

Love Speaks Precisely

Joshua 23 and 24

Introduction

What factors make it difficult for us to speak precisely about the truth of God's Word? Which do you struggle with the most?

Today we will hear an aging believer speak God's Word precisely. May God the Holy Spirit encourage us with his Word to speak the same way!

Background

The children of Israel had been in the Promised Land for some time but were still in the process of conquering it.

Joshua's 60 plus years of service to the nation of Israel was coming to an end.

In these two chapters Joshua speaks to the leadership and then to all the people.

Chapter 23: Joshua speaks precisely to the leaders of God's people

Verses 1-5

1. Joshua had been in a leadership position in Israel since leaving Egypt. Recount some of the things he had witnessed over the years.



2. Of what facts does Joshua remind the leaders?
3. What promises of God does Joshua repeat?
4. Why is it so important that our church leaders speak precisely about what God has done for us and what he has promised to us?

Verses 6-13

1. Describe Joshua's approach to God's Word.
2. The Lord would continue to fight for his people as they held fast to his Word. "One of you routs a thousand because the Lord your God fights for you" (Joshua 23:10).
3. Even though Israel had these promises of God, they also had a sad history of associating with the nations and gods of Canaan.
4. What would happen if God's people allowed these godless influences in their land and in their life?
5. In many Christian churches there is a lack of precise speaking about God and his Word. What leads people and pastors to remain silent in areas where God's Word speaks clearly? What are the sad results?

Verses 14-16

1. Joshua was about to go the way of all people. He was about to die. What was the tone of his message to the people?
2. Based on the last few verses of this chapter do you think Joshua is threatening the people? Are we ever right to end a spiritual conversation with that message?
3. Joshua is one leader speaking to a group of leaders. List some of the qualities of his speaking that we want our leaders to imitate.

Chapter 24: Joshua addresses the nation of Israel

Verses 1-13

1. What is the theme of Joshua's message?
2. If Joshua were speaking to us, what would be some things he would include in his message?

Verses 14-18

1. Joshua speaks precisely about what it means to fear and serve the Lord. What did it mean for Israel? For us?
2. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."



3. What was the response of the people? What reasons did they give for their response?

Verses 19-27

1. Explain Joshua's response to the people. Does he doubt their sincerity?
2. How can we help God's people better understand the importance of precise speaking and acting when it comes to our service to our God?
3. How do you picture this back and forth between Joshua and the people? What were their attitudes towards each other?
4. Give some situations when we can speak more precisely and situations when we may have to be a little less direct.
5. The people were witnesses against themselves. How do fellow believers hold each other accountable?
6. What is your opinion of the value in having visible reminders like that stone or like that copy of God's law with these things recorded in it? Do we do anything similar?

Taking this truth home

1. Agree or disagree: We should speak to all of the members of our congregation in the same precise way.



2. Discuss special factors in the conversation that Joshua had with these people.
3. Talk about the benefits of a long-serving pastor speaking to the members of his congregation. When will a new pastor be better?

Summary

At the end of his life, Joshua gathers God's people and speaks precisely. This is great leadership from the Lord's servant and a wonderful example for us who have been entrusted with the Word of Truth. Speak precisely so many may hear the good news of God's love for us in Christ.