

# In Light of God's Salvation...

## Summary and Goal

Joshua, the Israelites' leader, was near the end of his life. As he read the book of the law and gave Israel a choice (worship God or worship idols), he called the people to remember God's faithfulness and live in light of His salvation. Like the Israelites, we too are called to live in light of God's salvation by worshipping God in sincerity and truth, by putting away our idols, and by following Him in obedience.

### ***Main Passage***

Joshua 24:14-28

### ***Session Outline***

1. Worship the Lord in sincerity and truth (Josh. 24:14).
2. Put away idols (Josh. 24:15-23).
3. Commit to obedience as a sign of our salvation (Josh. 24:24-28).

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### ***Theological Theme***

Our best efforts at obedience are bound to fail unless we have first experienced God's salvation through Jesus.

### ***Christ Connection***

Joshua was God's chosen servant to bring the Israelites into the promised land. His story points forward to Jesus Christ, God's chosen servant who will bring God's people to their eternal inheritance.

### ***Missional Application***

God calls us to put away our idols and display for the world a new way of living, made possible only through Christ's salvation.

## Session Plan

# In Light of God's Salvation...

## Session 6

### *Pack Item 5: The Conquest Map*

### *Pack Item 10: The Promise of Land*

The biblical story for this session comes at the conclusion of the Book of Joshua, after the conquest of the promised land has been achieved (see **Pack Item 5**) and the tribes of Israel have received their allotments of land (see map on **Pack Item 10**).

### ? For Further Discussion

What mistakes have you witnessed that have driven you away from making the same error?

Why did they impact you so?

### ? For Further Discussion

Joshua instructed the congregation to worship in truth—the challenge was integrity. How might a person today pretend to worship?

## Introduction

Use the writer's example of "Five Little Monkeys" to introduce the idea of learning from others' mistakes within the context of the Book of Joshua (leader p. 70; PSG p. 55).

- ? What are some actions that contradict what people say they believe?
- ? Why is it important for Christians to act in ways that line up with what we say we believe?

Summarize this session on living in light of salvation and Israel's choice to worship Yahweh as their God near the end of Joshua's life (leader p. 70; PSG p. 56).

## 1. Worship the Lord in sincerity and truth (Josh. 24:14).

Use **Pack Item 2: Joshua's Life** and the leader content to recall a couple of significant moments in Joshua's life and his continued faithfulness (leader p. 71). Then read Joshua 24:14. Focus on the concern for worship in Joshua's directives, how he implored Israel to serve the God who had saved them (leader p. 71; PSG p. 56).

- ? What would you say are characteristics of worship done "in sincerity and in faithfulness"?
- ? What characteristics would be found in insincere, unfaithful worship?

Explain how Joshua addressed both positive and negative elements in serving the Lord—serving the Lord in sincerity and discarding idols. Stress that though our experiences occur in a different era, God's standard of holiness remains steadfast (leader p. 72; PSG p. 57).

- ? What role does a sense of awe play in leading us to sincere and faithful worship of God?

## 2. Put away idols (Josh. 24:15-23).

Read Joshua 24:15-23. Note the nature of the choice Joshua offered the Israelites—no luxury of neutrality (leader pp. 73-74; PSG p. 58).

- ① Joshua committed himself and his family to serving the Lord. What are some ways that a family can cultivate the same kind of devotion to the Lord's service?

Highlight that while the people responded positively to Joshua, he made a surprising statement in Joshua 24:19, knowing their sinful tendencies and past unfaithfulness. Further emphasize that serving the Lord is a serious matter requiring more than an easy, verbal congregational resolution (leader pp. 74-75; PSG pp. 59-60).

- ① How does Joshua's frank and honest assessment of Israel's inability to be faithful strike you?
- ① In what way is our commitment to worship God in light of Christ's salvation different than the Israelites' commitment?

## 3. Commit to obedience as a sign of our salvation (Josh. 24:24-28).

Ask a volunteer to read Joshua 24:24-28. Show how Joshua established a way for the Israelites to measure their commitment to God (leader p. 76; PSG p. 60).

