

Whom Will You Serve?

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[0:00] Well, we're turning to our Bibles now, and we are coming this morning with Paul to the very! last chapter of the book of Joshua that we've been studying on and off for quite some time, and we're going to read Joshua chapter 24. If you need a Bible, if you don't have a Bible with you, there's some at the side, at the front, at the back. Do get a hold of one and follow along so that you'll be able to see what we're reading and understand where what Paul is going to be speaking about will come from.

And we've seen in recent weeks, as Joshua comes to the end of his life, these great gatherings when he gathers together all the people of Israel. And here we come now to the last one, and we'll begin at Joshua 24 in verse 1. Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, long ago your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah the father of Abraham and of Nahor, and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the river and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac, and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it. And afterwards I brought you out. Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come up upon them and cover them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt.

And you lived in the wilderness a long time. Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of the land, and I destroyed them before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Baor to curse you, but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand. And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, 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 from which you had not labored, and cities that you had not built. And you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of 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 that your father served beyond the river and in Egypt and serve the Lord. And if it's evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods of your fathers 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.

[4:11] 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 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. 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.

[5 : 26] 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.

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. After these things, Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old.

And they buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gash. Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, and had known all the work that the Lord did for Israel.

As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of money.

[6 : 54] It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph. And Eleazar, the son of Aaron, died, and they buried him at Gibeah, in the town of Phinehas, his son, which had been given to him in the hill country of Ephraim.

Amen. Amen. And may God bless to us His Word. Well, good morning, folks. Please have that last chapter of Joshua open in front of you, Joshua 24.

Now, the theologian and songwriter, Bob Dylan, sang these words. And you'll be relieved I'm not going to sing them to you. I'm just going to read them. You may be an ambassador to England or France.

You may like to gamble. You may like to dance. You may be the heavyweight champion of the world. You may be a socialite with a long string of pearls. But you're going to have to serve somebody.

Yes, indeed. You're going to have to serve somebody. Well, it may be the devil or maybe the Lord. But you're going to have to serve somebody. And Bob Dylan is right.

[8 : 18] All people in all places at all times have to serve someone or something. So it's not so much a question of do you serve or not.

It's a question of whether or who you serve. Which God do you serve? Let me read again that central section in this great farewell sermon of Joshua's.

Have a look at verse 14 with me. Joshua addresses all the gathered people of Israel. He says, 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.

[9 : 20] And this is the great question, isn't it? For everyone. For God's people at all times. It's the question, the great choice that we face every day.

Choose this day whom you will serve. It's really quite a shocking passage really, isn't it? It's quite an extraordinary thing for Joshua to say in this, his farewell speech.

He's at this stage, about 110 years old. He is soon to die. And you think at this point, it's the time for nice words, gentle words.

Words of encouragement. But Joshua doesn't hold back, does he? He sets out very clearly to all the people before him, the response, the commitment, the expected response of God's people, the response of exclusive loyalty, exclusive allegiance to the Lord God alone.

But it's only that call to respond, it comes only in response to God's great and extraordinary faithfulness, that demand, that demand is made. And the big question that Joshua poses for God's people then and now is simply this, whom will you serve?

[10:44] Whom will you serve? In light of all that Joshua says, the choice seems obvious, doesn't it? Serve the Lord. But the trouble is, it doesn't always feel that obvious, does it?

Come Monday morning, when you're in the lecture room or in the office or sat in the waiting room at the doctors, when the pressures of the world kind of come in amongst us, when we see the things on our phones, things people say to us, serving the Lord often doesn't feel like the obvious choice. The gods of this world, the things that we see, money, sexual fulfillment, power, popularity, the things that our hearts cling to, they look often more real, don't they?

More immediate. They promise good things. And the Lord, well, he seems a bit distant, far off. And this choice remains today.

God is calling a people to himself. And he calls you, each one of us here today, to a clear choice. A choice to serve him. And to serve him exclusively.

[12:00] That's the big question this chapter poses to us this morning. We're going to take this in two sections. The first point, verses 2 to 13. We see there the call to exclusive service comes only after God demonstrates extraordinary grace.

That's the big thing we see in this first half of the chapter. God's extraordinary grace. As you cast your eyes over those verses, Joshua is giving a bit of a recounting of history.

He looks back in time. And he fills our vision with the grandeur, the sheer magnitude of God's extraordinary grace. He reminds the people of all that God has done down through the ages.

