

ACTS2COMMUNITY

STUDY QUESTIONS—Leader's Guide

June 21, 2009

Scripture Reading: Joshua 24:1--27

Leaders: Israel had failed to follow the ways of God and had forgotten the faithful acts of God. They settled into a land with a people who did not follow the one and only Lord (this was the land promised to Abraham). Israel was not loyal to God's kingship and their repeated rejection of Him provoked divine discipline. Judges 2:16 says "Then the Lord raised up Judges, who saved them out of the hands of...raiders." Why did Israel quickly forget the promises God made and their faithful fulfillment? Israel failed to "pack-up" their past before they "moved-in" to their future.

Getting Started

Since you were born, how many times have you moved from one place to another?

Give candy to the person who has moved the most.

Would you rather pack-up and move into a smaller space? A larger space? Your current size space? Why?

Digging Deeper

Towards the end of Joshua's life, he renews the covenant made at Sinai between God and His people Israel. Joshua reminded Israel of God's faithfulness and called them to make a choice...to serve God yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Begin in Joshua 24:1 and read aloud the "I" statements from God.

You can have the group take turns pointing out various "I" statements from God, by going around the circle in turn. This will give the group a perspective on all that God has done for Israel.

Who acted on Israel's behalf?

Considering your own experience with God, do you remember a time when God has acted on your behalf? What did it do to your faith?

Based on everything God had done for Israel (as seen in the "I" statements) Joshua exhorts Israel to do what 2 things (see v.14)?

1. Fear the Lord
2. Serve Him with all faithfulness

Before Israel can "move-in" to a life of trust and total commitment to God, they must "pack-up" what is holding them back.

What does Joshua tell them to do (v.14 and v.23)?

Throw away the foreign gods that their forefathers worshipped.

What do the "foreign gods" look like in our lives?

Example: the pursuit of money, relationships, possessions, comfort, safety

According to Joshua 24, can we fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness (move-in) without throwing away our "gods" (packing up)?

Application

What choice will you make?

Because you will make one. If you're not choosing to faithfully follow God, you are choosing to follow something else.

What do you need to get rid of so that you can participate in the life God has for you?

If you are willing, share this with your group.

Leaders, this should be you. If no one is willing to share, take the lead and share first. This will encourage others to be vulnerable as well.

Challenge: As a practical lesson, gather stones/rocks and sharpies for your group members. Allow them to write on their stones what it is that is keeping them from the life God has for them. Have the members carry this around for a day/week/month as a "witness" to what they are packing up.