

Joshua Dies

Judges 2:7-10

MEMORY VERSE

JOSHUA 23:3

“You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has fought for you.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Bring some items to demonstrate half and whole, for example: half a paper grocery bag (cut vertically), half of a plastic container (possibly a plastic butter dish cut vertically), half of a dollar bill, half a pair of scissors, half a pair of shoes, half a recipe (written or mixed) or a CD case without the CD.

As many sheets of blank paper as the number of children in your class, a circle pattern made from heavy paper and markers.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

What About the End?!

Play or sing a song for (not with) your class. Stop the song before the end, leaving everyone with that funny “you have got to finish that!” feeling.

While you have their attention, talk about serving God for our whole lives, all the way to the end! God wants us to start our serving Him and finish our lives doing the same.

LESSON TIME!

Each of us has a choice to make. Will we serve the Lord, offering our whole life? We must choose to follow God and His ways or to follow our own ways. (Our own ways will only lead to misery and destruction.) Joshua was a man who faithfully walked with God--his entire life. **Let us serve God our entire lives.**

JUDGES 2:7-9

So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died when he was one hundred and ten years old.

And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash.

Though not a perfect man, Joshua was firm in his decision to serve the Lord. His life of faith, obedience, and commitment was an encouragement to others to "choose to serve the Lord." Let's look back at some of the events in Joshua's life that reveal his character.

EXODUS 17:9-13

And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Joshua was full of faith and obedient. He followed the orders of his godly leader, Moses, leading the children of Israel into victory over their enemies.

Half or Whole?

Bring some of these items to demonstrate the importance of half and whole: Half a paper grocery bag (cut vertically), half of a plastic container (perhaps a plastic butter dish cut vertically), half of a dollar bill, half a pair of scissors, half a pair of shoes, half a recipe (written or mixed!), or a CD case without the CD.

Show these items to the class and ask what is wrong with them (they are not complete). Stress the importance of serving God for our whole lives, not just part of them. Our goal is to hear the words, "Well done my good and faithful servant." We want to finish the race and win the prize. May we be as Joshua, full of faith, obedience, and commitment. **Let us serve God our entire lives.**

EXODUS 33:11

So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

One of the most striking characteristics of Joshua's life was that he loved to spend time in God's presence. What an example for us as we desire to serve the Lord all of our lives.

The time we spend with the Lord—in His Word and prayer—is extremely important. Daily, it is a good thing to read and meditate on God's Word (Psalm 1:1,2). Daily, it is good to pray—bringing our requests before God and communing with Him (1 Thess. 5:17). The more time we spend with the Lord, the more that we will get to know Him. The more we know Him, the more we will love Him and want to serve Him and others. **Let us serve God our entire lives.**

NUMBERS 14:8, 9

"If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.'

Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them."

Do you remember this circumstance? The Israelites had heard news of "giants" in the land and strong, fortified cities; they were afraid to possess the land God had promised them. Joshua was the voice of faith and encouragement. He encouraged the people to look at the power of God to deliver and not the circumstances.

Note, also, Joshua's commitment to the Lord; he stood firm in His faith in God even though almost everyone else, overcome by their unbelief, stood against him. He did not allow the fear of man to dissuade him. May we stand strong in the Lord and choose to do what is right even if the whole world rejects God's way and counsel.

When Joshua became "old and well advanced in age," he called for all Israel. He reminded them of God's mighty works and encouraged them commit fully to serve the Lord.

JOSHUA 24:14, 15

"Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!

And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of 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."

Joshua could not make the choice for the children of Israel, but he could lead by example. His resolve was firm: "...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15b).

Sadly, after Joshua's death, the next generation chose to reject God.

JUDGES 2:10

When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel.

The next generation chose not to remember God's goodness and faithfulness. As Joshua warned, their choices would have consequences, personally and nationally. As God dealt with His wayward children, the nation of Israel suffered many defeats at the hand of their enemies.

We must choose—to serve God or walk in our own ways. May we be as Joshua—full of faith, obedient, and committed, a true lover of God. May we purpose, as Joshua, to serve the Lord our entire lives!

PSALM 31:23, 24

Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person.

Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you who hope in the LORD.

A Piece of the Pie

Have each child make a pie chart showing how much of his time is spent serving the Lord. Fold a piece of paper in quarters. Make one for each child. Cut out a pattern of a pie (a circle) from heavy paper for them to trace onto the 1/2 of the sheet of folded paper. Let the kids cut out a circle for their pie chart.

Teachers should make one as well and tape on the chalkboard. Divide the pie in a way appropriate to the ages of your class, such as: morning, noon, and night; or day and night, or maybe hourly.

Have the children fill in or shade in the amount of time spent serving the Lord. Is it 10%? 25%? 50%? Discuss how God wants us to serve Him with our entire lives. Write the theme or memory verse on the chart.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to serve the Lord for all of their lives like Joshua did. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.