This is all about God and his grace. And what we see here is that God takes an undeserving people and he demonstrates to them again and again astonishing grace and provision.

Just notice where this historical account of God's people begins. Verse 2. And it begins quite surprisingly. I'm not sure this is a place where I would have started, but Joshua is making a particular point by beginning where he does.

[13:15] Look at what he says. Verse 2. Joshua said to all the people, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Long ago your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor, and they served other gods.

Isn't that extraordinary? We perhaps in our minds imagine Abraham to be a sort of neutral figure, a blank canvas. But no.

He was a pagan who served other gods. That was the starting point for this chosen people. A hopeless pagan in a land beyond the Euphrates serving other gods.

And notice that word serve. This is a chapter all about which gods are served. And the starting point of God's people in history was not promising. They served other gods.

And it's in the midst of this false worship, this false service, that God enters Abraham's story. He takes him, and he leads him to the land of Canaan.

[14:29] And so begins the extraordinary story of God's grace, and of the outworking of his promises to have a people for himself. In the land that he has chosen under his rule, a people that will be a blessing to the nations.

That's where it begins. And it's truly remarkable. And it's clear, isn't it, that the hero of the story, it's not Abraham, is it?

It's not any other man. The hero is the Lord. He describes all that he has done. Just notice all the verbs associated with what God did.

I took. I led. I made. I gave. I sent. I plagued. I brought you out. I brought.

I did. I brought. I gave. I destroyed. I delivered. I gave. I sent. I, I, I. I could keep going on. I. It's the Lord who's doing it.

[15:30] He is the one directing. He is the one who's doing this work. Amazing rescues. Amazing victories. Again and again, God is the hero. He is the one who has taken this people and given them to sow abundantly.

And we've seen that week after week, working through Joshua, haven't we? And here's the final paragraph, the abundant grace of God in full display. Look at verse 13.

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

You did not plant. That is the ultimate gift of grace, wasn't it? They contributed nothing. The Lord has given it.

And it's what the Lord promised all those years before to Abraham. That pagan, worshipping other gods. Look where he's brought his people. God alone has provided for his people.

[16:44] He's done it. He alone. And Joshua here is highlighting for us in glorious technical, the grace upon grace that the Lord has provided.

It is. It is his sovereign grace alone that has brought them to this point. And the call that's made in verse 14, that call to exclusive service, comes only after the recollection of all that God's demonstrated, all his amazing, extraordinary grace.

So Joshua begins this address. He says to the people, remember where the Lord took you from. Remember how in moments of utter helplessness, I've rescued you.

Remember how I've sustained you through the wilderness. And remember that I am the one who gave you this plentiful land. I've done it. Remember that. Remember that. And wouldn't those who heard Joshua speak those words as they gathered there listening to him, wouldn't they have felt again the gentle gravity of God's grace as they look out on the land that God has given them? Joshua reminds them. They're reminded of the beauty of his tender care, pulling them in to live lives of covenant loyalty to him.

[18:12] This wasn't a reluctant response that Joshua was calling for. He's setting before them again, look at what God has done for you. Look at it. What a great God we have.

What great faithfulness. But this history of amazing grace is not just limited to God's people then, is it? His demonstration of extraordinary sovereignty and grace is not limited to them.

It's true for us today, isn't it? If you're a Christian here this morning, you know, don't you, that it's not because of anything intrinsically amazing about you that the Lord has called you and welcomed him into his family.

It's not because we deserved it in any way. No, it's only because of his grace. That he chose us and welcomed us into his family.

He chose to love us. And so we can look back at grace upon grace, can't we? We can remember all that God began and continues to do for his people down through the ages and ultimately in the cross of Christ.

[19:26] That's what we look back on. Even greater demonstrations of grace than what Joshua's outlining here. Peter writes in his first letter.

He says, You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited by your forefathers, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but ransomed with the precious blood of Christ.

And so as you consider all that God has done for you, all that he continues to do for you, as you think back on the cross, don't you feel the gentle gravity of God's grace again pulling you in?

The beauty of his tender care pulling you back, pulling you in to loyalty to him alone. Perhaps you're here this morning.

You wouldn't describe yourself as a Christian. Well, you need to know what God has already done to rescue and redeem sinful people like you and I.

