

# DO NOT BE DECEIVED: BE ON GUARD!

FEBRUARY 26, 2023

## WORSHIP

Today Is the Day, Still Standing, Battle Belongs, Not for A Moment, In Christ Alone

## WELCOME

Have you ever been duped or swindled? Was it by someone you initially perceived as a threat or an “enemy”, or someone you saw as “friendly” and non-threatening?

## WORD

### JOSHUA 9:16-21 (READ THE ENTIRE JOSHUA 9 & 10)

<sup>16</sup> It came about at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were neighbors and that they were living <sup>[g]</sup> within their land. <sup>17</sup> Then the sons of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon and Chephirah and Beeroth and Kiriath-jearim. <sup>18</sup> The sons of Israel did not strike them because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD the God of Israel. And the whole congregation grumbled against the leaders. <sup>19</sup> But all the leaders said to the whole congregation, “We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we cannot touch them. <sup>20</sup> This we will do to them, even let them live, so that wrath will not be upon us for the oath which we swore to them.” <sup>21</sup> The leaders said to them, “Let them live.” So they became hewers of wood and drawers of water for the whole congregation, just as the leaders had spoken to them.

Victorious living is something that we must maintain day by day. In the Bible, there were two occasions when Joshua committed mistakes. One was with Achan’s story, which shows us that sin is the kryptonite of believers. The second failure of Joshua comes in at **chapter 9** – it was not Joshua or the people’s sin. It was a deception done by another group of people. Deception is a strong enemy, so **DO NOT BE DECEIVED: BE ON GUARD!** In **1 Peter 5:8**, we are warned to “**be on the alert**” because our enemy “**prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour**” – when the lion is about to attack, it doesn’t make a noise. It usually attacks when the prey is not aware. There is a warfare going on today for our souls and our lives. Victory is promised by God, but there are conditions to those promises. We got to know our part and do our part. **Joshua 1** lays the foundation – we must study the Word, and be careful to obey, so that we will be successful and victorious.

What do we need to do to be on guard and avoid deceptions?

### 1. CHECK IT OUT

Joshua had success in the battles at Jericho and Ai. Gibeon was one of the next cities to be conquered, and **Joshua 9:3-5** described the strategy of the Gibeonites to escape conquest – they set up a deception that they were poor and weak. In **verse 7**, they had a suspicious about their claims. But the Gibeonites continued with the made-up tale and the Israelites fell to their deception (**vv. 13-14**). Worse, they did not ask for the counsel of the LORD and ended up making an oath to the Gibeonites!

Don’t be in a hurry to make vows. Make sure you check out things and the enemy is not deceiving you in any way, Peter warns believers to “**be on your guard**” (**2 Peter 3:17**) so that we will not be carried away by false things that cause us to fall. Paul told his disciples to “**be on guard for yourselves and for the flock**” (**Acts 20:28**) – it starts with us, and then we also guard others the same way (parents, pastors, and disciplers must guard themselves as they help others guard themselves). The “**warfare**” is not of the flesh, but the destruction of fortresses (**2 Corinthians 10:4-5**). What must we do? “**Take every thought captive**” – the crucial battle is what is going through our minds. How do you fight the enemy? Determine what the strongholds in your mind are. What mindsets do you need to abolish? Guard yourself from the lies of the enemy!

### WHO DO YOU BELIEVE ?

LIES OF THE SATAN	TRUTH OF GOD THROUGH SCRIPTURE
“EVERYONE IS DOING IT - OK “	BE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY (1 Peter 1:15-16)
“WHATEVER MAKES YOU HAPPY	DENY YOURSELF AND FOLLOW ME (Matthew 16:24-26)
“YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE”	THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH (Hebrews. 9:27)
“FOLLOW YOUR HEART”	THE HEART IS DECEITFUL (Jeremiah 17:19)

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### WORD

“PREMARITAL SEX AND LIVING IN IS OK”

IMMORALITY IS WRONG  
(1 Corinthians 6)

### 2. CONSULT GOD

George Muller said that when we pray, we must get our heart at such a state that it has no will of its own – he said we must be ready to do whatever the Lord’s will is! We must pray to God objectively, check if our request will bring honor to God’s Name.