- ① What is the significance of Joshua erecting a physical stone to remind the people of their commitment?
- ① What actions in our homes and churches help remind us of our calling to live in light of God's salvation?

Communicate that Joshua made a covenant with the people, recording it in the book of the law and using a large stone for a witness. Connect this to our responsibility to disciple the next generation (leader pp. 76-77; PSG p. 61).

- ① Why is it important that we see our obedience in light of God's salvation and not as a way of earning God's salvation?

## Conclusion

Close by drawing further attention to the importance of remembering God's faithfulness while remaining realistic about our ability (or inability!) to obey God perfectly (leader p. 77; PSG p. 62). *Apply the truths of this session with "His Mission, Your Mission"* (PSG p. 63).

*Pass out cards from Pack Item 6: Serve the Lord to help group members recall the importance of our commitment to obedience as a sign of our salvation.*

### Point 2 Option

To accent the seriousness of sin, read the list of comparisons between how man labels sin and how God looks at sin, or you might hand these out to some volunteers to read (see leader p. 75; available on the DVD in *The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack*).

Ask: Which comparison sticks out to you, and why?

### Point 3 Option

Before the group meeting, have cards with Joshua 24:15 printed on them. After the Scripture, have a place at the bottom of the card with a sign and date section. Give these cards out and allow group members a moment to reflect on the session and consider the cost of this commitment to obedience. On the back of the cards, ask them to write down a prayer asking the Lord to help them follow in obedience.

You can find a template available on the DVD in *The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack*.

**Christ Connection:** Joshua was God's chosen servant to bring the Israelites into the promised land. His story points forward to Jesus Christ, God's chosen servant who will bring God's people to their eternal inheritance.

**Missional Application:** God calls us to put away our idols and display for the world a new way of living, made possible only through Christ's salvation.

## Expanded Session Content

# In Light of God's Salvation...

## Session 6



### Voices from Church History

"May God help [us] to  
submit without delay [our]  
proud will in loving, child-  
like obedience to Himself."<sup>2</sup>

—D. L. Moody (1837-1899)

### Introduction

The nursery rhyme "Five Little Monkeys" is popular in households with little children. Perhaps you know it. "Five little monkeys jumping on the bed. One fell off and bumped his head. Mama called the doctor and the doctor said, 'No more monkeys jumping on the bed!'"

While this little ditty teaches the principle of subtraction, it should also teach an important life lesson—learn from the mistakes of others. As we've seen in our study of the Old Testament Book of Joshua, the Israelites have had many opportunities to learn from the mistakes of their ancestors and peers. In this session, they are given the choice to learn from past mistakes or repeat them.

"Purity of heart is to think one thing," said Søren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher and theologian.<sup>1</sup> Kierkegaard believed we should not think one thing while at the same time entertaining contradictory thoughts or actions. As leader of the Israelites, Joshua exemplified this kind of wholehearted devotion, and at the end of his life, he once again called on his people to choose to follow God.

- What are some actions that contradict what people say they believe?
- Why is it important for Christians to act in ways that line up with what we say we believe?

### Session Summary

In this session, we will read the story of Israel's choice to worship Yahweh as their God. Joshua, their leader, was near the end of his life. As he read the book of the law and gave Israel a choice (worship God or worship idols), he called the people to remember God's faithfulness and live in light of His salvation. Like the Israelites, we too are called to live in light of God's salvation by worshiping God in sincerity and truth, by putting away our idols, and by following Him in obedience.

## 1. Worship the Lord in sincerity and truth (Josh. 24:14).

As we come to the end of Joshua's life, let's look back and reflect on his journey. This was a man who was born a slave in Egypt and who developed as a warrior under Moses (Ex. 17). He followed Moses' instructions and successfully led the fight against Amalek. God had already chosen Joshua and was preparing Joshua for his future role when He told Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven" (Ex. 17:14).

