

Holding On to What God Has Given Joshua 22

So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there. ⁴⁴The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD handed all their enemies over to them. ⁴⁵Not one of all the LORD's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.

Joshua 21:43-45 (New International Version)

The writer of Joshua is telling believers how to resist the downward pull and hold on to the territory their faithful God has given them.

- **Response #1: BELIEVERS MUST CONTINUE TO LOVE GOD.**

Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh ²and said to them, "You have done all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and you have obeyed me in everything I commanded. ³For a long time now—to this very day—you have not deserted your brothers but have carried out the mission the LORD your God gave you. ⁴Now that the LORD your God has given your brothers rest as he promised, return to your homes in the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. ⁵But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul." Joshua 22:1-5 (NIV)

*Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment."
Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)*

"If you love me, you will obey what I command." John 14:15 (NIV)

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 2 Corinthians 5:9 (New American Standard Bible)

Love for God = the desire to please God, the desire to obey Him

- "Walk in his ways" = Reflect His character.
- "Obey his commands" = Know His Word and obey what you know.
- "Hold fast to him" = Never allow circumstances to separate you from God.
- "Serve him" = Meet the needs of others.

- **Response #2: BELIEVERS MUST GUARD AGAINST SINFUL INFLUENCES.**

And when the Israelites heard that they had built the altar on the border of Canaan at Geliloth near the Jordan on the Israelite side, ¹²the whole assembly of Israel gathered at Shiloh to go to war against them. Joshua 22: 11-12 (NIV)

"The whole assembly of the LORD says: 'How could you break faith with the God of Israel like this? How could you turn away from the LORD and build yourselves an altar in rebellion against him now? ¹⁷Was not the sin of Peor enough for us? Up to this very day we have not cleansed ourselves from that sin, even though a plague fell on the community of the LORD! ¹⁸And are you now turning away from the LORD? " 'If you rebel against the LORD today, tomorrow he will be angry with the whole community of Israel. ¹⁹If the land you possess is defiled, come over to the LORD's land, where the LORD's tabernacle stands, and share the land with us. But do not rebel against the LORD or against us by building an altar for yourselves, other than the altar of the LORD our God. ²⁰When Achan son of Zerah acted unfaithfully regarding the devoted things, did not wrath come upon the whole community of Israel? He was not the only one who died for his sin.'" Joshua 22:16-20 (NIV)

Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings anywhere you please. ¹⁴Offer them only at the place the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, and there observe everything I command you. Deuteronomy 12:13-14 (NIV)

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Galatians 6:1 (NIV)