[20:37] because by nature, all of us reject God, we rebel against his rule. He's the one who made us. But we push back, don't we? And as sinners, people stand in rightful judgment.

To be a Christian does not mean earning brownie points or doing certain things that earn his favor. No. To be a Christian means to fling yourself upon his grace, to rest upon what he has already done for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ died so that you might be saved, so that the price for your sin might be paid. That's why Jesus died on the cross. Abraham, left behind pagan worship.

Not because of anything special about him, but only because God reached down. Only because God called him and showed him amazing grace.

And that's how God still works today. He calls undeserving people, men and women, people just like you and me, who by nature worship other gods.

[21:54] And he calls us to exclusive service of him, but only, that call comes only in light of the extraordinary grace he's already demonstrated to us.

That's the big thing in the first half of this chapter. Joshua is showing the people again, look at what God has done. He has done it all. That's the first point of Joshua's two-point sermon.

And it's only now, only now that Joshua has laid the foundation of God's work and grace, that he sets forward the response expected from the people. He sets out the commitment that is expected.

Only now does Joshua set out the moment of decision. And that moment of decision flows immediately from what he's just said. Look at verse 14. He says, now therefore, in light of all I've just been saying, in light of God's great faithfulness and covenant faithfulness down through the

years, here is the response expected.

So this is our second point looking from verse 14 to 28. The call to exclusive service, it means a clear, considered, and concrete choice must be made.

[23 : 12] Whom will you serve? That's the question. In light of all I've just said, says Joshua, in all I've just said about what God has done for you, fear him alone.

Serve him alone. Be faithful to him alone. That's the logical, clear response. Serving God means not serving other things, other gods.

Seven times that word serve crops up in verse 14 and 15 alone. But what does it mean to serve God or indeed to serve the gods of your fathers?

It's a question, isn't it, of wholehearted commitment and obedience to the Lord. We've seen it demonstrated in Joshua already, haven't we? Just think back to Caleb in chapter 14, trusting what God has said, even if that means at the moment standing alone, trusting God to do what he says, even as the enemies look frightening.

And what we serve, we obey. What we serve, we seek to please. What we serve, we make sacrifices for. What we serve, we're loyalty.

[24 : 25] we serve somebody. And, we've got to serve someone. Every one of us serves someone or something, whether we know it a lot, whether we like it or not.

None of us avoid serving something. And so Joshua says, will you serve the Lord? Three things.

Firstly, it's a clear choice. Looking at verses 14 and 15, it's a clear choice. Joshua is very straightforward, isn't he? A very clear, a very definite choice must be made.

Choose to serve God. And serving God, second half of verse 14, it means putting away other gods. It's not possible to have it both ways.

You can't serve the Lord and the gods of your fathers, it's either or. And even if you reject serving the Lord God, there remains a choice to be made.

[25 : 25] Either you have to serve the gods of your fathers or you choose to serve the gods of the land where you now live. It's quite interesting, isn't it? I hadn't really clocked that before.

I expected there to be two choices to make, but there's really three. I expected Joshua to say, choose God or choose non-God.

But he doesn't. He says, choose God, but if you don't choose God, you've still got a choice to make. Either you choose the ancestral Mesopotamian gods or the contemporary Amorite ones.

Look at verse 15. He's setting a choice before them. Joshua is forcing them to face reality, isn't he? They couldn't just take an easy option and opt out of serving the one true God and say to themselves, thank goodness I don't have to choose some God to serve.

No. There was in reality another choice to make and Joshua faces them up to that choice. If not the God who created the heaven and earth, which God will you serve?

[26 : 41] The conservatives among them, they're probably veered towards the ancestral gods, the Mesopotamian gods. The liberals maybe would veer more towards the Amorite contemporary gods where they now live.

But there's a choice to make. If you reject God, you still have a choice between which gods you'll serve. Either the gods of the old days or the gods of the people around you.

You've got to serve one. Now on the ground, those Israelites in those days sat before Joshua.

They would have felt the pull in those two directions, wouldn't they? Either to their ancestral gods or maybe more compellingly to the gods of the people around them, the gods of the Canaanites.

But they couldn't serve both. You've got to choose. If they reject the Lord, they've got two bad choices to make. And Joshua is presenting them with that reality.

[27 : 49] What is the god you're going to serve really like? What sorts of values do those gods really represent?

