

Caught Up in the Victory

A Lesson For Leaders from Joshua

Joshua 9

This story falls right after many wins for the Israelites. They'd been blessed by God and had been able to overtake their enemies on every side. Unfortunately, countless victory got the best of them.

Joshua was a fine leader. He was devoted to God and lead the people of Israel in a way that kept them following their Creator. But when the Gibeonites came by impersonating foriegners from a country far away, he made a fatal mistake. Despite his doubt and ignoring the nagging suspicion that we can hear so obviously in his voice, he looked at the bread and the wine, the clothes and the shoes and neglected the most important step of his investigation. Joshua and the leaders of Israel forgot to consult their commander in chief. Their egos got the best of them. They'd won enough battles that they got a little cocky and decided to start making decisions on their own.

That was their first mistake. And then they made the treaty with the Gibeonites. Little did they know how quickly that would come back to bite them in such a short time. Some mistakes take years for the repercussions to become evident, but for Joshua and the nation of Israel it only took three days for the folly of their ways to catch up with them.

As leaders in the Kingdom of God, we have to be very careful we don't let our egos outwit our wisdom. We often come to our meetings from busy days and stress filled lives. Too many times we are in a hurry to get in and out, and it's just too easy to rely on our own wisdom as we make decisions that will effect the body of Christ. We look at the finance reports and listen to common sense reports and base our decisions on what our eyes can see and ears can hear instead of inviting and waiting for the Holy Spirit to speak.

As a result we find ourselves too often running ahead of God, doing things that seem wonderful but aren't in His master plan. How might our decisions change if we come to every meeting having prayed for at least 15 minutes? What would our decisions look like if we spent time in prayer, not before every vote, but before each discussion? How might our personal lives change if we were in the scripture first thing in the morning every single day?

If the leaders in Joshua's day had consulted their one true King, Gibeon's ruse would have probably been uncovered. Israel could have seen one more win. As leaders we have a responsibility to learn from Joshua and Israel's mistakes and continually look to God to reveal His will to us.

Early in his leadership Joshua told the people "Choose this day who you will serve." He was worried about the gods of the other nations getting in the way of Israel following God. It never occurred to him that ego would be just as lethal. Let's not let the blessings God gives us keep us from the wisdom he wants to bestow!