

Sermon Study Guide



#12: “And the Winner is...”

Series: *Courage in the Crucible*

May 9, 2021 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

In this study on the book of Joshua, we learn how we can stand courageous when trials, difficult situations, opposition, and inevitable changes surround us.

Reflect

What kind of conflict have you had with someone that you consider pretty serious? What was the reason?

Read and Discuss

Scripture

Joshua 22:1-34

Discussion Questions

Because of our sinfulness, misunderstandings and conflicts happen even between Christians. In Joshua 22, we see a conflict arise among the tribes of Israel after the land had been allocated. Here are four biblical principles we can apply when conflict or fighting happens between Christians?

1. ***Be careful not to lay the seeds of perceived injustice and jealousy (v. 1-9).*** Why did Joshua give the fighting men returning from the East the instruction to divide equally what they had brought back with the men who stayed behind? What usually happens if an employer doesn't treat his employees equally? What would be your best advice to parents who are not treating their children equally? How can you avoid laying seeds of perceived injustice and jealousy to your relationships at home and at work?
2. ***There are things in life worth fighting for if those things are God-commanded (v. 10-12).*** What was the reason why the 9½ tribes were going to war against the 2½ tribes, which were their own brethren? Although there were assumptions being made, why should the 9½ tribes be commended for what they were planning to do? In what areas of your life should you fight for God? Why do a lot of Christians shy

away from conflict when they need to advocate for Christian truth? What are the things in life that are worth fighting for?

3. ***Communication with the intention to reconcile is key to conflict resolution (v. 13-20).*** Why was Phinehas, a priest, and 10 tribal rulers sent to confront the fighting men of the Eastern tribes who had built the giant altar? How did Phinehas and the rest of the delegation show their willingness to resolve the perceived issue that they needed to deal with? (v. 19)? Discuss why assuming to know/understand what you only heard, without first finding out the facts, is dangerous? What principles can be found in Colossians 4:6 and Ephesians 4:15 when confronting someone with truth? Why is finding a resolution to a conflict an important element in reconciliation?
4. ***Everyone has justified and even spiritual reasons for their actions. Only God's evaluation matters (v. 21-29).*** How did the other 2½ tribes respond to the delegation who came over to confront them? Both sides had spiritual reasons for their defenses, but why would God be the perfect Judge of their reasons or even our intention? How do you allow God to take care of everything about you, including your heart?

Respond

In Walk: A major conflict was averted because biblical principles were applied. People who believe in the One True God came into conflict, but at the end God was glorified (v. 30-34). How would you determine if the conflicts you are involved in will glorify God and serve as a Christian testimony to the unbelieving people around you?

In Prayer: Heavenly Father, I must admit before you that conflicts, especially with my fellow Christians, is something that would be hard to deal with. But thank You for the reminder from Your Word of how I should deal with it. May You help me in my intentions because You are the only One Who can

see my heart. May You help me to communicate well and to aim for reconciliation when I deal with conflicts with others. Thank You that it is only what You think that should matter most and not my personal reasons, no matter how spiritual they may sound. May You give me wisdom in how I deal with others. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.