

# Choose This Day Among Three Chairs: A Comprehensive Bible Sermon of Joshua 24:14-16

## Background of Joshua 24: A Nation at the Crossroads

There are moments in history when an entire nation stands at a crossroads, when the choices made in a single day ripple through generations, when leaders must call their people to decide what they truly believe and whom they will truly serve. Joshua 24:14-16 records one such moment—perhaps the most significant covenant renewal ceremony in Israel's history, occurring at the end of Joshua's life and leadership.

The book of Joshua has chronicled Israel's conquest and settlement of the Promised Land. Under Joshua's leadership, they've crossed the Jordan River, conquered Jericho, defeated coalition armies, and divided the land among the twelve tribes. God has fulfilled His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The people who were slaves in Egypt now possess their own land. The generation that wandered in the wilderness has been replaced by one that has seen God's faithfulness in conquest and settlement.

But military victory and territorial possession don't guarantee spiritual faithfulness. Joshua, now an old man facing death, gathers all Israel at Shechem for a final challenge. This is not merely a farewell address but a covenant renewal ceremony, a moment when Israel must choose definitively whom they will serve. The location itself is significant—Shechem, where Abraham first built an altar to the Lord in Canaan (Genesis 12:6-7), where Jacob buried foreign gods under an oak tree (Genesis 35:2-4<sup>1</sup>), and where Joshua had previously led a covenant ceremony (Joshua 8:30-35<sup>2</sup>).

**Joshua 24:14-16 captures the heart of this moment: Joshua's challenge to the people and their response.** These verses present us with the fundamental human question that every person, every generation, every nation must answer: **Whom will you serve?** The response given here echoes through Scripture and confronts every believer today with the same choice—decisive, public, and costly allegiance to the Lord.

## The Text: Joshua 24:14-16

Let us first examine the text itself in two translations:

**New International Version (NIV):** *"Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." Then the people answered, "Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods!"*

**English Standard Version (ESV):** *"Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods..."*

## Historical and Covenantal Context

To understand Joshua's challenge, we must grasp Israel's theological crisis.

### **The Generational Transition**

Joshua, approximately 110 years old, had led Israel for twenty-five years since Moses' death. As Moses's former assistant and one of two faithful spies, he commanded Israel's conquest. Now facing death, Joshua recognized the rising generation hadn't witnessed the mighty acts that formed their parents' faith.

The Israelites at Shechem had seen God's power in Canaan's conquest but hadn't experienced Egypt's slavery or the Red Sea crossing. They knew stories of wilderness manna without tasting it themselves. Their inherited faith remained untested by personal crisis.

Joshua understood each generation must choose for itself. **Faith cannot be passed down automatically like inheritance.** Each generation must personally encounter God and commit to the covenant. Parental faith, however strong, cannot substitute for personal commitment.

### **The Syncretistic Temptation**

Joshua's words reveal a shocking reality: even among those witnessing God's faithfulness, idolatry remained. ***"Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt"*** (verse 14). Some possessed household idols from Mesopotamia or Egypt.

Settled in Canaan, Israel faced new temptations from the surrounding peoples who worshiped Baal and Asherah. The temptation was hedging bets—worship Yahweh while honoring local deities for harvests and acceptance. This syncretism would plague Israel throughout the judges and monarchy, representing humanity's desire for God's blessings without His exclusive claims.

### **Verse 14: The Call to Undivided Loyalty**

***"Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord."***

Joshua's challenge begins with ***"now therefore"***—connecting Israel's complete salvation history (verses 2-13) to their required response. God's faithfulness demands our faithfulness. His grace calls for gratitude expressed in obedient service.

***"Fear the Lord"*** encompasses reverential awe and holy respect. This isn't terror driving us from God but reverence drawing us near while recognizing His holiness and authority. To fear the Lord means taking Him seriously, treating His word as authoritative, and living with accountability awareness.

***"Serve him with all faithfulness"*** translates Hebrew words meaning wholeness, integrity, and truth. Joshua demands wholehearted service—not external conformity but internal devotion. You cannot serve the Lord faithfully while serving other gods. Divided loyalty is no loyalty.