Your theology is so important especially when you face problems: God is sovereign (**Psalm 135:6-7**), holy (**1 Peter 1:16, Isaiah 57:15**), good (**Psalm 34:8**), omniscient (**Psalm 139:4**), love (**1 John 4:8**). When God does something, He will not violate any of His characteristics. Even with God’s intent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, (**Genesis 18:20-32**) Abraham negotiated with Him and appealed to His righteousness, grace, and justice. Abraham knew God well, and his appeal for God to hold back His wrath showed that God was willing to be merciful if there were righteous people in the land. God is compassionate enough to accept Abraham’s terms, and God saved four people (Lot’s family). **Genesis 15:13,15** were declarations of God towards the Canaanites. Israel’s 400 years of captivity was until the sinfulness of the Amorites was “completed”. Indeed, **“God’s grace is not infinite. God is infinite, and God is gracious.** We experience the grace of an infinite God, but grace is not infinite. **God sets limits to His patience and forbearance”** (RC Sproul). We cannot keep on sinning and expect to get away with it! Steve Charnock said, **“Without holiness God’s patience would be an indulgence to sin, His mercy a fondness, His wrath a madness, His power a tyranny, His wisdom an unworthy subtlety. Holiness gives decorum to them all”.** **Deuteronomy 9:4-5** also clearly points out that destroying and dispossessing the Canaanite lands was punishment for their wickedness. **Leviticus 18:20-24** are some of the sins Canaanites were accustomed to doing. **Deuteronomy 18:9-11** is a specific instruction for God’s people not to follow these sins in the land God was giving them. In **Ezekiel 33:11** and **Psalms 116:15**, some verses about death may seem contradictory but it clearly shows God’s heart to not allow people to fall into the trap of the enemy.

### 3. COMMIT TO GOD’S WAYS

**The Gibeonites** despite the deception they made, eventually got folded into the Israelites (**1 Chronicles 9:2, Nehemiah 3:7**). In God’s mercy and grace, they became servants of the Lord and continued to serve even after many years have passed! **Psalms 15:1, 4** tells us how faithful our God is about making vows. **Ecclesiastes 5:4-5** also emphasizes the importance of fulfilling a vow made to God, like what Joshua and the Israelites did. We learn from this story that you do not make a mistake to correct another mistake. Instead, you commit your mistakes to the Lord – follow His ways and commit to continue in the ways of God! Under God’s favor, Joshua was able to conquer the lands faster-- God brought five kings together (**Joshua 10:8-14**) and defeated all their armies by throwing them into confusion and with large hailstones! **Romans 8:28** is a wonderful assurance that God can work all things together for good, including bad moments. If we respond in faith and proper theology, think and act biblically, and commit the outcome to God – we will be victorious!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

#### 1. Self-Check.

Have you ever been deceived? How did it make you feel?

#### 2. Setting It Right.

What steps should you be doing to make sure you are on the alert against the deceptions and lies of the enemy?

#### 3. Living It Out.

As you conform to God’s ways, what do you think He is commanding you to do? Will you commit to act this week?

### WORKS

#### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray that the Lord will reveal the deception of the Enemy to people in your life and around you who do not know Jesus yet as Savior and Lord. Let them know how God can cause all things to work together for the good of His people. Share how they too can avoid being deceived and have victory in and through Jesus Christ alone.

### WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

#### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

#### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God’s help and comfort for Turkish and Syrian people devastated by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; escalating tension in East Asian countries to stop.

#### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

#### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

#### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

### MEMORY VERSE

#### 1 PETER 5:8

<sup>8</sup> Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.