

DR. JASON POZNICH
13 SESSIONS

THE BOOK OF *Joshua*

**NEXT
LEVEL**  **ONLINE**

OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 1: Joshua 1

Important Themes in Joshua:

1. _____ transition
2. The _____ God provides
3. _____ to God's commands
4. _____ among God's people
5. God's _____ in times of uncertainty and change

Challenges Presented by the Book of Joshua

1. Violence
2. Land promises: are they conditional or unconditional? Are they temporary or everlasting?
3. Archaeological locations: some of the sites cannot be confirmed, and the timing of the conquest is highly debated as a result.
4. There are some significant differences between the Hebrew manuscripts of Joshua and the Greek manuscripts of Joshua.
5. The relation of Joshua to the New Testament, specifically Jesus.

Structure of Joshua:

1. _____ the Land (Joshua 1-5)
2. God _____ the Land (Joshua 6-12)
3. _____ the Land (Joshua 13-21)
4. _____ Faithfully in the Land (Joshua 22-24)

The Shapes of God's "Word"

1. The shape of _____ — God keeps his word. He is faithful to his promises. (verses 6)
2. The shape of _____ — God gives his people the Word. (verses 7-8)
3. The shape of _____ — God gives his people THE Word. He promises to be with his people. (verse 9)

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Why do churches often struggle to navigate their way through a change in senior leadership? What makes leadership change difficult in the church?
2. Of the five major themes of Joshua discussed in the video (see above), which one is most relevant and timely for you in your current season of life? Why?
3. God tells Joshua not to be afraid. What are some of the most common fears people have, and which ones are true of you?
4. Three different times, God commands Joshua to be strong and courageous. If we read between the lines, we might conclude that Joshua had a little fear or timidity when it came to his new calling. How do the shapes of God's "word" (promise, Scripture, and presence) help us overcome the fear inside of us when God calls us to do something challenging and new?
5. How does the presence of God help you faithfully follow God's call to do something challenging and new?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 2: Joshua 2

In many ways, this story is a reversal of a story that happened in the days of Moses in Numbers 13-14. When the people of Israel were ready to scout out the promised land, Moses had each tribe choose one representative. 12 men total. Those 12 men would then enter the promised land and scout it out to see if it was ready to be given by God. However, when they arrived in the land, they saw giants. They saw strong men, more able-bodied, able to fight, and ready for battle. So they sent back a report to Moses. Ten of them returned with a negative report. But the other two men, one named Caleb, whom we'll meet later in the book of Joshua, and Joshua came back with a positive report.

Was Rahab's "deception" sinful?

1. Option 1: She chose the lesser of two evils. It was still evil; it was still wrong. But she was in a lose-lose situation, and she chose the best loss.
2. Option 2: It was sin because it was a lack of trust. Had she better understood God's character, she would have known that God would have provided some alternative way out or she could have told the truth and the spies would be protected.
3. Option 3: Deception and lying aren't always synonymous. For example, in military battles, part of the strategy is to deceive the enemy. In sports, part of your goal is to deceive the opponents about your plan or your strategy.
4. Option 4: In the ancient world, truth equaled loyalty to neighbor and to God. Therefore, because she was expressing loyalty to God and her Israelite neighbors, she was being truthful.

Helpful Mantras:

- What you've done is not who you are.
- Your future is not defined by the trash in your past.
- You might have given up on you, but God hasn't given up on you.
- Your future is defined by faith, not failure.

Big Idea: God uses _____ people for his _____ purpose.

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. For thousands of years, Rahab has been known by her profession and lifestyle: "Rahab the Prostitute." Sometimes the labels we wear are labels placed on us by others. Sometimes the labels we wear are labels we adopt ourselves. If you were to give yourself a nickname (John the _____, Sarah the _____), what would it be?
2. Why do we often let the trash in our past define us?
3. How do you evaluate Rahab's "deception" of the king's men? Was it sinful or not? Was there an option discussed that made the most sense to you?
4. Do you tend to let your failure define you or your faith define you?
5. If you follow Jesus, you have been recycled and made new. For what "redemptive purposes" has God recycled you? In other words, in what way does God want to utilize your changed life to impact others around you?