***"Throw away the gods"*** requires decisive, immediate rejection—not gradual reduction but complete removal. References to Mesopotamian and Egyptian gods reveal that some Israelites still cherished family idolatry. You cannot serve the Lord while retaining idols, even hidden ones.

For modern believers, our idols aren't carved images but anything receiving devotion, belonging to God alone—wealth, success, relationships, reputation, comfort. Joshua's command remains: throw them away and serve the Lord.

## Verse 15: The Challenge to Choose

***“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”***

### **“If Serving the Lord Seems Undesirable”**

Joshua presents a hypothetical: what if serving the Lord doesn't appeal to you? What if His demands seem too restrictive, His standards too high, His exclusivity too narrow? The Hebrew phrase translated ***“seems undesirable”*** or ***“is evil in your eyes”*** suggests something morally offensive or disagreeable.

This is rhetorical—Joshua is not genuinely suggesting that serving the Lord is undesirable. Rather, he's forcing the people to confront the implications of their divided hearts. If they're unwilling to put away their idols, they're essentially saying that exclusive service to Yahweh is unacceptable to them. Joshua makes them face this reality squarely.

This rhetorical technique challenges people to examine their true motivations. **Are they (or WE) truly committed to the Lord, or are they just going through religious motions while their hearts are elsewhere?** Do they genuinely love God, or do they find His demands burdensome?

### **“Choose for Yourselves This Day”**

Here is the famous call to decision: ***“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.”*** This is one of Scripture's great choice texts, emphasizing human responsibility and the necessity of conscious, deliberate commitment.

Several elements deserve attention:

**“Choose for yourselves”** – This is personal responsibility. No one can choose for you. Your parents' faith cannot substitute for yours. Your spouse's commitment cannot cover your lack of commitment. Your pastor's dedication cannot compensate for your indifference. Each person must individually choose.

**“This day”** – The choice is urgent and immediate. Not tomorrow, not when it's convenient, not after you've weighed all options indefinitely. Today—now—choose. Delay is itself a choice, typically a choice for the status quo, for compromise, for divided loyalty.

The call to choose ***“this day”*** also implies that the choice must be renewed continually. Today you choose; tomorrow you must choose again. Covenant faithfulness is not a one-time decision but a daily commitment, a continual choosing of God's ways over competing alternatives.

**“Whom you will serve”** – Notice Joshua frames this as a choice between masters, not between serving and not serving. Everyone serves someone or something. The question is not whether you'll serve but whom you'll serve. Autonomy is an illusion; we're all slaves to whatever controls our hearts. The only real choice is between good masters and bad, between the Lord who liberates and idols that enslave.

## “But as for Me and My Household”

Having laid out the options, Joshua declares his choice: “But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” This is one of Scripture’s most quoted statements, often displayed in Christian homes—and rightly so. But we must understand what Joshua is actually declaring.

**Personal commitment** – “*As for me*” emphasizes Joshua’s individual decision. Regardless of what the nation chooses, regardless of cultural trends, regardless of popular opinion, Joshua has made his choice. He will serve the Lord.

This is leadership by example. Joshua doesn’t merely command others to serve the Lord while remaining uncommitted himself. He leads by declaring his own allegiance first. He’s willing to stand alone if necessary. His commitment doesn’t depend on others’ choices.

**Household leadership** – “*And my household*” indicates Joshua’s responsibility for and authority over his family. As the household head, he commits not only himself but his entire household to serving the Lord.

This doesn’t mean Joshua can believe for his children or that his faith automatically transfers to them. Each person must personally choose. But it does mean Joshua will lead his household in the right direction, will establish patterns of worship and obedience in his home, will teach God’s word to his family, and will not allow idolatry under his roof.

The household in ancient Israel included not just immediate family but extended family and servants—everyone under the household head’s authority and care. Joshua commits to creating a context where everyone in his sphere of influence will be directed toward serving the Lord.

**Present and future tense** – “*We will serve*” is both a present commitment and a future intention. It’s not “*we have served*” (past faithfulness) or “*we would serve*” (hypothetical), but “*we will serve*”—ongoing, continuing, persistent service regardless of circumstances or consequences.

