he still says this is the land of the Amorites. The presence and the influence of these people are among them, all their worship centers remain, and all their gods remain. If they do not choose God, they would be like the Amorites.

## C. The Model to Imitate (vs. 15c):

1. As for me and my house – When Joshua said house, he is speaking of all who lived and worked at his house. No one is allowed to do any different.
2. Serve – Serving the Lord is going to be continuous because the laws of the Lord will be honored and it is expected, in Joshua's house, to be sacrificially obeyed.
3. Serve – Serving the Lord is such a blessing it should never be a burden to anyone.
4. Serve – They must come before God continuously, completely surrendered to labor like a slave with exhilaration as they obey all His Levitical Laws.
5. Serve – Worshipping God was a continuously surrendered lifestyle. In their case it had to be a decisive decision because it was obedience to His commands. Preparing the animal was a daily process. Preparing ourselves is a 'presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice' (Romans 12:1) that is then 'holy sacrifice,' 'your spiritual service of worship.'
6. The Lord – Joshua view the Lord as the only one and true God – 'the Lord.'
7. The Lord – As Lord, He is the One who established the relationship with Israel, the One who defines it and the One who direct it. It is our responsibility to honor, respect Him and to trust His leadership so that He reigns in our lives.
8. The Lord – Joshua viewed the Lord as the one who is powerful with all authority and might. Trusting the Promises of the Lord is evidence that He reigns in our lives!

---

<sup>1</sup> Butler, T. C. (1984). *Joshua* (Vol. 7, p. 273). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

<sup>2</sup> Waltke, B. K. (1994). [Joshua](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 259). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.