



JOSHUA

NEW BEGINNINGS

NCCC

Judging or Holiness

Josh 22

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❖ *Friendly Fire Almost Occurred*

- Joshua commends and warns the people (1-5)
 - Joshua commends the 2 1/2 tribes.
 - He warns them to be very careful to obey the Word of Moses:
 - This sets the stage for what follows
 - Notice the emphasis is on truth and love. The objective standard and experience of love and truth in life is in the warning.
 - The warning is not a paper tiger but indicates it is possible to fall away.
- An apparent apostasy and matching concern (10-12)
 - Huge alter
 - Huge reaction—war (Lev 17:8; Deut 13:12).
- Israel's impression and warning(13-20)
 - "break faith"
 - "turn away from the Lord"
 - "an alter in rebellion"
 - Phinehas is leader again as he was in the story of Peor (Num. 25).
 - Sin is systemic & corporate & so is judgment
- Apology and reconciliation (21-29)
 - "he knows" v.22
 - "if rebellion, bring on judgment" v.22
 - Not for sacrifice v.23
 - Concern for faithfulness (contextualization)
 - Alter was named "witness" v.34
 - Israel satisfied with answer.

❖ *When Is Friendly Fire Most Likely To Happen*

- Happens when there is a **difference**
 - Differences today
- It happens when we loose sight of **big picture**
 - Best defense is an offense who has the bull most of the game.
- It happens through **some symbol**
 - Missionaries take time to learn symbols, so no friendly fire.
- It happens through **honest zeal** for God
- It happens when we **shoot and ask questions** later
- Yes there is a place for judgment (Mat 7:1-2; 15-16; 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:1-11).

❖ *Practical Suggestions Against Friendly Fire*

- Know your faith
 - Know your Bible and sound doctrine (majors & minors).
 - Know the differences between culture & faith—travel

- Study church history
- Know yourself
 - Are you a judgmental, shoot-first kind of person? Then slow down
 - Need to be right person? Why?
 - Tongue instrument of blessing and cursing?
 - To appear like the person in control or genuinely protect
 - Do I really believe everyone should be like me?
 - Humble yourself
- Come out of your castle; mix it up.
 - Be with sinners without judging
 - Be with Christians of different names, economic, ethnic backgrounds
 - Expose yourself to different styles
- Learn to confront in love
 - If not love, then that is not confrontation
 - Learn, don't attack
 - Assume you must be missing something
- Protect and guard the Scriptures including the unity of saints.
- Ultimately God is your defense.
- Don't get distracted: "keep the main thing the main thing."
- You will receive friendly fire, but so did your Lord. You must never give it.

❖ **Questions**

- Read Joshua 22 or assign someone to retell the story.
- Which group of Israelites displays the most zeal to remain holy to the Lord?
- What are the major doctrines of our faith that are not negotiable and must be protected?
- What are some minor doctrines which are very important but not worth splitting the Body of Christ over?
- Is unity a major or minor?
- How is it possible to be so concerned for truth, on the one hand, or love on the other hand, that we lose sight of one or the other?
- If someone does need to be confronted over behavior or doctrine how should it be done? Without any names, have you ever had to do this? How did it go?
- Have you ever been the victim of friendly fire? Without names how did it get resolved or did it?
- Pray Jesus' prayer in John 17 for unity in the church.