This commitment implies perseverance. Serving the Lord is not a short-term experiment but a lifelong devotion. It’s not dependent on feelings or circumstances but is a settled decision that will govern all future choices.

## Verse 14: The People’s Emphatic Response

***“Then the people answered, ‘Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods!’”***

The people’s response is immediate and emphatic. “*Far be it from us*” translates the Hebrew *chalilah*, a strong expression of horror—literally, “*profane be it to us!*” This isn’t casual agreement but emphatic rejection of forsaking the Lord.

They declare that abandoning Yahweh for other gods is unthinkable, utterly contrary to their covenant identity. The word “*forsake*” (*azab*) means to abandon a covenant relationship, to break faith with someone deserving loyalty. This emphasizes the relationship—God is not merely a theological concept but a covenant partner who acted in history on Israel’s behalf. Serving other gods means betraying this faithful relationship.

Yet Joshua’s skeptical response proves prophetic. The book of Judges chronicles Israel’s repeated apostasy—forsaking the Lord for Baals and Ashtoreths, exactly what they vowed never to do at Shechem.

This warns us: passionate declarations in emotional moments don’t guarantee consistent faithfulness in daily life when cultural pressure mounts and idols beckon with promises of

pleasure or security. Jesus warned about those who say “**Lord, Lord**” but don’t obey (Luke 6:46<sup>3</sup>). Verbal commitment must match lived faithfulness.

# Pastor Dave: The Three Generational Chairs:

## A Review of Spiritual Trajectory

1. *The Joshua Chair of Commitment*
2. *The Solomon Chair of Compromise*
3. *The Rehoboam Chair of Rebellion*

### Introduction: The Pattern That Repeats

Scripture reveals a troubling pattern: spiritual vitality rarely survives three generations intact. What begins as passionate devotion in one generation softens into comfortable familiarity in the next, then collapses into outright apostasy in the third. This isn’t abstract theory—it’s a recurring tragedy throughout redemptive history.

Consider Israel after Joshua. The generation that conquered Canaan served the Lord faithfully. Their children, who grew up hearing conquest stories, maintained nominal allegiance. But their grandchildren, who knew neither the Lord nor His mighty works, abandoned Yahweh entirely for Canaanite idols (Judges 2:10-12).

This generational trajectory confronts every believing parent and church leader today. Where does your household stand in this cycle? More critically, what spiritual inheritance are you passing down? Are your children observing genuine faith lived authentically, or merely religious routine performed comfortably?

The pattern warns us: each generation must personally encounter God, not simply inherit religious tradition. Secondhand faith withers. Cultural Christianity crumbles. Only deliberate discipleship—where parents model authentic worship, teach Scripture faithfully, and demonstrate costly obedience—interrupts this devastating three-generation slide toward spiritual emptiness.

### The Joshua Chair of Commitment: The First Generation

The first chair is occupied by those who, like Joshua, have personally encountered God’s power and faithfulness. This is the generation that has witnessed miracles, experienced deliverance, and seen God work in undeniable ways. Joshua had been Moses’ assistant, one of only two faithful spies, and the leader who watched walls fall at Jericho, and the sun stand still at Gibeon. His faith wasn’t theoretical—it was forged in the fires of real experience.

**Those sitting in the Joshua Chair know what they believe and why.** Their faith has been tested and proven. They’ve counted the cost and chosen to pay it. When Joshua declared, “**As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord,**” it wasn’t empty rhetoric—it was the settled conviction of someone who had walked with God through decades of challenges and triumphs.

Several qualities characterize this first-generation faith. There’s **clarity of conviction**—Joshua knew exactly who God was and what He required. There’s **personal experience**—



his faith was based on what he himself had witnessed and encountered, not merely on what others told him. There's a **willingness to sacrifice**—he had given his entire adult life to God's purposes, leading Israel through warfare and settlement. And there's **leadership responsibility**—he felt the weight of not just his own faithfulness but of directing an entire nation toward covenant obedience.

The Joshua generation typically emerges from crisis or awakening. They're the immigrants who fled persecution and found religious freedom. They're the converts who encountered Christ in dramatic conversion experiences. They're the revival generation that witnessed the Holy Spirit move powerfully in their churches and communities. They're the church planters and missionaries who left comfort to pursue God's calling. Their faith is fresh, passionate, tested, and resilient.

