

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Joshua 23–24
PRINT PASSAGE: Joshua 24:18-27

Do Not Conform to the World



AMIR ALWAYS HAD THE NEWEST STUFF: THE COOLEST SNEAKERS, THE LATEST PHONE, THE BEST GAMES.

His friends at school and even kids at church admired him. Amir tried to act like it did not matter, but inside, he loved the attention. Having nice things made him feel important.

One night at youth group, his leader asked a question that Amir could not forget: “If everything you owned disappeared tomorrow, what would you have left?” That question followed Amir home. He sat in his room and looked around . . .

trophies on the shelf, rows of sneakers, and gadgets tucked into drawers. He tried to imagine his room empty. The thought made his stomach twist. He prayed quietly, “God, why does this question bother me so much? I don’t think I’d be okay if I lost everything. What would my life even look like? Help me understand what really matters.”

The next week, Amir’s youth group volunteered at a shelter. There, he met a boy named Calan. Calan did not have much, just a worn backpack—but he had the biggest smile Amir had seen in a long time. As they talked, Calan mentioned God repeatedly. It was as though He was his closest friend. “I talk to God every day,” Calan simply said. Amir was confused: How can someone with so little be so joyful? On the way home, Amir realized something important. Calan had something that could not be lost or taken away—his faith in God. That was his real treasure.

That night, Amir prayed again: “God, help me know You as Calan does. Teach me how to be content, not because of what I have, but because of who You are.” Over time, Amir’s heart changed. He gave away things that he did not need. He kept serving at the shelter. His friendship with Calan helped them both grow closer to God.

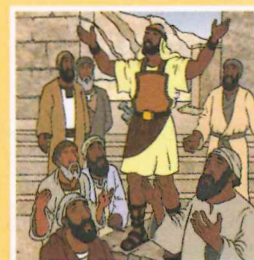
Years later, Amir still remembered that question. And now he knew the answer. He had Jesus, and that was everything.



WORD UP

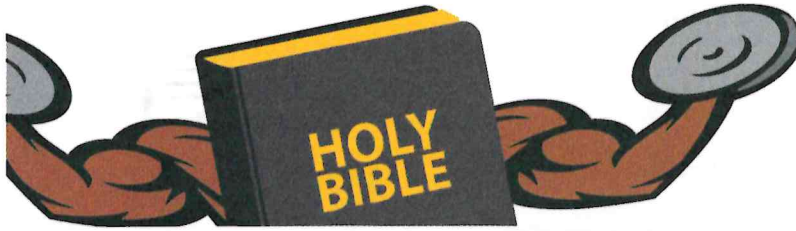
Joshua 24:18-27

18 And the LORD drove out before us all the nations, including the Amorites, who lived in the land. We too will serve the LORD, because he is our God.” **19** Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. **20** If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you.” **21** But the people said to Joshua, “No! We will serve the LORD.” **22** Then Joshua said, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the LORD.” “Yes, we are witnesses,” they replied. **23** “Now then,” said Joshua, “throw away the foreign gods that are among you and yield your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.” **24** And the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the LORD our God and obey him.” **25** On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people, and there at Shechem he reaffirmed for them decrees and laws. **26** And Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak near the holy place of the LORD. **27** “See!” he said to all the people. “This stone will be a witness against us. It has heard all the words the LORD has said to us. It will be a witness against you if you are untrue to your God.”



KEY VERSE:

[Joshua said,] “Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:14b)



WORK OUT

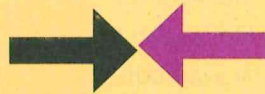
JOSHUA 24 IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHAPTERS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BECAUSE IT CHALLENGES GOD'S PEOPLE TO MAKE A CLEAR DECISION: WHOM WILL YOU SERVE?

Joshua gathered the Israelites at Shechem, a place with deep meaning. Long before, Abraham worshipped God there, and Jacob had dedicated land to God in the same place. Joshua chose Shechem to remind the people of God's long history of faithfulness. By this time, the Israelites had already seen God do amazing things: freeing them from slavery, protecting them in the wilderness, and giving them the Promised Land. Joshua reminded them of all this and then gave them a choice: serve the Lord alone or turn back to false gods.

Joshua was not saying that idols were a good option. Instead, he was helping the people clearly see the difference. Serving God was the best and only right choice. Joshua did not just tell them what to do; he led by example. He boldly said that he and his family would serve the Lord. His commitment challenged the people to make their own decisions. The Israelites promised to obey God, throw away idols, and stay faithful. Joshua even set up a large stone as a reminder of their promise. It stood as a witness to their choice.

This chapter reminds us that faith is not automatic. Each generation—and each person—must choose to serve God. Just like Amir, we must decide what really matters and commit our hearts fully to the Lord.

INSIDE OUT



Respond to the questions below on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Are you truly choosing God over everything else in your life?
2. Does your lifestyle reflect love for God or love for things?
3. What "idols" (anything you put before God) might be competing for your attention daily? Popularity? Sports? Social media? Approval?
4. If people watched you for a week, would they see that God comes first in your life?
5. Joshua challenged the people to make a clear choice. Now it is your turn. What does choosing God look like in your everyday life: at school, online, and at home?

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Every day, you make choices: what to wear, what to watch, what to post, whom to follow. The world offers endless options: games, fashion, devices, popularity, and celebrities. But choosing God first changes everything. It may not always seem popular, but it brings something better: real peace, lasting joy, contentment, and purpose. Jesus asked, "What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?" (Mark 8:36). Stuff breaks. Trends fade. Phones get outdated. But a life with God lasts forever. When you choose Him daily, you are investing in something that can never be taken away.



Faith requires intention. In a world full of distractions, followers, fashion, sports, and pressure to fit in, you must decide: Will I follow God or the crowd? Choosing God shows up in daily decisions: honesty when cheating is easier, kindness when gossip is popular, courage when standing alone feels scary. Joshua boldly said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Can you say the same? Will your choices shape your school, your friendships, and your future?



STEPPING OUT!

Spend time in prayer today. Ask God to help you choose Him throughout the day. One decision at a time. One response at a time. One moment of obedience at a time. Choosing God today shapes your tomorrow and your eternity. You are not choosing alone. God is with you and will give you strength to follow Him.



Media Mission



Ask your family the following: What could you live without for a week—your phone, streaming apps, gaming? Those things fade. God does not. Have you chosen Him today? Choosing Him secures something far greater than anything temporary. Listen to the song “I Will Follow Jesus” at the link listed below.



<https://youtu.be/3ZvuR9lx3M?si=IWyUcY55Yw-L34c>



Create a five-day “Faith Walk Challenge” with a friend.

- Day 1: Encourage someone.
- Day 2: Sit with someone who seems alone.
- Day 3: Perform a random act of kindness.
- Day 4: Refuse to join the gossip.
- Day 5: Share something that God is teaching you.

At the end of the week, talk about how it felt to choose faith on purpose.