God continued developing Joshua, and under Moses, Joshua was one of the men who entered the promised land and spied on Israel's enemies that God would drive out before them. Only Joshua and Caleb returned with a report aligned with God's promise.

After a long life of faithfulness in leading Israel (as Moses' successor), Joshua called on the people to live in light of God's salvation:

*<sup>14</sup> "Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD."*

Can you imagine the Israelites as they listened to Joshua? They might have thought, *Joshua sounds just like Moses did at the end of his life. This will not be good.* The seriousness of the moment could not be escaped. There was no one to succeed Joshua. If the Israelites had thought they were in trouble when Moses died, they likely were quaking in the sand at the thought of Joshua passing off the scene—not having a leader lined up to guide them, intercede for them, or communicate with God on their behalf!

In his words to the Israelites, Joshua gave key instructions that got to the heart of worship—fear the Lord; worship, or serve, Him in sincerity and faithfulness; and get rid of the gods of your fathers. Joshua's directives implored Israel to serve the God who had saved them. (The biblical understanding of servanthood has its foundation in people serving God in worship. The terms for "service" and "worship" are often interchangeable.<sup>3</sup>)

- ❓ What would you say are characteristics of worship done "in sincerity and in faithfulness"?
- ❓ What characteristics would be found in insincere, unfaithful worship?

### Further Commentary

"Joshua addressed the people, charging them to be faithful in serving the God who had been so faithful in helping them. He again mentioned the gods of their ancestors (cf. v. 2) and urged the people to remove them ('throw away') from their midst. In v. 14 the NIV's 'serve him with all faithfulness' is literally 'serve him with integrity (*tāmîm*) and truth...The NASB renders the phrase here as 'sincerity and truth,' the NRSV as 'sincerity and...faithfulness,' the REB as 'loyalty and truth,' the NLT as 'wholeheartedly.' The word *tāmîm* connotes the idea of wholeness, blamelessness, integrity, even 'perfection,' and thus Joshua's exhortation is a passionate one that the people should be totally devoted—blameless—in their worship of their God. The first part of v. 14 contains a concentration of theologically freighted words: the Israelites should fear...the Lord, and they should serve...him with integrity...and truth...Joshua was urgently impressing on the people what they should do."<sup>4</sup>

—David M. Howard Jr.



## Voices from the Church

“There are four great impelling motives that move men to action: Fear, Hope, Faith, and Love...Fear is first in order, first in force, first in fruit. Indeed, fear is ‘the beginning of wisdom.’ Scripture summarizes the chief cause of sin and crime: ‘There is no fear of God before their eyes.’”<sup>6</sup>

—*The Prairie Overcomer*

Notice how Joshua addressed both positive and negative elements in serving the Lord. Positively, the Lord was to be served in sincerity, that is, without hypocrisy and in faithfulness. Negatively, the Lord was to be served by discarding their false gods, the idols the Israelites’ ancestors had worshiped beyond the Euphrates River in the time of Abraham and the gods in Egypt. (Joshua may have been thinking about the spectacle of the children of Israel dancing around the golden calf, which had been made by Aaron, possibly resembling an Egyptian god.)

Joshua’s instructions are applicable to believers today because God is unchangeable. He still equips those He calls. As Ray Stedman stated:

The Christian is more than an empty vessel. He has something within—or, more accurately, *Someone* within. We have a treasure in our clay pot! And more than a treasure—a transcendent power! That is humanity as God intended it to be. The clay pot is not much in itself, but it holds an inestimable treasure, beyond price, and a transcendent power, greater than any other power known to humanity.<sup>5</sup>

Though our experiences occur in a different era, God’s standard of holiness remains steadfast. Fearing God still means standing in awe of Him. It is easy to imagine standing in awe in the presence of your favorite athlete, scholar, or movie star. But just think about it—we are *always* in the presence of God (Ps. 139:7-12) and should tremble at His displeasure.