But here's the critical question Pastor Dave's framework forces us to ask: **What happens to the next generation?** Can the Joshua Chair's commitment be passed down, or does something inevitably change when children inherit faith rather than discover it for themselves?

## **The Solomon Chair of Compromise: The Second Generation**

The second chair is occupied by those who, like Solomon, inherited both blessing and responsibility but gradually drifted into compromise. Solomon was David's son, heir to a united kingdom at its zenith of power and prosperity. He began well—asking God for wisdom rather than wealth, building the magnificent temple, and leading Israel to unprecedented glory. The Queen of Sheba traveled from distant lands to witness his wisdom and wealth. God appeared to him twice, affirming His covenant.

Yet Solomon's story is tragedy wrapped in gold. Despite his wisdom, despite his knowledge of God's law, and despite personally experiencing God's presence, Solomon gradually compromised. He married foreign wives who turned his heart toward their gods. He built high places for pagan worship. The man who built God's temple also built shrines to Molech and Chemosh. First Kings 11:4 delivers the devastating verdict: ***"As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been."***

Those sitting in the Solomon Chair represent the second generation—children of the committed, heirs of the faithful. They know the right answers. They've been raised in church, attended Bible studies, and memorized Scripture. They've inherited theological frameworks and religious practices. They often hold positions of influence and enjoy the fruit of their parents' faithfulness.

**But something subtle has shifted. The faith they possess is more inherited than discovered, more intellectual than experiential, more theoretical than tested.** They know **about** God more than they **know** God. They maintain religious forms while their hearts slowly drift. They accommodate cultural pressures that their parents resisted. They make **"reasonable"** compromises that seem minor but accumulate over time.

The Solomon Chair is characterized by **gradual drift** rather than dramatic rebellion. It's not wholesale abandonment of faith but incremental compromise. It's adding rather than replacing—keeping God but also pursuing wealth, success, pleasure, and cultural

acceptance. It's wisdom without devotion, knowledge without obedience, orthodoxy without orthopraxy.<sup>4</sup>

The compromises often seem sophisticated or progressive to those making them. ***"We're not as narrow as our parents." "We're more culturally engaged." "We're showing grace, not judgment." "Times have changed; we need to adapt."*** These rationalizations smooth the path from commitment to compromise, from exclusive devotion to comfortable syncretism.

What makes the Solomon Chair particularly dangerous is that those sitting in it often don't recognize they've left the Joshua Chair. They still attend church, still claim faith, still maintain religious identity. But their hearts—like Solomon's—are no longer **fully** devoted to the Lord. They've made room for other loves, other priorities, other gods. The drift is real even when unacknowledged.

## The Rehoboam Chair of Rebellion: The Third Generation

The third chair is occupied by those who, like Rehoboam, openly rebel against what their grandparents established. Rehoboam was Solomon's son, the third generation, and his story represents the tragic culmination of spiritual decline. When he ascended to the throne, he faced a critical choice: follow his grandfather David's faithful path or continue his father Solomon's compromising trajectory.

He chose worse than either. Rejecting wise counsel, Rehoboam imposed harsh burdens that split the kingdom. Under his reign, Judah abandoned the Lord and engaged in practices even more detestable than the pagan nations (1 Kings 14:22-24<sup>5</sup>). They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill. Male shrine prostitutes operated throughout the land. The temple Solomon built for God's glory was ransacked by Egypt within five years of Rehoboam's reign.

Those sitting in the Rehoboam Chair represent the third generation—grandchildren of the committed, children of the compromisers. They've inherited religious forms but not religious faith. They know the vocabulary but reject the values. They've watched their parents' comfortable compromise and concluded that if faith can be negotiated, it can be abandoned. They're often angry at what they perceive as hypocrisy—their grandparents talked about radical faith while their parents lived practical accommodation.

The Rehoboam generation is characterized by **open rebellion** rather than gradual drift. Where Solomon compromised privately while maintaining public orthodoxy, Rehoboam rebelled publicly. Where the second generation drifted slowly, the third generation walks away decisively. They're the church dropouts, the deconstructed, the **"spiritual but not religious,"** the vocal critics of the faith they were raised in.