Will you go the way of tradition or will you go with the gods of the people around us? Will you go the way of inherited Christian values or will you be swept along with secular thinking?

And although the gods of the secular western world don't take a physical form, they promise the same things, don't they? Prosperity, sexual freedom, religious relativism.

But despite the promises of fulfillment and happiness, the gods of our age don't deliver, do they? Because we've still got a choice to make.

If we don't choose to follow the Lord God, we've got to choose which of the gods of our current world will we serve. And it's worth asking, what do the gods of our age deliver?

[29:03] Have the ideologies and gods of our world over the past few decades led to more solid relationships or less solid? Have the ideologies of our past few decades led to more children growing up knowing their fathers or less?

Have the ideologies of our past few decades led to more people with stronger mental health and resilience or less? Have the ideologies of our past few decades led to decreasing levels of loneliness or increasing loneliness?

What do the gods of our world actually deliver? And by naming them here Joshua's saying, look, face reality here, look at what these gods are and he would say to us naming the gods of our world look at them do you really want to serve a god like that?

You've got to make a choice. What do the gods of our world really value? how do they value human life? Especially at its beginning and end at its most vulnerable points.

What do the gods of our world tell us? Joshua would say, look, you are foolish.

[30:29] You are foolish to run after any other god other than the Lord God. He's just piled up as an example after example of God's grace shown to his people.

His great power demonstrated again and again. This is the god you get to serve. And if not him, well, you've got to choose between these other non-gods.

You've got to pick. What are you going to give your life to? What are you going to sacrifice for?

Which god? You can't try and have the best of both worlds.

God will not stand for that. Who will you choose? If not the Lord, then who? It's a clear choice that Joshua sets before us.

An exclusive choice. But it's also, secondly, a considered choice. A considered choice. Look on to verse 16. And we read the people's response to Joshua.

[31:35] And it seems, seems quite encouraging, doesn't it? Verse 16, for far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods.

For it's the Lord who brought us up out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, look at the end of verse 18, we also will serve the Lord for he is our God. It all sounds very promising.

It's a wonderful response, isn't it? But much to our surprise, their confession is met with some slightly shocking words from Joshua. Look at verse 19. You are not able to serve the Lord.

If you forsake him and serve foreign gods, he will turn and do you harm. These words from Joshua in response, they are words of warning, aren't they?

They're a warning against trite confessions. It's a warning against easy words. Joshua knows the heart of the people and so he warns them.

[32:40] If you commit yourself to the Lord, there must be a considered, careful, commitment. The Lord does not just want mere confession with our lips, does he?

Real service, real worship is not merely what we utter with our lips, but it's the lives that we lay down. So don't make a commitment you're not really willing to keep.

And Joshua's doing here what the Lord Jesus often did, refusing glib vows because he desired whole hearts. he didn't just want easy words.

Jesus was never hesitant to sell out the true cost of discipleship and we shouldn't be hesitant either. We had to count the cost of what it really means to follow the Lord Jesus.

And so Jesus does expect confession with our lips, absolutely, but it doesn't stop at that, does it?

The real sign of genuine confession with our lips is the obedience demonstrated visibly, concretely, in our lives.

[33:52] And for the people in Joshua's day, that meant a rejection of the foreign gods, a rejection of the gods that their neighbors worshipped.

and for us today, as we heed that warning, a warning against mere lip service, a warning to be willing to count the cost for following Christ, whether that be unpopularity in the classroom or the lecture hall, whether it means being overlooked in the workplace for promotion because we hold to an orthodox understanding of human sexuality.

Joshua 24 urges us to carefully consider the vows that we make with our lips. Are we counting the cost?

Are we remembering who it is that we make these vows to? It's the Lord God. So not only are God's people in light of his sovereignty and his grace to make clear choices, considered choices, but it's to be a concrete choice.

It's the third and final thing in the second half of this chapter, a concrete choice. When the Lord calls us to follow him, when he calls us to live lives of faith, he calls us to complete devotion, to wholehearted service.

[35 : 16] And when we consider all that he's done for us, that is the logical, obvious response, isn't it? It means concrete action, it means real repentance. Look at what Joshua says there in verse 22 and 23.

He says, you are witnesses against yourselves that you've chosen the Lord to serve him. And they said, we are witnesses. And he said, then put away the foreign gods that are among you and incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel.

He says, put away the foreign gods. The implication is they haven't yet put away the foreign gods, the idols. They hadn't put them away. They were still in their midst.

