



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Joshua 7-8:35

KEY POINT: All Christians have an obligation to deal openly and honestly with their sin.

FOR LEADERS

- **Attendance!** *Please remember to take attendance for you group this week! Please be sure to make a note of who attended your group this week, and input that on your weekly event in EConnect, and if you need any assistance with this we're happy to help!*

GETTING STARTED

- [1] Communities Video:** Watch this week’s community extras video.
- [2] Icebreaker:** Name one area where you can clearly see God working in your life!
- [3] Opener:** What were some of your big takeaways from the sermon this week?

THE DEVASTATION OF SIN

Ask for someone to read Joshua 7:1-9.

- [1]** What consequences did Israel experience because of Achan’s decision to ignore the clear command of God?
- [2]** If Jesus’ death and resurrection has removed God’s judgment for sin of those who trust him, what responsibility do Christians still have for dealing with sin in their lives? In what sense can we say that we must honestly deal with our sin, if Christ has already dealt with it?
- [3]** How have you experienced the pain and devastation of unconfessed sin?

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SIN

Ask for someone to read Joshua 7:10-21.

- In the sermon, Ryan drew our attention to the personal language Achan uses to confess his own sin: “I have sinned . . . this is what I did . . . I saw them . . . I coveted them . . . I took them” (vv. 20-21).
- [4]** Once his treachery was discovered, what are some excuses Achan might have used to justify his sin?
 - [5]** Why are we so quick to blame others for our own failures and shortcomings?

Ask for someone to read James 1:12-15.

- [6]** Where in your life are you tempted to blame others (and even God) for your own sin?
- [7]** What does it look like for you to take ownership and responsibility for these struggles and failings?

THE INSANITY OF SIN

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Ask for someone to read Joshua 7:22–26.

Page 33 of the study guide for this week’s passage highlights the ways in which Achan’s sin was irrational (“In order to make sense . . .”). Moreover, his actions resulted in the death of thirty-six Israelite soldiers. Even after Israel had been defeated in battle, both Achan and his family refused to reveal what he had done. It was only after God exposed him that he came clean and acknowledged his guilt. These observations provide insight as to the severity of what Achan did and why it is judged with such seriousness.

[8] Is sin always irrational? Why or why not?

[9] How does a recognition of sin’s irrationality help us in our own struggles?

[10] Ryan helpfully pointed out that lack of confession does not make us a spiritual giants. Rather, we become strong when we walk with people in openness and transparency. Who in your life are you able to be honest with about your struggles with sin?

[11] What characterizes a healthy environment for the open and honest confession of sin?

[12] One big reason why people feel unable to bring their struggles into the light is that it is sometimes hard to find someone who can be trusted with such sensitive and personally hurtful information. Just as we have an obligation to confess sin, so those who are spiritually mature have an obligation to hear confession in a way that is gracious and Christ-centered. In what ways can we be better at hearing one another’s confession? In what ways do you make it easier or more difficult for people to confess to you?

[13] In the sermon, we also learned that God displays his mercy in allowing our sin to be exposed before loving and spiritually mature friends. When have you personally experienced this?

[14] How does a person’s own self-righteousness make it difficult for others to repent?

THE IRONY OF SIN

Have someone read Joshua 8:1–2.

[15] How does what God says here add to the tragedy of Achan’s fateful decision?

[16] When has your sin caused you to miss out on God’s blessing?

PRAYER

[1] Pray that the Lord would give you good people in your life with whom you can be honest about your struggles.

[2] Pray that the Lord would help you to be better at hearing other people’s confessions.

[3] Pray for God to reveal to you how your sin hurts you and those around you.