For this reason, serving God, as Joshua instructed, must be done with integrity. The word for “sincerity” here is also used by David in Psalm 18:25, a psalm about God rescuing him from his enemies. Can you imagine David wholeheartedly thanking God for saving his life from Saul? In his song to the Lord, David said God repaid him (David, an upright man) with His uprightness. Joshua’s use of this strong word was intended to lead the Israelites to serve God wholeheartedly and to fear the cost of half-hearted devotion.

Joshua also instructed the congregation to worship God in faithfulness. This is the opposite of pretending. Joshua’s words were commands with a tinge of warning—be people of integrity. God knows our hearts and our inner thoughts.



What role does a sense of awe play in leading us to sincere and faithful worship of God?

## 2. Put away idols (Josh. 24:15-23).

As Joshua continued to instruct the Israelites, he acknowledged that serving the Lord is not something that can be coerced. For our obedience to please the Lord, it must be given willingly. So, Joshua set before the people a choice:

*<sup>15</sup> And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond 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.”*

*<sup>16</sup> Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods, <sup>17</sup> for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. <sup>18</sup> And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”*

*<sup>19</sup> But Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. <sup>20</sup> If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.” <sup>21</sup> And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the LORD.” <sup>22</sup> Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” <sup>23</sup> He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel.”*

The Israelites understood the implications of Joshua’s words as they listened to him that day. Like Moses did when giving his last words to the Israelites on the edge of the promised land, Joshua offered the Israelites a choice. If it seemed evil, or displeasing, for them to serve the Lord, then they could direct their allegiance to a false deity, one of the false gods their ancestors served beyond the Euphrates River, ones whom God had proved were impotent. Or they could choose to serve the gods of the Amorites in the promised land where they were dwelling, the gods who were shown to be nothing as God had already driven out the Amorites. The choice was theirs.

### Further Commentary

“Joshua gave Israel a choice to worship the gods of their ancestors or those of the Amorites. He affirmed the God of Israel as his own choice. So if Israel would follow Joshua in peace as they did in war, they must choose the true God. After the people promised to worship God alone, Joshua warned them that it would be difficult. The people must not choose lightly or in a moment of good feeling about God, ‘a holy God...a jealous God.’ If the people chose now for God and changed their minds later, God would completely destroy them, just as they did their enemies in lands they now inhabited (2:10). This warning is the closest chapter 24 comes to pronouncing curses. For a vassal to enter into a treaty obligation and later to break it was considered an act of treason worthy of death. So it is here for Israel. Joshua charged Israel to ‘get rid of the foreign gods that are among you.’ The people made their promises, but the report does not indicate that they did away with their gods, unlike their ancestor Jacob. He buried the gods in his possession at Shechem, the same place where his descendants now stood (Gen. 35:2-4).”<sup>7</sup>

—Richard S. Hess,  
*HCSB Study Bible*

## Further Commentary

“In his study of this chapter, Francis Schaeffer points out rightly that when Joshua challenged the people to choose to serve God and affirmed that this was his settled choice as well, the tense he used implied more than a once-for-all choosing, as if one can make a choice and be done with it thereafter. The tense involves what grammarians call continuous action. That is, it involves the past, but it also involves the present and the future. It is as if Joshua had said, ‘I have chosen to serve the Lord; I am choosing that same path of service now; and I will go on choosing to serve God until the very end.’ Schaeffer writes, ‘This was the character of Joshua. He chose, and he chose, and he chose, and he kept right on choosing. He understood the dynamics of choice—once-for-all choice and existential choice as well. Thus his word to the people was not an affirmation puffed up on the spur of the moment. It was deeply imbedded in Joshua’s comprehension of what is required of a person made in the image of God, one called upon not to obey God like a machine or an animal, but to obey God by choice.’”<sup>8</sup>

—James Montgomery Boice

Joshua did not offer them the luxury of neutrality—they could not serve the one true God of Israel and false gods. This is the equivalent of Jesus’ statement, “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other” (Matt. 6:24). And then, in one of the great acknowledgments of an individual’s undivided loyalty to God, Joshua affirmed that he and his house would serve the Lord. It was his way of saying, “Even if I and my family are the only ones in Israel who will serve the Lord, we will serve the Lord.”



