

Into the Promise: A Journey Through Joshua
Lesson Nine: “Hold Fast to Him”
Joshua 22

I. Transitions

Regardless of the circumstances, our age or any other factors, our command does not change:

*Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law which
Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God
and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him
and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

~ Joshua 22:5

A. Love the Lord

“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30).

B. Walk in all His ways

“so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).

C. Keep His commandments

“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him” (John 14:21).

D. Hold fast to Him

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:4-5).

E. Serve Him with all your heart and soul

“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father” (Colossians 3:17).

II. Perception

The two-and-a-half tribes erected a large altar on the west side of the Jordan. They wanted proof that they belonged to the ten tribes in Canaan and worshiped their God. But was the altar necessary? Wiersbe gives this helpful insight:

If the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh faithfully attended the feasts in Jerusalem (Exodus 23:17), honored the Lord by obeying His Word, and talked about His Word in their homes (Deuteronomy 6:6-9), they would be able to raise their children to know and serve the Lord. The altar on the Jordan bank, however, was no guarantee of such success.¹

The altar was so large that it was easily seen from the east side. The ten tribes spontaneously gathered in Shiloh, ready to go to war. But the wisdom of the Lord prevailed. Could it be that they acted based on Deuteronomy 13:12-15?

If you hear in one of your cities, which the Lord your God is giving you to live in, anyone saying that some worthless men have gone out from among you and have seduced the inhabitants of their city, saying, “Let us go and serve other gods” (whom you have not known), **then you shall investigate and search out and inquire thoroughly. If it is true and the matter established that this abomination has been done among you**, you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it and all that is in it and its cattle with the edge of the sword (emphasis mine).

Two Choices:

1. Assume based on circumstantial evidence
2. Go directly to the person and get the facts
 - Matthew 18:16-18
 - Galatians 6:1

The Delegation sent to investigate the tribes was made up of a tribal leader from each of the ten tribes. Leading them was Phinehas, the son of the High Priest, who had already proven his loyalty and leadership (Numbers 25). Wiersbe writes about the events in Joshua 22:

Phinehas called what they had done a “trespass” (vv. 16, 20, 22, 31), which means “an act of treachery”...The strongest word used was *rebel* (vv. 16, 18-19, 22-29), which means deliberately resisting God’s will and disobeying His law. In building an unauthorized altar, these two and a half tribes were guilty of apostasy. ²

The Response – Phinehas was satisfied with their explanation and war was averted.

“Today we know that the Lord is in our midst, because you have not committed this unfaithful act against the Lord; now you have delivered the sons of Israel from the hand of the Lord” (Joshua 22:31).

III. Know Who You Are

- A. Know your identity in Christ
- B. Act out of that identity

IV. Obedience is the Key to Maintaining Victory

The Warrior Ethos for Believers:

- I will always put Jesus and His mission first
- I will never accept defeat. Christ has already won the war.
- I will never quit. As long as I have breath, I am in the battle for the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom and His glory.
- I will never leave a fallen comrade. We are commanded to bear one another’s burdens and to restore a fallen comrade in a spirit of gentleness (Galatians 6:1-2).

Katherine Wolfe's testimony:

“And I will give you treasure hidden in the darkness – secret riches. I will do this so you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, the one who calls you by name” (Isaiah 45:3 NLT).

Before we can heal, we have to grieve what's been lost. We have to look at our empty hands and feel the heavy absence of the thing we loved. Naming our hurts is the beginning of seeing the goodness of our lives with clearer eyes. What is grief, after all, if not leftover love? To mourn loss is to recognize a good gift you had. ³

Suffering is not the end of my story. Pain and joy can coexist. New life always begins with the end of an old life. My hope is not in any good gift but in the Giver of every good gift. God made me to do the hard things in the good story He is writing for my life. ⁴

Obey your way into intimacy and joy!

¹ Wiersbe, Warren, *Be Strong*, p. 166.

² Wiersbe, Warren, *Be Strong*, p. 166.

³ Wolfe, Katherine, *Treasures in the Dark*, p. 4.

⁴ Wolfe, Katherine, *Treasures in the Dark*, p. 8.