

# Press On

Joshua 22:1-9

## This Week's Focus

Have you ever attended a camp, mission trip, or a conference that had a significant spiritual impact on your life? What happened when you got back to “real life?”

This is more or less the story we find in Joshua 22, only on a much larger scale. The people of Israel had essentially accomplished the mission God had given them of taking the promised land. As life returned to “normal” for the various tribes of Israel in the promised land, Joshua challenged them to persevere—to continue loving and serving God with all their hearts and minds. How we live in the days and weeks that follow significant events says a great deal about us.



## Joshua 22:1-9

**1** Joshua summoned the Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh **2** and told them, "You have done everything Moses the LORD's servant commanded you and have obeyed me in everything I commanded you. **3** You have not deserted your brothers even once this whole time but have carried out the requirement of the command of the LORD your God. **4** Now that He has given your brothers rest, just as He promised them, return to your homes in your own land that Moses the LORD's servant gave you across the Jordan. **5** Only carefully obey the command and instruction that Moses the LORD's servant gave you: to love the LORD your God, walk in all His ways, keep His commands, remain faithful to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and all your soul." **6** Joshua blessed them and sent them on their way, and they went to their homes. **7** Moses had given territory to half the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, but Joshua had given territory to the other half, with their brothers, on the west side of the Jordan. When Joshua sent them to their homes and blessed them, **8** he said, "Return to your homes with great wealth: a huge number of cattle, and silver, gold, bronze, iron, and a large quantity of clothing. Share the spoil of your enemies with your brothers." **9** The Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh left the Israelites at Shiloh in the land of Canaan to return to their own land of Gilead, which they took possession of according to the LORD's command through Moses.

Begin by reading the passage through two times.

What is the most difficult challenge you have ever faced? How did you handle this challenge? What was the result?

How did you feel when the challenge was over and you went back to everyday life?



## Challenge and Praise

Joshua blessed the warriors of the Eastern Tribes and sent them home with their plunder from war (vv. 6-9). He cheered their service and then challenged them to continued service. As followers of Christ we need encouragement and praise, but we also need to be challenged.

### Joshua 22:1-3

How does Joshua describe the people of these tribes (vv. 2-3)? How were they able to obey?

Joshua commends them not only for obedience to God, but also for obeying him. What can we learn from their example in terms of submitting to the authorities in our lives?

### Joshua 22:4-6

What did God give to these tribes on account of their faithfulness to His covenant? What is significant about this promise (see Gen. 12:1-3)?

God not only provided these tribes with the land they had requested, but also with rest (v. 4). What is significant about this promise (see Ex. 20:8-11)?



How does the rest God provided relate to the rest Christ promises (Heb. 4:9-11)?

What three commands did Joshua give the Israelites in verse 5? Why did God's people need to be reminded of these commands?

## Joshua 22:7-9

Who did Joshua single out in these verses? What did he command them to do?

How do you see God's provision for His people on display here? How might knowing that God will provide for us help us to obey Him?



## Central Truth

Following Christ requires us to press on in life, loving and serving Him with all that we are, regardless of the circumstances.

## Now What?

Is it easier or more difficult for you to seek and obey God when life is "normal"? Why?

Look again at Joshua 22:5. Do these commands sound too challenging? Where can you find the strength you need to obey?

In what areas of your life is it most difficult for you to obey God? What is one measure you will take this week to obey God in that area?

How has God faithfully provided for you and your family? How might a greater awareness of this lead to faithfulness as you live on mission for Him?



## [ Personal Challenge ]

**Dwell:** Sometimes we neglect opportunities to live on mission for Christ because we wrongly assume we are ill-equipped for mission. We think that someone else is surely more equipped to share Christ with a lost friend or show mercy to someone in need. In such instances, we need to recount the many ways God has blessed and provided for us. Journal a list of God's provision in your life, of the ways God has provided for you both physically and spiritually. Then pray, asking God to help you rest in His provision and trust in His strength as you seek to live for His kingdom and glory.

**Memorize:** Joshua 22:5

**Pray:** Thank God for His faithfulness in your life and in the life of your family. Pray that He would help you to live with a deeper and more present awareness of His faithfulness and provision. Ask Him to help you press on in love and obedience to Him no matter what circumstances you find yourself in. Pray that the focus and purpose of your life would be centered on loving Him supremely and living on mission for Him.

## Keep on Digging

Read Deuteronomy 28:1-14 and journal a list of the blessings God promises to those who obey Him. While not all of these blessings will be experienced in this life, God promises tremendous blessings to those who commit their lives to faithfully obeying Him. The emphasis of Deuteronomy 28 is not on us earning blessings through obedience. None of the blessings we receive from God are deserved. Instead, these blessings highlight God's goodness toward His children, and the reality that He will not overlook any act of obedience that is done in faith.