Joshua committed himself and his family to serving the Lord. What are some ways that a family can cultivate the same kind of devotion to the Lord’s service?

The people responded to Joshua with a congregational “Amen!” This was their verbal understanding that it would be ludicrous to forsake the Lord in order to serve false gods. This congregational commitment was based upon God’s involvement in their history. Their recounting of their history matched Joshua’s recalling of their history. They knew it was the Lord who worked wonders from Abraham’s time to Joshua’s time to keep His promise to Abraham (Gen. 12)—the promise that now had reached a level of fulfillment in their own time. The motivation for Israel to serve the Lord and proclaim Him as their God was God’s faithfulness to them.

But then Joshua made a surprising statement: “You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God” (Josh. 24:19). Was this a statement of judgment? Did Joshua set them up just to tear them down? No. Joshua realistically looked beyond their passionate declaration. He knew that Israel had often forgotten the God who had rescued them. He knew their sinful tendencies and their past unfaithfulness.

God is holy and jealous (Ex. 20:5). For this reason, as Joshua stated, He would not overlook their “transgressions” or “sins.” “Transgression” means to break the covenant or go beyond the limits. “Sin” means to miss the mark or go the wrong way. God called out both sin and transgression as He identified Israel’s wrongs in the story of Achan in Joshua 7:11.





To further grasp the seriousness of sin, consider these comparisons:

“Man calls [sin] an accident; God calls it an abomination.  
Man calls it a blunder; God calls it blindness.  
Man calls it a defect; God calls it a disease.  
Man calls it a chance; God calls it a choice.  
Man calls it an error; God calls it an enmity.  
Man calls it a fascination; God calls it a fatality.  
Man calls it an infirmity; God calls it an iniquity.  
Man calls it a luxury; God calls it a leprosy.  
Man calls it a liberty; God calls it lawlessness.  
Man calls it a trifle; God calls it a tragedy.  
Man calls it a mistake; God calls it a madness.  
Man calls it a weakness; God calls it willfulness.”<sup>9</sup>

Serving the Lord was a serious matter. It required more than an easy, verbal congregational resolution. Rejecting the Lord would bring serious consequences upon those who forsook Him to serve foreign gods. But in spite of Joshua’s objection, the Israelites remained steady and once again made an affirmative confession—“No, but we will serve the LORD” (Josh. 24:21).

We can understand their decision. They knew the fear of crossing the Jordan and felt the ground tremble as the wall of Jericho tumbled down. They knew the awesomeness of God’s might displayed over and over as they possessed land they did not own. In light of God’s salvation, Joshua called the people to put away their idols and to set themselves as witnesses against themselves if they were to disobey.

In Leviticus 17:7, the Israelites were commanded by the Lord through Moses to put away their idols like the goat-demons for all eternity. Deuteronomy 32:16-17 was another indication, among many, of the Israelites’ struggle with idolatry. Joshua needed to prohibit worship of idols since their history beyond the Euphrates River, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and even in the promised land revealed the Israelites were prone to wander.

- ❓ How does Joshua’s frank and honest assessment of Israel’s inability to be faithful strike you?
- ❓ In what way is our commitment to worship God in light of Christ’s salvation different than the Israelites’ commitment?

### Voices from the Church

“When we ask people what they want in church instead of giving them what they were created to long for, we play into the very idolatry that church was created to dismantle.”<sup>10</sup>

—James MacDonald

## Further Commentary

“The stone served as a lasting memorial that would remind future generations of the covenant made at Shechem and its importance. Jacob’s connection with a stone and with Shechem is especially significant for this passage. At Shechem, Jacob buried all the foreign gods that his wives and concubines brought from their family home in Haran (Gen. 35:2-4). The erection of a stone witness at this same spot confirms that the people do not intend to worship these deities. However, it may also identify the place where the images were buried. Thus the ambiguity of the place remains. Will Israel worship the LORD alone, as symbolized by the stone of witness, or will it return to this spot in order to worship other deities, as symbolized by the buried images? Israel’s choice to betray its promise (Judg. 2:11-13) was signaled by its omission of any reference to foreign deities in response to Joshua’s challenge (24:23-24). This also contrasts with Jacob whose command to his family to put away their deities met with a positive response (Gen. 35:2-4).”<sup>11</sup>