Ironically, they're often more honest than the compromising generation that raised them. They recognize that you can't serve both God and idols, that faith demands exclusive commitment, that Christianity is either true and worthy of complete devotion or false and worthy of rejection. They've watched their parents try to have it both ways and concluded it doesn't work. So rather than continuing the charade of comfortable Christianity, they abandon it entirely.

The third-generation rebellion takes various forms in contemporary culture. Some reject Christianity intellectually, citing unanswered questions or perceived contradictions that their compromising parents couldn't address. Some reject it morally, finding biblical standards oppressive compared to cultural alternatives. Some reject it experientially, having seen

religious forms without genuine spiritual power. Some reject it relationally, wounded by church hurt or parental hypocrisy.

## The Tragic Pattern and Its Modern Manifestations

What makes Pastor Dave's framework so powerful is that it's not just ancient history—it's the repeated pattern we see throughout Scripture and throughout church history. Consider:

### Biblical Examples:

- **Abraham** (faith) → Isaac (passive faith) → Jacob (initially rebellious)
- **David** (passionate worship) → Solomon (compromise) → Rehoboam (rebellion)
- **Hezekiah** (revival and reform) → Manasseh (worst king in Judah's history)
- **The judges period**: repeatedly, a generation that knew God → a generation that didn't know God's mighty acts → a generation that did evil in God's sight

### Church History Examples:

- First-generation believers who risked everything → second-generation cultural Christians → third-generation apostates
- Revival movements that burned hot → institutional churches that maintained forms → dead orthodoxy
- Missionary generation that sacrificed greatly → children who enjoyed the fruit → grandchildren who rejected the mission

### Contemporary Examples:

- The Greatest Generation that survived Depression and war, built churches, maintained strong faith → Baby Boomers who inherited prosperity, maintained church attendance but compromised with culture → Millennials and Gen Z who are leaving church in record numbers
- Immigrant families with passionate faith → assimilated second generation → fully secularized third generation
- Church planting movements with radical commitment → established churches with comfortable programs → declining churches struggling to survive

The pattern is remarkably consistent: fiery first generation, faltering second generation, faithless third generation.

**Joshua → Solomon → Rehoboam. Commitment → Compromise → Rebellion.**

## Breaking the Cycle: Lessons and Applications

Understanding this three-chair pattern raises urgent questions: Is this cycle inevitable? Can it be broken? What must each generation do to pass on genuine faith rather than mere religious forms?

### For Those in the Joshua Chair (The Committed Generation)

If you're in the Joshua Chair—if your faith has been tested, proven, and deeply experienced—your responsibility is immense. You must do more than simply maintain your own faithfulness; you must pass on the **reality** of faith, not just its forms.

**Model authentic faith, not religious performance.** Your children and grandchildren need to see you actually walking with God, not just going through religious motions. They need to



witness prayer that expects answers, faith that takes risks, obedience that costs something, and joy that transcends circumstances.

**Tell your story repeatedly.** Joshua rehearsed Israel's history extensively in Joshua 24—not because people enjoyed the stories but because each generation needs to know what God has done. Don't assume your children know why you believe what you believe. Tell them your testimony. Describe when and how God became real to you. Share the moments when faith was tested and proven.

**Create opportunities for the next generation to experience God firsthand.** Inherited faith is always weaker than discovered faith. Take your children on mission trips where they see God work. Involve them in ministry where they experience His power. Create space for them to encounter God themselves, not just hear about your encounters.

**Teach them to think, not just to obey.** Many Joshua-generation believers, zealous for their children's faithfulness, inadvertently create Rehoboams by demanding obedience without developing understanding. Teach your children and grandchildren **why** you believe, not just **what** you believe. Engage their questions. Help them think biblically about cultural issues rather than simply declaring positions.

**Warn about the Solomon Chair.** Help the next generation recognize the subtle drift toward compromise before it happens. Teach them that small compromises lead to large apostasy, that the drift is gradual and deceptive, that what seems like sophistication or nuance is often the first step toward abandonment.

