

# ONE SINGLE ACT

DATE: SUNDAY, 04TH OF JULY 2021 | DARING GREATLY SERIES: PART 3

## JOSHUA 7:7-9

*And Joshua said, "Alas, Sovereign Lord, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan! 8 Pardon your servant, Lord. What can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies? 9 The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?"*

## JOSHUA 7:14

*"In the morning, present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe the Lord chooses shall come forward clan by clan; the clan the Lord chooses shall come forward family by family; and the family the Lord chooses shall come forward man by man.*

### NOTES FOR LEADERS:

Please diarise our next prayer and leaders meeting on Tuesday, the 20th of July at 18h00. The meeting will take place online.

## START TALKING

1. What stood out to you from Sunday's message?
2. Did Sunday's message bring up any questions for you around how God deals with sin? Please share those questions with the group.

## START THINKING

1. Read Joshua 7:14. Why do you think Achan didn't come clean immediately after hearing the plan for finding the guilty party? What might have happened if Achan repented before he had been singled out clan by clan, family by family, person by person? In what ways can you relate to Achan?
2. How does our turning away from sin give glory to God?

## START SHARING

1. Read Joshua 7:7-9. Have you ever suffered a painful defeat, only to realize after the fact that God had bigger plans at work? If so, what happened?
2. In what area of your life are you guilty of justifying your own actions over obedience to God's word?
3. What faith habits can you build into your life that will lead to greater commitment to God and obedience to His word?

## START PRAYING

God often uses His Word to shine a light on an area we have tried to cover up or hide. In prayer, invite God to shine His light into every area of our lives and show us anything we may need to repent of.

## START DOING

Achan attempted to hide his sin from God and others. Is there a sin in your life that you have been hiding and need to confess? Humble yourself before God this week and repent. Allow the power of His presence to flood your life as you accept His forgiveness.

# SUMMARY

## OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

This Sunday, Jarius shared a powerful message on obedience. Two weeks ago, we started this new series, Daring Greatly, which focuses on lessons from the life of Joshua.

Joshua was a man called by God to lead the nation of Israel out of the wilderness into the promised land. This was not an easy task, and it happened in a miraculous way. He led the Israelites through the Jordan river on dry land (similarly to how Moses led the Israelites through the Red sea). They arrive in the promised land, and there's this beautiful moment of restoration with God before they go on to conquer the city of Jericho.

God appointed Joshua. He encouraged him by promising Joshua that He will be with him, that He'll give Joshua strength, and that Joshua will be victorious in battle. Then finally, He reminded Joshua to be strong and courageous.

What we often miss in the story of Joshua is what comes after the call to be strong and courageous... *"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."* Joshua 1:7-9.

Our courage and strength mean very little if not followed up with acts of obedience to the word and instructions of God. We often cringe when we hear the word "obedience" because we relate it to obeying rules. But obedience to God's Word is much bigger than that...

Being obedient to God's Word says a few things about what we believe... it says that we believe that His Word is good, that it is true, that it is authoritative. It says that apart from Him, we don't have any hope. It says that we believe God's Word and instructions are best for our lives and the lives of our family.

This idea of obedience to God's Word and his instructions is present throughout the Bible:

- Abraham's offering and obedience to sacrifice Isaac
- Noah building the Ark
- Moses leading the Israelite slaves out of Egypt
- Joshua leading the Israelites out of the wilderness into the promised land, and the incredible victory over Jericho
- Mary and Joseph and the birth of Jesus
- The disciples leaving their jobs and families to follow Jesus
- and ultimately our Saviour who died on a cross for our sins

On the cross, Jesus said three words - "It is finished" - that secured our freedom.

Three things that happen when our strength and courage is followed up with acts of obedience:

### 1. Acts of Obedience reveal our heart posture and our physical position

In Joshua chapter 7 we see the nation of Israel suffer a significant defeat against Ai. This defeat happened because a man named Achan ignored a specific command from God. Achan had taken some of the devoted things from the Lord's treasury and buried them under his tent. He was the only

man who ignored God's instruction regarding the devoted things (see Joshua chapter 6).

Achan had seen the goodness of God in the wilderness. He had crossed the Jordan River on dry ground and celebrated the victory over Jericho, and yet this was not enough to convince him of the goodness of God. He still disobeyed the command of God.

Disobedience caused severe destruction and pain. Achan's disobedience resulted in the death of 36 men and ultimately the death of his family and his own death. His disobedience also bought fear to the Israelite army after they were defeated at Ai.

Achan's heart posture was revealed through him taking some of the devoted things. After the defeat at Ai, he probably felt even stronger that he was right in trying to look after his own need first rather than obeying God. Our response to God often looks very similar, where our obedience is conditional to God's provision actions and outcome.

We see a completely different response from Joshua after the defeat as he goes to the presence of God and falls to his feet before the Lord and repents. Joshua's heart posture is one of submission, humility and repentance, and God meets him with the following instruction. *"Stand up! What are you doing down on your face?"* Joshua 7:10.

Obedience is our responsibility; the outcome is God's responsibility. And obedience to God's word will always place us in a position of honour. Joshua's heart posture petitioned with God, and He responded by calling Joshua to his feet. God then revealed to Joshua the reason for their defeat and gave Joshua instructions on how to deal with it and then prepared the nation for victory.

Acts of obedience require vulnerability and humility. It means placing our trust in God even when we cannot see what the outcome will be.

### 2. The Presence and the power of God follows our Obedience

After Joshua responded in obedience, he could deal with Achan's disobedience. Then God comes with incredible power and presence and restoration: *Then the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land."* Joshua 8:1.

We should never underestimate how God's presence and power follow obedience and the impact that it could have in our lives and the lives of others.

### 3. Obedience sets in motion what we cannot yet see

Joshua actively goes and deals with the disobedience of Achan, and he radically gets rid of the very thing that has caused the defeat in Ai. He does not try and wiggle his way out of it; he does not try to justify Achan's behaviour; He responds to God's instruction. And this is followed by the restoration of God's promise, breakthrough and victory.

It's time for us to radically deal with the things that God has instructed us to... there is no more time to justify our actions, no more time for conditional obedience... we need to be strong and courageous and deal with things that might be keeping us from living fully free in the love and peace of our Lord Jesus.