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Session 3: Joshua 3-4

3 Strategies for Leaving a Godly Legacy:

1. We leave a godly legacy when we let _____. (3:3-4)
 - a. The Ark of the Covenant = military battle
 - b. The Ark of the Covenant = God's presence

2. We leave a godly legacy when we get our _____. (3:11-13)
 - a. The Jordan River at normal times: 4-5 feet deep, 100 feet wide, calm
 - b. The Jordan River at flood stage: 10 feet deep, a mile wide, flowing 10+ mph

3. We leave a godly legacy when we start _____. (4:2-3,6)
 - a. Is there one stone monument or two?
 - i. If there is just one stone memorial, the author uses a form of flashback in verse 9 to explain how the 12 stones made it into the river for the 12 tribal representatives to pick up and carry out.
 - ii. If there are two stone memorials, Joshua builds a second memorial as a parallel to Moses and to memorialize God holding up the waters so they could cross on dry ground.
 - b. They arrive at Gilgal on the 10th day of the first month, the day the Passover lamb was to be chosen. This foreshadows the celebration of Passover in the next chapter.

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Who in your life has left a godly legacy? What was it about their lives that made their faith legacy worth passing on to you and others?
2. In leadership circles, leaders are encouraged to conduct a 360-degree leadership assessment. This assessment utilizes people all around you (supervisors, subordinate employees, peers) to assess strengths and weaknesses. If you were to assess 360 degrees of your life, where would you discover that you have done well at letting God lead? In what areas of life would you discover that you have struggled to let God lead?
3. When have you had to demonstrate the kind of faith that gets your feet wet?
4. Why do you think God wanted the priests to step into the floodwaters before he held up the waters of the Jordan River?
5. If you have anything in your possession that serves as a reminder of God's faithfulness (a stone-stacking memorial), share that story. If you don't have anything in your possession that serves as a reminder of God's faithfulness, what do you have at home that tells a story of God's faithfulness?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 4: Joshua 5

Intertextual Connection:

- 5:1 mentions the hearts of the Canaanite kings melting in fear when they heard about the Israelites crossing the Jordan River as a result of God drying up the waters. This response is meant to help us recall the words of Rahab in chapter 2. There, she tells the spies that the hearts of all the citizens of Jericho are melting in fear because they have heard what God did to Sihon and Og in the days of Moses.

3 episodes of ritual preparations to get themselves right with God before battle:

1. _____ (vs 2)
 - a. This ritual highlights the _____ of the Israelites. Circumcision told the Israelites who they are and, more importantly, whose they are.
 - b. Moses & Joshua Parallels:
 - i. Moses had to circumcise his sons before leading the Israelites. Joshua had to circumcise his spiritual “sons” before leading the Israelites in battle. (vs 4-8)
 - ii. After crossing the Red Sea on dry ground, God tested Israel at the Waters of Meribah. After crossing the Jordan River on dry ground, God tests Israel through circumcision.
 - c. Spiritual tests often follow spiritual success.
2. _____ (vs 10-12)
 - a. This ritual highlights _____. The Israelites should trust that God provides for his people.
 - b. They celebrate Passover, they eat from the land, and God no longer needs to provide Manna.
 - c. Moses & Joshua Parallels:
 - i. Moses leads the Israelites in their first Passover as they leave Egypt. Joshua leads the Israelites in their second Passover as they enter Canaan.
3. _____ : the ritual of Holy Ground highlights loyalty. The Israelites should be loyal to God. (vs 13-15)
 - a. Moses & Joshua Parallels:
 - i. Moses had a holy ground moment. Joshua had a holy ground moment.

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Important tasks often require significant preparation. Think about and share a time of preparation that got you ready for something. It could be something fun (a vacation, a hobby). It could be something related to your future (education, job training).
2. During the session, we learned that “spiritual tests often follow spiritual success.” We often associate these tests with an enemy (the devil), and we often assume they are to our detriment. However, some spiritual tests come from God. Why do you think God often allows us to be tested following times of spiritual success?
3. God uses individual and corporate spiritual rituals to prepare us. What are some spiritual rituals that God has used to prepare you for an important season?
4. How do spiritual rituals form us and prepare us to do what God is calling us to do?
5. Joshua had to examine whether or not he was on God’s side. What spiritual ritual can you utilize this week to examine whether or not you are on God’s side?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 5: Joshua 6

Joshua Recap:

- Chapters 1-5 we labeled “Enter the Land.”
- We now enter the second major section of the Book of Joshua, which we have labeled “God gives the land.” This section extends from chapters 6-12.

5 Camera Angles to Review the Violence of Joshua:

1. _____: A good god wouldn’t command the genocide of a people group. Therefore, either this god isn’t real, or he isn’t good. This angle is often presented by atheists.
2. _____: Either the Israelites misunderstood God, or we misunderstand how to read Joshua. Some say God did not want to take the lives of any Canaanites. The Israelites did and misunderstood God in the process. Others say we shouldn’t read the battle narratives as historical battles. Instead, the Israelites gradually became the majority in the land through repopulation.
3. _____: This angle says God took the lives of some of the Canaanites as a way to protect the Israelites from being corrupted by their Canaanite ways. God wanted to protect the Israelites from these practices, so he got rid of the Canaanites.
4. _____: The destruction of the Canaanites is a form of judgment on the wickedness and evil in their culture.
5. _____: Some point out that walled cities like Jericho were military fortresses, so the destruction would be limited to soldiers and those associated with the military station. Others recognize that God would have granted repentance to anyone in the city, just like he did to Rahab. Others soften the blow by suggesting this language is hyperbole.