So they confessed with their lips, but there seems a little action on the ground. No sign, perhaps, of real repentance. repentance. And Joshua is urging them.

This has got to be borne out in reality. It's got to be concrete. Repentance must be real and visible. James Philip, on his notes on this little section, he says that God is not interested in a disembodied consecration.

[36 : 34] Our response must not be in theory or in principle only, but expressed an action. He goes on to say that we need not doubt that the people were absolutely sincere in what they were saying, but to say the Lord our God will be served and his voice will be obeyed is not the same thing as saying we now put away our idols, our strange gods, in this visible act of severance.

They're not the same thing. Joshua was calling his people to a concrete choice, not merely a theoretical one. note where this all takes place.

Just cast your eye back to verse 1. Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and it seems to be in the vicinity, look at verse 26, halfway through, under a terebinth tree.

tree. Now why mention that? Well it's very interesting to compare this event with a very similar event under a terebinth tree in Shechem many hundreds of years before.

Listen to these words from Genesis 35, which come at the end of the story that charts Jacob's return to Canaan, his return to the Lord. Here's what you read in Genesis 35, under the terebinth tree in Shechem.

[38 : 02] Jacob said to his household and to all who are with him, put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your garments.

Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress, and has been with me wherever I've gone. So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem.

The contrast is striking, isn't it? From Genesis to here in Joshua. Under the terebinth tree in Shechem, Jacob's household actually brought out their idols.

They gave them to Jacob and he hid them away. And hundreds of years on, under the terebinth tree in Shechem, Joshua's people make the confession, but Joshua has to tell them to put the gods away.

You see, genuine faith must eventually become visible obedience, and that will mean putting away certain idols.

[39 : 18] That was true for God's people in Jacob's day and Joshua's day, but also ours. We must put away the idols in our lives, the things that we serve.

Perhaps it's a relationship that you know can't continue if you're to serve the Lord. It may well be that the next job promotion you ought not to take, because your career has become all consuming, preventing you from serving others in the church fellowship.

friendship. It may be that your comfort and ease in life has become your idol, and so you resist taking on more responsibility at home or in church or in work, because you love comfort.

whatever it is, whatever it is that your heart drifts to in those quiet moments, the things that you lay awake at night dreaming of, stretching for, trying to grasp.

grasp. Is the Lord putting his finger on a particular area in your life, a hidden pagan God that you run after? Might there need to be some concrete action that you need to take?

[40 : 39] And if the Lord is challenging you, don't be discouraged. If you feel that message in your heart, don't be discouraged, because the Lord's warning is a gracious warning.

He warns you to draw you. There is hope for you. As you look back on even greater demonstrations of grace than even they had, God has, in the ultimate act of grace, sacrificed his own son on the cross to pay the price for the price of our sin.

He's done that for you, so that your sin can be forgiven, that you can join his family forever. God has God has to turn from those things in your lives.

Would you turn to him knowing that his everlasting grace will welcome you? He won't turn you away. He'll gladly welcome you. That is the great and certain hope for the Christian.

And it will surely come because, as we've seen again and again in the book of Joshua, Scripture, not one word, not a single promise of the Lord's will fall to the ground.

[41:51] All that he's done, all that he's promised to do, he will do. All shall come to pass. Great is his faithfulness. And so the book of Joshua, as we come to its end, puts this very simple question to you.

In view of all God's promises, in view of all his great acts of faithfulness and grace down through the years, will you serve him? Will you serve him alone?

It matters. It matters for your eternity. It matters to God. He cares that you choose to go his way and follow him. He desires that all might be saved.

And my prayer is that our answer, that my answer would echo Joshua's answer. Look what he says at the end of verse 15, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Let me pray. And we'll sing to close our time together. Our Father in heaven, we thank you that you are a good and a gracious God that you promise wonderful things for your people.

[43:12] You promise wonderful things for all who turn to you, who serve you and you alone. And so, Lord, as we wrestle with the gods of this world that pull us away, Lord, would you help us to respond to all that you've done in faith?

That we wouldn't live by sight, by what we see, by the visible promises of this world, but we would live by your word and your promises alone. And so, would you help us today and every day to serve you and you alone.

Help us, Lord, for you are weak and tempted. We need your help. And so, by your spirit, would you help each of us to serve you all the days of our lives.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.