

JOSHUA

Week Four

The Consequences of Unresolved Sin

Significant truths:

Chapter 6

1. **God does not require us to understand His will, just obey it, even if it seems unreasonable.**

True obedience to God means doing what God says, when He says it, how He says it should be done, and for as long as He says to do it. But what if you do not understand the reasons for doing what he is asking. Doesn't matter, we are to obey regardless of the circumstances or how strange the request may be. It is natural for us to want to understand the reasons before obeying. We want to know the risks and we want to be certain that it will accomplish what we desire. Look at Joshua 6:5 and ask yourself, would you show the same obedience that Joshua demonstrated? As a soldier, Joshua must have seen these instructions as very strange. Yet as a man of God, he immediately obeyed. God does not require us to understand His will, just obey it, whether it 'makes sense' or not. Obedience must be a priority in every believer's life. It is the only way you will ever become the person God wants you to be, and the only way you will ever achieve the things in life that He has so wonderfully prepared for you.

Chapter 7

2. **The thrill of victory is often followed by the agony of defeat.**

The distance between a great victory and a great defeat is only one step, and often only a short one at that. One sad truth of reality in a fallen world is that we can be riding high on the cloud of some great spiritual success and the very next moment find ourselves in a valley of spiritual failure and despair. One moment we can be like Elijah standing victoriously on Mount Carmel and the next shriveled up under a juniper tree or hiding in a cave in deep despair complaining to God.

Never is the believer in greater danger of a fall than after a victory. We are so prone to drop our guard and begin trusting in ourselves or in our past victories rather than the Lord. One victory never guarantees the next. Only as it builds our confidence in the Lord and develops our wisdom in appropriating God's Word do our victories aid us for the next battle. Always, the basis for victory is the Lord Himself and our faith/dependence on Him. In Chapter 7, we see that we must be on guard because victory can often times open the door to the world as pride, greed, power, money and the desire for material wealth comes rushing in. We develop thoughts that are more aligned to the ways of the world, and we begin to think we can hide from God just as Adam and

Eve did in the Garden. We become emboldened, and then we become unfaithful, which means that we act underhandedly. We seek happiness and security from things rather than from God. (1 Timothy 6:6) God will not honor our underhandedness and while He may give us victory today, we can assuredly know that we will taste defeat tomorrow when we act in disobedience to God.

3. Nothing escapes the watchful eye of God.

Sin never escapes His watchful eye. We can fool ourselves and others, but never the Lord God sees the sin in our lives and desires us to deal with it, not hide it. Hiding it only hinders our progress in God's will and plan and creates trouble for others. Numbers 32:23 reminds us, "be sure your sin will find you out." This is similar to the idea of reaping what we sow because of the natural consequences of God's spiritual and moral laws and because of God's personal involvement. God does not just teach that sin will be discovered but that the consequences of our sin become active agents in discovering us.

Achan saw, he coveted, and he took. It was the same with Eve (Genesis 3:6) and with David (2 Samuel 11:2-4) and it is the same with us. Achan's confession while honest, was too late and it was the product of discovery. It was not an act of repentance or godly sorrow that leads to repentance. Confession without repentance is hollow and does not restore fellowship with God. Without repentance we retain a wrong attitude which keeps a barrier between us and the Lord. Achan failed to act on his own accord. His confession came too late. It lacked genuine sincerity demonstrating a changed and transformed heart. Know that God has a watchful eye and knows our heart.

4. The hidden sin of one can have far-reaching implications for families, communities, and even nations.

When we let our greed and pride overcome us, it is important to repent and turn back to God, and should we fail to do so, like Achan's sin, those hidden actions have far-reaching implications for families, communities and even nations. God made it clear that it was Israel that had sinned and not just Achan alone (Josh. 7:1, 11). Why would God blame the whole nation for the disobedience of only one soldier? Because Israel was one people in the Lord and not just an assorted collection of tribes, clans, families, and individuals. God dwelt in the midst of their camp, and this made the Jews the Lord's special people (Ex. 19:5-6). Jehovah God walked about in their camp, and therefore the camp was to be kept holy (Deut. 23:14). Anyone who disobeyed God defiled the camp, and this defilement affected their relationship to the Lord and to one another.

God's people today are one body in Christ. Consequently, we belong to each other, we need each other, and we affect each other (1 Cor. 12:12). Any weakness or infection in one part of the human body contributes to weakness and infection in the other parts. So, it also is with the body of Christ. "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one

part is honored, every part rejoices with it” (1 Cor. 12:26). “One sinner destroys much good” (Eccl. 9:18).

Questions and Discussion: Look at the key truths provided in Chapters 6 and 7 of Joshua and consider the following questions for discussion:

- Have you encountered situations where you felt God was calling you to do something unreasonable? If so, how did you respond?
- When you see God working through in ways that energize and excite you with what you accomplish, how do you guard yourself from pride and conceit and stay true to God?
- Does it bother you that God sees your hidden secrets? Are there things you need to confess and repent?
- What steps should you take to protect the body of Christ when you see sin in the life of a believer? Read Matthew 18: 15. What are the pitfalls if we ignore sin?
- Do you see any relationship to Achan’s story and the decline of the family in America? How important is it to purge the ‘Achan’ from yourself each day so you can be a person of purity, faith, and integrity?