Big Idea: A God-sized strategy trusts his powerful presence and listens to his wonderful words.

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Can you think of and describe a time when God was asking you to do something that didn’t make sense?
2. Knowing that Jericho was actually a fairly small town, why do you think it was the first target in the land of Israel?
3. In the video, we discussed five different angles to explain the violence of Joshua. Which ones, if any, do you find helpful? Are there additional angles you think are worth exploring?
4. Joshua 6 teaches that a God-sized strategy trusts his powerful presence and listens to his wonderful words. Of the two (trust his presence, listening to his words), which one do you struggle with the most? What can you do to grow in that area?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 6: Joshua 7-8

Two Reasons It Is Dangerous to Get Comfortable with Sin:

1. Sin is _____
 - a. Individualistic culture: We think that my choices are mine, and they really only affect me. I shouldn't be punished for someone else's choices, and they shouldn't be punished for mine. We think, "My sin is between me and God, not me, you, and God."
 - b. Collectivistic Culture: They saw the group or the community as a collective whole. My sin is yours, and your sin is mine. Because sin is infectious. The sin of one hurts the many.
 - c. We like to think that our personal sin is personal. The reality is personal sin has corporate consequences. The reality is personal sin is never just personal; private sin is never private.

2. Sin is _____
 - a. God takes sin seriously and responds to it seriously. (7:14-15)

How to Respond to Sin: Destroy Sin Before Sin Destroys Us. (7:19)

The Ladder of Second Chances

- ☐ A New chance requires renewed _____. (8:1-2)
- ☐ Renewed courage requires faithful _____. (8:3)
- ☐ Faithful obedience opens up _____. (8:14, 17, 29)

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. When the weather is bad, people like to stay inside and get comfortable in different ways. Some people like to put on their pajamas, curl up with a book and a blanket, and grab a cup of coffee. How would you describe your perfect "comfort day" when it is cold or rainy outside?
2. Our culture often ranks sins, and we get more comfortable with certain sins as opposed to other sins. What sins do we often grow comfortable with and let slide?
3. Why do we get comfortable with some sins and treat other sins seriously?
4. What can you do in the next few weeks to destroy sin in your life before it infects or hurts those around you? How can others help you?
5. God gave Joshua a second chance after he failed to consult God. How has God given you second chances after failure?
6. When we faithfully obey God, he often opens up opportunities to partner with him in his work. How have you seen God open up opportunities for you to make a difference for him and with him? What opportunities might he be opening now?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 7: Joshua 9

T _____ : Gibeonites travel to Israelites (vs 3-5)

T _____ : Back-and-forth dialogue (vs 6-13)

D _____

T _____

S _____

C _____

S _____

T _____

D _____

T _____ : Gibeon and Israel enter a treaty (vs 14-15)

T _____ : Israelites travel to Gibeonites (vs 16-18a)

T _____ : Back and forth dialogue (vs 18b-25)

- Read Deuteronomy 29:11 to see God's instructions for treating foreigners who wanted to be given a place among the Israelites.

T _____ : Reinforcing treaty (vs 26-27)

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. How are you most likely to respond to threats or fear: fight, flight, freeze, face, or fib?
2. Describe the greatest prank or trick you have ever played on someone else or that has been played on you?
3. Place yourselves in the shoes of the Gibeonites. How would you have acted if you were in the same situation? What would you have done similarly? What would you have done differently?
4. When you find out that someone has lied to you and deceived you, what are some of the ways you usually respond?
5. Although the Gibeonites lied and deceived the Israelites, they were put into a privileged position as servants connected to the Tabernacle. How have you seen God work through people's mistakes and sin to bring about good?
6. In this story, we see the importance of watching our words carefully and keeping our commitments. What can you do to watch your words more carefully and keep your commitments more faithfully?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 8: Joshua 10-12

Parallels Between the Southern Coalition and the Northern Coalition:

Southern Alliance 10:1-5	Northern Alliance 11:1-5
Divine reassurance 10:8	Divine reassurance 11:6
Victory employing surprise 10:9-11	Victory employing surprise 11:7-9
Execution of kings/destruction of cities 10:16-39	Execution of kings/destruction of cities 11:10-15
Conquest summary 10:40-43	Conquest summary 11:16-23

