

Sermon Study

JOSHUA: Salvation Story – Achan (Confession)
Joshua 7:16-23

February 25, 2018

vision

Eastview
Christian
Church is a
fearless church
of Christ
followers whose
ridiculous love
and dangerous
witness are
irresistible.



AUTHOR'S NOTE (summary of key points for this study)

Being convicted by sin is one thing, but confessing it is another. We'll take a closer look at the pivotal interaction between Joshua and Achan, consider how each side handles it, and discuss how it applies to our lives. As Christians, while most of us understand that sin cannot go unpunished (hence, Jesus on the cross), the challenge for us in this study is that it shouldn't go unconfessed either.

Gather (your group getting to know each other)

Share a time (maybe as a kid) when you were caught doing something wrong.

Go
(your group on mission)

When Christians confess in the real world, it often means admitting you were wrong, or apologizing for offending someone else. Sadly, these are increasingly foreign behaviors to a secular world built on pride. So if you've sinned against someone, consider how your confession can be a witness. If you've wronged someone, apologize... especially if it was over something small. These acts of humility should set us apart and help others see the gospel in action.

Grow (your group growing as Christ-followers)

Key Scripture

"...tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." (Joshua 7:19, ESV)

Discussion

1. Have someone begin the discussion time by leading the group in prayer, then read Joshua 7:16-23.

2. Joshua holds a mandatory meeting, pulls millions of people together, early in the morning, after a stinging defeat, where 36 men died and everyone is angry, confused, scared, or grieving...and at some point, Achan realizes this public, nationwide search is going to land on him. How do you think Achan felt during the events of v.16-17? Have you ever been in a situation (maybe at work or with a spouse or family member) where there's a search underway to find the leaker, the gossip, the liar, the one who messed up, the person at fault...and you know it's you? How tempted would you be to run, hide, stay quiet and hope you're never discovered? Why?

3. Furthermore, what if it's not you personally, but you *know* who it is? Should you expose the culprit? If someone else knew it was Achan, should they have told Joshua? If you know who's been leaking sensitive information, should you tell the leadership? Is it your place to accelerate someone else's confession? How should a Christian handle that situation?

4. In v.18, Achan is finally identified through God's revelation via the casting of lots. But what's that look like for us? In other words, how do *you* know you've sinned? How is it revealed to you? How are you made aware of it most often?

5. Let's shift and look at this from Joshua's perspective. This is a big leadership moment for him in v.19. Remember, because of Achan's sin, men died and the nation's confidence melted. Many in the crowd may have been vengeful. The spotlight is on Achan for sure, but it's also on Joshua. How does he treat Achan now that he's been singled-out? Is it what you'd expect? Break apart v.19 and describe what you notice about how Joshua handles this (particularly these three ideas: 1) My son, 2) give glory and praise, and 3) tell me what you have done).

6. What guidance can this give us about how to deal with others if we catch them in sin? Bigger picture, what might this tell us about how God treats us when He catches us in our sin?

7. What are your thoughts on confession? What's your history with it? What images come to mind? As we move now into our primary discussion on confession, share your perspective with the group.

8. Verse 20 is Achan's big moment. What will he say? Will he deny it? Will he make excuses? Will he claim he "didn't know?" Will he try to justify it somehow? What about you? How are you inclined to react once you've become aware of your sin or been identified as the guilty culprit? Is your instinct confession, or something else? Why?

9. We see that Achan does, in fact, confess. And notice that he doesn't stop after his general confession of sin (v.20), but keeps going and specifically names exactly what he did and why (v.21). What was Achan's sin? How would you describe the way(s) in which he sinned here?

10. Describe why it's important to be specific in our confessions of sin. Is this difficult for you? Why?

11. Our passage ends with the messengers bringing the items from Achan's tent to Joshua, but also "to all the people of Israel" where they then laid these items "down before the Lord." Why do you think this might be significant?

12. Close by reading 1 John 1:8-10 aloud in group and discuss how this passage impacts your view of confession.

Give
(your group serving each other)

Serve your group this week by encouraging confession of sin, considering James 5:16 and Galatians 6:1-2.