—Richard S. Hess

## Voices from the Church

“We are products of our past, but we don’t have to be prisoners of it.”<sup>12</sup>

—Rick Warren

### 3. Commit to obedience as a sign of our salvation (Josh. 24:24-28).

As we come to the end of this section of Scripture, we see once again the people making a jubilant vow: “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.” They remembered God’s faithfulness and knew He had the power to deliver them.

*24 And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.”<sup>25</sup> So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. <sup>26</sup> And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God.”<sup>28</sup> So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.*


Joshua wanted the people to count the cost. He established a way to judge whether or not the Israelites were keeping the vow they made to the Lord—the statutes and rules from the Torah. These rules served as reminders of their obligation to live out their verbal confession. These rules provided the measure for their commitment to God.

- ❓ What is the significance of Joshua erecting a physical stone to remind the people of their commitment?
- ❓ What actions in our homes and churches help remind us of our calling to live in light of God’s salvation?

Joshua made a covenant with the people. Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God. He took a large stone and personified it—as if it had ears to hear the resolutions voiced by the Israelites. The stone would serve as a witness, a visible prosecuting attorney against Israel if they did not live out their confession of being faithful to God.

Since the people seemed adamant about sincerely serving the Lord, Joshua dismissed the congregation and permitted them to go back to their homes in their newly assigned territories. The Israelites would bear responsibility for their covenant with God alone because Joshua would soon die.

The story of Joshua and his leadership reminds us of the responsibility we have to disciple the next generation. Parents have the responsibility of directing their children by training them in the way they should go (Prov. 22:6). We submit to the training of God through various circumstances and seek to live in obedience, trusting Him to empower us to follow in His ways. God calls us to put away our idols and display for the world a new way of living, made possible only through Christ's salvation.

 Why is it important that we see our obedience in light of God's salvation and not as a way of earning God's salvation?

## Conclusion

Like Joshua, believers must count the cost, considering the annals of time and the record of history to remember God's plan for good and not evil to those who believe (Jer. 29:11). Joshua's faithfulness was rewarded and he was called "the servant of the LORD" at the end of his life (Josh. 24:29).

Also like Joshua, we are to have a realistic understanding of our ability (or inability!) to obey God perfectly. The beautiful difference between our situation and Israel's is that we have an even greater leader than Joshua—Jesus Christ, God's chosen servant who brings us not into the earthly promised land but into our eternal inheritance. The children of Israel were unable to keep their vows (as we will soon see in Judges 2:10), but because we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us and guiding us, we are empowered to live in light of God's salvation and to point the world around us to that light.

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Joshua was God's chosen servant to bring the Israelites into the promised land. His story points forward to Jesus Christ, God's chosen servant who will bring God's people to their eternal inheritance.

## 99 Essential Christian Doctrines

### 73. Justification and Works

Justification is not the result of human effort or good works but through faith in the righteousness of Christ. Although good works do not lead to justification, justification leads to good works in the life of a believer (Eph. 2:10). Faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:17). While good works do not establish justification, they do verify a genuine faith and make our justification evident to others.



## Voices from Church History

"It costs something to be a true Christian. Let that never be forgotten. To be a mere nominal Christian, and go to church, is cheap and easy work. But to hear Christ's voice, follow Christ, believe in Christ, and confess Christ, requires much self-denial. It will cost us our sins, and our self-righteousness, and our ease, and our worldliness. All—all must be given up. We must fight an enemy who comes against us with twenty thousand followers. We must build a tower in troublous times. Our Lord Jesus Christ would have us thoroughly understand this. He bids us 'count the cost.'"<sup>13</sup>

—J. C. Ryle (1816-1900)