Interpretations about Joshua's _____ Prayer (10:12-15)

1. A surface-level reading says he is asking for God to _____ the daylight before the sun goes down. Verse 14 makes it seem like it is later in the day.
2. They just marched through the night and caught them by surprise early in the morning. It would seem more likely that he would want the _____s extended to finish the battle. Plus, the sun and moon would be on different sides of the horizon. The sun is rising in the east over Gibeon, and the moon is setting in the west over Aijalon.
3. This could be a _____ reflection on verses 1-11.
4. Maybe Joshua is asking for the Canaanites to see something they would interpret as a bad _____, suggesting that the “gods” are against them.

Two responses to the challenges we face:

1. _____
2. _____

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Share a story about a time when you were chased by someone or something.
2. How do our past decisions chase us down and catch up to us? List some possible ways our past might catch up to us.
3. Have you ever faced an obstacle that seemed insurmountable? How did you respond to the challenge? How might the outcome have been different if you had responded with bold prayer?
4. The Israelites experience what seems like a common phenomenon. They overcome one challenge only to encounter an even bigger challenge. Have you experienced this phenomenon in your life? How did you handle it?
5. If you were to “count your blessings,” what blessings would be on your list? Consider taking some time later this week to count your blessings one by one.

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 9: Joshua 13-17

Recap the structure of Joshua:

1. Enter the Land (Joshua 1-5)
2. God gives the Land (Joshua 6-12)
3. Inherit the Land (Joshua 13-21) *This session begins this third section of Joshua.*
4. Live faithfully in the Land (Joshua 22-24)

To read about the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh receiving allotments of land east of the Jordan River, see Numbers 32-34 and Deuteronomy 2-3.

Characteristics of Godly Courage that Lives a Devoted Life:

1. Willing to wait on God's _____
2. Takes appropriate _____

Land Grant Narratives in the Inheritance Chapters:

1. Caleb (14:6-15)
2. Othniel (15:18-19)
3. Zelophehad's daughters (17:3-4)
4. Ephraim & Manasseh (17:14-18) - Land _____ Narrative

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Have you done any research on your family heritage or lineage (Ancestry.com, etc.)? If so, what have you found?
2. Caleb is a picture of a life that follows God wholeheartedly. He patiently waits and takes initiative when the time is right. Do you find it more challenging to wait patiently on God or take initiative and act? Why?
3. The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh go to Joshua and complain about the land allotment they receive. They complain about the quantity and the quality. Why do we often complain about the good gifts God has given to us?
4. These chapters present two clear ways that God's people can respond to God's good gifts: courageous commitment or critical complaining. What good gifts has God given you recently, and what steps can you take to respond to God's good gifts with courageous commitment?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 10: Joshua 18-21

Complacency creates _____ .

Shiloh:

- ☐ Shiloh is the third location for the Tent of Meeting (Tabernacle) in Joshua. The first two are Gilgal and Shechem.
- ☐ Shiloh will be the primary location for the Tent of Meeting for years to come.
- ☐ Shiloh bookends chapters 18 and 19.
- ☐ The mention of Shiloh signals the worship context of these chapters; it is meant to highlight God's _____ in the allotment of land.

Hearing the allotments for each tribe, along with various boundary markers and city lists, can be confusing. It might be helpful to consult a map of the land of Israel in the days of Joshua. I've provided a few links to online maps I've found helpful. The links do not suggest agreement or endorsement of everything else on the site.

- ibiblemaps.com/tribal-allotments-of-israel-2/
- biblestudy.org/maps/division-of-promised-land-to-twelve-tribes-israel.html
- jewishvirtuallibrary.org/map-of-the-twelve-tribes-of-israel

The people of Israel can _____ :

1. City of _____ (20:2-6)
2. Cities for the _____

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. How does complacency cause us to lose our spiritual footing?
2. What types of chaos can develop whenever we become complacent in our faith?
3. Casting lots might seem like a strange way to discern God's will. What are some ways we can discern God's will today?
4. God cares about justice among his people. Where do you see evidence of God's concern for justice in our culture and society? How can the church more effectively pursue godly justice?
5. God made sure that all of the Israelites had access to the teaching of his law. How can churches ensure everyone in their community has access to God's word? How can we work to give people greater access to God's word around the world?