## **For Those in the Solomon Chair (The Compromising Generation)**

If you recognize yourself in the Solomon Chair—if you've gradually drifted from your parents' passionate faith into comfortable accommodation—the path forward requires honest recognition and decisive action.

**Acknowledge the drift.** The first step is admitting that you've compromised, that your heart isn't fully devoted to the Lord, that you've made room for other gods. This requires brutal honesty about the gap between your professed beliefs and your actual priorities.

**Identify your idols.** What has captured your heart that doesn't belong there? Career success? Financial security? Social acceptance? Comfortable lifestyle? Children's achievements? Your own reputation? Name the gods you're serving alongside (or instead of) the Lord.

**Repent decisively.** Solomon's gradual drift requires a decisive reversal. Throw away the gods, to use Joshua's language. Make hard choices that demonstrate God's priority. Cut off compromises. Establish clear boundaries. Return wholeheartedly to exclusive devotion.

**Consider your children.** Recognize that your compromise is preparing your children for rebellion. If you maintain Christian forms while accommodating worldly values, you're teaching them that faith doesn't really matter, that it can be negotiated and adjusted to fit cultural expectations. Your children are watching what you actually value, not what you claim to value.

**Pursue an authentic encounter with God.** Move beyond inherited, intellectual, theoretical faith to personal, experiential, tested faith. Pray for God to break through your comfortable religion to a genuine relationship. Take risks that require faith. Step into situations where you must depend on God.

## For Those in the Rehoboam Chair (The Rebellious Generation)

If you're in the Rehoboam Chair—if you've rejected the faith you were raised in—consider that what you're rejecting may be the compromised Christianity of the Solomon generation rather than the genuine faith of the Joshua generation.

**Distinguish between hypocritical religion and authentic Christianity.** Many who abandon faith are actually abandoning the watered-down, culturally compromised version they witnessed in their parents, not the radical, biblical Christianity their grandparents may have lived. Before rejecting Christianity entirely, investigate whether what you're rejecting is actually Christianity at all.

**Recognize your spiritual hunger.** The anger and passion with which many third-generation rebels reject faith often reveals spiritual hunger masquerading as skepticism. You care deeply about truth, authenticity, justice, meaning—all things Christianity addresses. Consider whether your rejection is actually a search.

**Understand that compromise doesn't work.** Your instinct that you can't serve both God and the world, that faith requires total commitment or isn't worth having—this instinct is correct. Jesus Himself said no one can serve two masters. The problem isn't that Christianity demands too much; it's that the compromised version you witnessed demanded too little.

**Consider the empty alternative.** What are you choosing instead of faith? Cultural acceptance? Personal autonomy? Ideological certainty? Pleasure? These are simply new idols replacing old ones. The Rehoboam generation often exchanges one form of slavery for another, thinking they've found freedom when they've simply changed masters.

**Encounter Jesus for yourself.** Don't let your parents' compromise or grandparents' fundamentalism define your understanding of Christ. Read the Gospels. Examine Jesus' actual words and actions. Consider His claims. Investigate the resurrection evidence. Make your own determination about who He is.

## Conclusion: Which Chair Will You Choose?

Pastor Dave's framework of the Three Generational Chairs is ultimately not about fatalism but about choice. The pattern Joshua → Solomon → Rehoboam has repeated throughout history, but it's not inevitable. **Each generation, each individual, can choose which chair to occupy.**

The Joshua Chair of Commitment remains available in every generation. First-generation passionate faith isn't limited to literal first generations. Revival generations, awakening generations, and reformation generations throughout history have occupied the Joshua Chair even though they weren't the first to believe. The commitment Joshua demonstrated can be recovered, renewed, and embraced afresh.

But it requires recognition of where you currently sit. Are you maintaining genuine devotion or gradually compromising? Are you passing on living faith or dead religion? Are you modeling costly discipleship or comfortable Christianity?

The trajectory from commitment to compromise to rebellion isn't inevitable, but it's likely without intentional intervention. Each generation must personally encounter God, personally commit to covenant faithfulness, and personally choose to sit in the Joshua Chair regardless of what previous generations have done.

The question isn't which chair your parents or grandparents occupied. The question is: Which chair are you sitting in today? And which chair are you preparing the next generation to occupy?

