

March 26 — Wholehearted Devotion

READ

Joshua 12:7-15:19

Joshua 14:7-9, *“I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me ... to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions, but my fellow Israelites who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt in fear. I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly. So on that day, Moses swore to me, ‘The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly.’”*

THINK

Caleb was brave. He didn't give in to the naysayers when he was sent with a reconnaissance team to explore the Promised Land forty years prior. He believed that, with God's help, the Israelites could easily take their inherited land. He spoke up and said, “We CAN conquer!”

Unfortunately, because of the people's disbelief, Caleb and Joshua had to spend the next forty years wandering in the wilderness with them. But after the long wait, they were the only two spies who would live to cross over into the Promised Land. Now, it was time to settle, and Caleb reminded Joshua of Moses' words: “He wholeheartedly followed the Lord.” He wasn't bragging. He was just stating a fact.

Do you wholeheartedly follow God? When a task or obstacle seems insurmountable, do you believe that God will go before you to conquer whatever difficulty you face? Take a page from Caleb's playbook and believe in God's almighty power. Nothing is too hard for Him; there's nothing He can't do. How great is that!

PRAY

Lord, You can do anything! I marvel at Your infinite power and wisdom and trust that, if I follow You, everything is possible. Amen.

March 27 — Worth the Effort

READ

Joshua 15:20-17:18

Joshua 17:15, *“Joshua replied, ‘If there are so many of you, and if the hill country of Ephraim is not large enough for you, clear out land for yourselves in the forest where the Perizzites and Rephaites live.’”*

THINK

Home renovation shows have been very popular for many years now. The show’s stars inspire many to take on their own home renovation challenges. They help us see beyond “what is” to “what could be.” Now, the results range from “Instagram worthy” to “not exactly what I imagined,” but at least an effort is made!

These Israelite tribes were facing a renovation challenge of their own. They wanted more land but weren’t willing to make an effort to get it — even though God had already given it to them. They only saw obstacles and challenges instead of the end result of rising above and overcoming them.

Too many times, we see what God has for us. But because it will require effort, change, time, or other challenges, we don’t even try. However, if we take on the challenge, we’ll discover that God fills in the gaps. When things seem impossible, it’s just a reminder that we need God to lead the charge. Only then will you attain something truly beautiful and well worth the effort.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for the opportunities that You give me. There are so many times that I know the opportunity will require hard work. But, because I know You have already given it to me, I will do what is needed. Help me trust You, follow Your lead and give You glory. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

March 28 — What are You Waiting For?

READ

Joshua 18:1-19:48

Joshua 18:1-3, *“The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there. The country was brought under their control, but there were still seven Israelite tribes who had not yet received their inheritance. So, Joshua said to the Israelites: ‘How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has given you?’”*

THINK

“What are you waiting for?” That was what Joshua was saying to the seven tribes of Israel who’d yet to take possession of the land. God had given them specific instructions to take the land He’d promised them. Why were they so hesitant? They had secured a miraculous victory over Jericho when the walls came crashing down at the sound of shouts and trumpets. They’d seen the sun stand still until they’d defeated five kings’ armies. Again, what were they waiting for?

God’s timing is often different than ours. Sometimes He waits to answer our prayer and sometimes He answers and we discover we’re not quite ready to move! The time had come, and the Israelites hesitated. Was it fear? Was it complacency since they were used to living in temporary dwellings? Whatever it was, it was time to make a move!

What answered prayer is waiting for you to “take the land”? Don’t give in to fear or apathy. Go for it! Trust that God is with you and that He’s fighting for you. It’s time to claim God’s promise! When you do, you will receive a wealth of blessing!

PRAY

Dear Lord, Your timing is perfect. Help me break through my fear and complacency to claim Your promise, the answer to my prayers. Amen.

March 29 — Influence Over Comfort

READ

Joshua 19:49-21:45
1 Chronicles 6:54-81

Joshua 21:45, *“Not a single one of all the good promises the Lord had given to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; everything He had spoken came true.”*

THINK

The definition of influence is “the capacity to affect the character, development, or behavior of someone or something.” You carry influence over the people in your life. Do you take your influence seriously?

In today’s reading, you may be thinking, “Wow, that is a lot of names and a lot of cities. What’s the point of all of this?” Even though it may not be the most interesting chapter in the Bible to read, there is still something important for us to hold on to. The Levites were a priestly tribe. God didn’t just give the priests one piece of land to settle in. Instead, He spread them throughout all the land of Israel. There wasn’t meant to be just one place for the Levites, but every tribe was meant to have a godly influence among them.

As Christ-followers, we are meant to be the light of the world. It can be easy to stay in our comfort zones, but we can’t hide from the world we are trying to bring light to. We aren’t meant to live in a bubble or holy huddle. We must make it a priority to carry the influence of Jesus everywhere we go.