The Book of Joshua - A NextLevel Video Series
Session 11: Joshua 22

Session Highlights:

Parallels Between Joshua 1 and Joshua 22:

Joshua 1	Joshua 22
Remember the command that Moses the Servant of the Lord gave you (12)	You have done as Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you (2)
Until the Lord gives them rest (15)	The Lord your God has given the other tribes rest (4)
Whoever ... does not obey your words (18)	You have obeyed every order I have given you (2)
In the land that Moses gave you, east of the Jordan River (14)	Go back home to the land that Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave you as your possession on the east side of the Jordan River. (4)

Spiritual Weeds that Can Grow in our Spiritual Soil:

1. The Weed of _____
2. The Weed of _____
 - a. _____ made by the 9 ½ tribes:
 - i. You are betraying God.
 - ii. You are turning away from the Lord.
 - iii. You built an altar for yourselves.
 - iv. You are in rebellion against God.
 - b. Divisive _____ are often rooted in dangerous _____.
 - c. The _____ of rebellion is linked to two prior acts of _____.
 - i. Numbers 25
 - ii. Joshua 7

How to Fight Spiritual Weeds:

1. Fight the Weed of Greed with the Weedkiller of Generosity.
2. Fight the Weed of Accusation with the Weedkiller of Healthy Conversation.

Big Idea: God can turn a weed of disunity into a witness of unity.

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. How have you witnessed greed create division?
2. How does generosity combat greediness that leads to division?
3. Have you ever been the victim or perpetrator of divisive accusations? If so, where do you see evidence that those divisive accusations might have been rooted in dangerous assumptions?
4. What tools (character traits, approaches, etc.) are necessary to combat the weed of accusation with healthy conversations? What demeanor is necessary? What mindset is necessary?
5. Can you think of a time when God turned a weed of disunity into a witness of unity?

The Book of Joshua: Session 12 (Joshua 23)
A NextLevel Video Series

Session Highlights:

Structure of Joshua 23

Setting (1-2)

A- _____ God's faithfulness to his promises (3-5)

B - _____ God's instructions & the cost if they don't (6-8)

A - _____ God's faithfulness to his promises (9-10)

B - _____ God's instructions & the cost if they don't (11-13)

A - _____ God's faithfulness to his promises (14)

B - _____ God's instructions & the cost if they don't (15-16)

The Warnings of Joshua 23:

1. Cultural seduction
2. Relational seduction

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. If you have the opportunity to plan your last words, what would you want to say and to whom?
2. How have you witnessed God's faithfulness with your own eyes? Where has God's faithfulness been evident in your own life or in the lives of those around you?
3. In what ways does culture try to seduce us, causing us to veer away from God's path?
4. Where do you see God's power on display today? Where have you witnessed God's power in your own life?
5. The Israelites are reminded that God had been fighting for them. How has God fought for you in small and large ways?
6. Joshua tells the Israelites to be very careful because close relationships can lead them away from God. In what ways can close relationships lead us away from God if we are not careful?
7. How does the stern warning at the end of Joshua's speech cause you to examine and self-reflect?

The Book of Joshua: Session 13 (Joshua 24)
A NextLevel Video Series

Session Highlights:

The Past, Present, and Future of Joshua 24:

1. Reflect on the Past: _____ (1-13)
 - a. The importance of Shechem
 - i. Abraham built a stone altar after God promised to give him the land (Gen 12).
 - ii. Jacob instructed his family to bury the family gods under a tree (Gen 34).
 - b. Joshua reminds Israel of what God has done (2-13)
 - i. The Patriarchs (2-4)
 - ii. Moses (5-7)
 - iii. East of the Jordan (8-10)
 - iv. West of the Jordan (11-13)
 - c. Notice the first-person pronouns (I...)—God is the one acting on their behalf.
2. Examine the Present: _____ (14-24)
 - a. Serve God faithfully by rejecting pretender gods.
 - b. Possible competitors to God:
 - i. Family
 - ii. Friends
 - iii. Money & Possessions
 - iv. Political partisanship
 - v. Entertainment, sports, and hobbies
 - vi. Success and achievement
3. Navigate the Future: _____ (25-28)

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. Begin by reflecting upon and sharing about God's past faithfulness in your life and your family. How has God been faithful throughout your life?
2. Although we might not have idols made of wood or stone, we have a variety of temptations that can rise to godlike status in our lives. What are some of the most common "gods" people worship in our culture?
3. If you are comfortable sharing, what tends to compete with God for supremacy in your life? In other words, what rises to godlike status (or at least dangerously close to godlike status) in your own life?
4. What objects do you have that function as symbols of your commitment to God or symbols that remind you of God's faithfulness?
5. If you are watching these videos and discussing them with a small group or as part of a group Bible study, consider taking communion together as a covenant renewal.
6. How does the book of Joshua prepare us for or anticipate the coming of a greater Joshua?

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