Choose the Joshua Chair. Choose decisive commitment over gradual compromise. Choose an authentic encounter over an inherited religion. Choose costly discipleship over comfortable Christianity. And teach those coming after you to make the same choice, not because you demand it but because they've witnessed its reality in your life.

The pattern can be broken. The cycle can be interrupted. But only by those willing to say, with Joshua, ***"As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord"***—and mean it not as a slogan but as a life.

## Pastor Dave: Faithful, Intentional, and Teachable: Living Romans 12:1-2

Pastor Dave's three-word framework—faithful, intentional, and teachable—perfectly captures the essence of Romans 12:1-2,<sup>6</sup> where Paul urges believers to offer themselves as ***"living sacrifices"*** and be ***"transformed by the renewing of your mind."***

**Faithful** means consistently presenting ourselves to God, not sporadically or when convenient. Living sacrifices don't climb off the altar when worship gets difficult. We remain steadfast in devotion through seasons of blessing and trial alike.

**Intentional** means actively pursuing transformation rather than passively drifting with cultural currents. We don't accidentally avoid conforming to the world's patterns—we deliberately choose God's ways. Transformation requires purposeful engagement with Scripture, corporate worship, and spiritual disciplines that renew our minds.

**Teachable** means maintaining humble receptivity to God's reshaping work. Stiff-necked pride resists transformation; teachable spirits welcome correction, embrace growth, and remain open to the Spirit's conviction. We must stay moldable clay in the Potter's hands. Together, these three postures position us for the ongoing transformation Paul describes—moving from world-shaped thinking to God-shaped living, proving in our daily choices what God's will is: good, pleasing, and perfect.

## Pastor Dave: Responsibilities of Choosing the Joshua Chair

Choosing the Joshua Chair of Commitment carries profound responsibilities that extend beyond personal piety to generational impact.

**First, model authentic devotion.** Those in Chair One must demonstrate genuine faith through consistent prayer, obedience to Scripture, and visible dependence on God—not merely religious performance but an authentic relationship with Christ.

**Second, teach diligently.** Following Deuteronomy 6:6-7,<sup>7</sup> committed believers must intentionally disciple the next generation, teaching God's Word ***"when you sit at home and when you walk along the road."*** Faith transmission requires deliberate effort, not casual assumption.

**Third, lead decisively.** Like Joshua declaring ***"as for me and my household,"*** Chair One occupants must make bold choices that demonstrate God's priority—even when countercultural or costly. Leadership by example speaks louder than verbal instruction.

**Fourth, remain vigilant.** The Joshua Chair requires daily renewal of commitment, ongoing resistance to compromise, and honest self-examination. Yesterday's faithfulness doesn't guarantee tomorrow's—we must choose daily whom we will serve.

**Fifth, create environments** where the next generation can personally encounter God, not just inherit religious forms.

## The Challenge to Those Who Heard

You've heard the pattern. You understand the trajectory. You recognize the three chairs—Commitment, Compromise, Rebellion. Now comes the critical question: ***What will you do with what you know?***

**This is your “choose this day” moment.** Like Israel at Shechem, you cannot remain neutral. Inaction is itself a choice—usually a choice for the status quo, for drift, for the Solomon Chair of gradual compromise.

**Examine yourself honestly.** Which chair are you actually sitting in? Not which chair you want others to think you occupy, but where you truly are based on your priorities, your choices, your devotion. Does your life demonstrate wholehearted commitment to Christ, or have you slowly accommodated cultural values while maintaining religious forms?

**Consider your legacy.** What chair are you preparing your children and grandchildren to occupy? They're watching what you actually treasure, not what you claim to believe. Your compromises today become their rebellion tomorrow.

**Choose the Joshua Chair today.** Throw away the idols—career ambition, financial security, cultural acceptance, comfortable living—that compete with God for your allegiance. Declare with conviction: “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

**Then choose again tomorrow.** And the next day. Covenant faithfulness isn't a one-time decision but a daily dying to self and living for Christ.

The pattern can be broken, but only by those willing to pay the cost of genuine commitment. Will you be that person? Will yours be that household?

## The Joshua Chair awaits. Choose it today.