God kept His promise to the ancestors of Israel — He didn’t leave one unfilled. He gave them just what they needed to stand strong for Him. God will give you what you need when you choose to take your influence seriously and stand for Him outside your comfort zone!

PRAY

Dear God, Thank You for always giving me what I need when I follow you obediently. Help me to take my influence seriously, and remember that I represent You wherever I go! Amen.

March 30 — Choose This Day

READ

Joshua 22:1-24:33

Joshua 24: 14-16, *“Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. Then the people answered, ‘Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods!’”*

THINK

Our days are filled with choices. From the moment the alarm goes off in the morning, we make decisions: Get up or press snooze? Waffles or eggs? Dress up or dress down? The list goes on and on. The majority of our daily decisions aren't life-altering, but there are some decisions that can have a deep impact — decisions like the friends we choose and the priorities we set. But the greatest decision we can ever make is the decision to follow God.

As Joshua neared the end of his life, he implored God's people to make a choice! They had a habit of following the traditions and gods of foreign nations. So, Joshua drew a line in the sand. Would they forsake the Lord, or would they and their families follow Him wholeheartedly?

The same question is before you today... Choose for yourself! Who will you serve?

PRAY

Lord, Is there anything that I have put before You in importance? If so, forgive me, and help me turn completely from that and back to You. I choose YOU — my Rock, my Savior, my God. Amen.

March 31 — Once Again

READ

Judges 1:1-3:30

Judges 3:12,15, 21, 30, *“Once again the Israelites did evil in the Lord’s sight, and the Lord gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel because of their evil. ... But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, the Lord again raised up a rescuer to save them. ... As King Eglon rose from his seat, Ehud ...pulled out the dagger ... and plunged it into the king’s belly. ... So Moab was conquered by Israel that day, and there was peace in the land for eighty years.”*

THINK

How many times have we struggled with a specific temptation yet “once again?” If we have a personal relationship with Jesus, we definitely have definitive lines that we know better than to cross. But it’s so easy to give in — whether it’s a sin of commission or omission — and we find ourselves giving in that old familiar tug. That is exactly what was happening with the Israelites in today’s reading. They allowed what was happening in the world to persuade them to turn from God.

Despite countless warnings to turn from worshiping other gods, they found themselves in a “once again” position, and it came at great cost. God raised up judge after judge to steer them back on track, and they still disobeyed. This angered God, who was testing them and allowed those pagan nations to remain. He was hands-off as the abusive king of Moab took control of Israel.

But here’s what’s great! God is a God of mercy and grace. He heard His people’s cries for help and raised up Ehud, a leader who would rescue His people. God orchestrated a private moment for Ehud to approach King Eglon and plunge a dagger into his belly. After a quiet escape, the Lord led the Israelites to victory over Moab.

God is a God of rescue. Through Christ, our Savior, we’ve received the ultimate gift of mercy and grace. So, be faithful to God because He is most certainly faithful to you. Don’t make that same poor decision yet “once again.”

PRAY

Lord, Thank You for being a God of mercy and grace. You sent Jesus to our rescue. Help me to stay on track and turn from that same temptation once again. I turn back toward You, leaning into Christ’s strength to overcome. Amen.

April 1 — Think Fast!

READ

Judges 3:31-6:40

Judges 4:18,20-21, *“Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, ‘Come, my lord, come right in. Don’t be afraid. So he entered her tent, and she covered him with a blanket. ... He told her. ‘If someone comes by and asks you, ‘Is anyone in there?’ say, ‘No. ’But Jael ... picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died.”*

THINK

The Israelites, God’s people, were fighting against their enemies, the Canaanites. Sisera, the Canaanite army commander, was fleeing from the Israelite troops when he came across a woman named Jael. She welcomed him into her tent, but when he fell asleep, she took the only weapon-like instruments she had — a tent stake and a hammer — and killed him. With this one action, she became a military hero — and she carried out God’s plan.

Jael deserves an A+ for her expediency to act. When the time came, she didn’t worry about not having a sword or other weapon, nor did she give in to fear or get caught up in “what ifs.” She obeyed God and brought glory to His name.

Jael’s story is a metaphor for how we should fight our spiritual battles. When the Holy Spirit prompts us, we usually don’t have much time to think because opportunities to act for God’s glory pass quickly. So, in those moments, we must move expediently and trust that God never leaves us unprepared, no matter how ill-equipped we feel!

How different would our world be today if we promptly seized every Spirit-driven opportunity, using the tools at hand? If we fight every battle with faith and action, we can be confident that we will win in the end because ultimate victory is already ours through Christ!

PRAY

Dear Lord, Thank You for securing the ultimate victory on the cross for my sins. Help me to respond quickly to Your promptings, that I may bring glory to Your name. Amen.