

It's perhaps a bit of nosy question, or you might even consider me impertinent for asking it, but I will anyway. Have you written your Will yet?

I've been researching my family's history for over thirty years, so I've discovered quite a few Wills. They often make interesting reading. What furniture or clothing or jewelery is to be given to which relative, how much money is to be given to friends or relatives or charities. One person even had several houses that he bequeathed to his children.

All of the Wills I've seen from my family only talk about possessions. This is what I expect to have when I die and they need to go to the following people. I've read in books how some people in their Wills make it clear what they believe. They might talk about politics, religion, social problems or international relations. The Will I wrote a few years ago with Gill doesn't comment on our beliefs at all.

If I was going to write a letter a few days before I died or if I was going to make a speech on my death bed then what would I say? Mmmm?! I'd want to say only important things. The things that meant the most to me. I wouldn't waste time or energy mentioning frivolous things. It would be top priority information only.

I'd talk about Gill (my wife), Reuben (my son), Betty and Brian (my two excellent parents) and God (the hope in my life). I really enjoy going to work, but I doubt if I'd mention that. Living in Nuneaton is pretty good, but that wouldn't be discussed. Neither would television or radio programmes that I enjoy, the abysmal state of politics in the UK nor why it's a super idea to learn to play a musical instrument.

Chapter 24 is the last chapter in the Book of Joshua. There are five further verses in the Chapter to the ones we heard earlier. We ended with verse 28, but verse 29 says, "After these things, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten." So, if we believe that Joshua knew that he was dying (and he probably did) then what he said was important to him.

So what did he do and say?

First of all he got all of the Israelites to come together to listen to him. All sorts of high-ranking people would have been there, as well as just normal people like you and me. He had led Israel for many years and so they all came. They knew that it was an important moment. They knew Joshua had blessed them greatly through his leadership, so now they wanted to honour him, say goodbye to him and listen to any important things he had to say.

Joshua gave them a short history lesson and then he told them something in a black and white manner. Do the right thing and follow God the LORD with all your energy and mental faculties or be stupid and do your own things. God created everything and has protected you over many generations, so now choose to follow Him by giving Your lives as a sacrifice to Him now. Then Joshua declares that he is going to follow God wholeheartedly, no matter what other people say or do. All of the people then say something similar. What a great moment in the history of a nation, when everyone is unified. That's so unlike our nation at the moment. The Israelites are unified as they put God first and trust in Him.

What about you? Lots of people feel strongly that there are no absolutes anymore, but just various shades of grey. That's not true. We can choose to follow God with our whole hearts or we can choose to follow other things that are purely froth and bubble in the large scheme of things. It's great to have hobbies and to spend time with your friends and family and to give money to various charities, but God is asking you today, "Are you following Me?" Are you putting Me first or do I just get a hurried few moments every so often?"

Joshua makes it very clear to the people after they have said they will follow God by saying that you can't only say in believe in God, you have to act it out too. Verse 23 says, "Therefore abandon the foreign gods that are among you, and turn your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel." [ISV] The Message says, "Now get rid of all the foreign gods you have with you. Say an unqualified Yes to God, the God of Israel." This implies that they did have foreign gods (some g) amongst them. Do you? Can you give an unqualified Yes to God today -no ifs, no buts, no maybes, no perhaps in five years time?

John Reeves spoke earlier of what God means to him. God has made a massive difference in his and Alma's lives. You can also invite Jesus to be your Saviour and Lord today too.

As we all dedicate our lives to serve and obey God, then circumstances don't get easier, but our priorities definitely do. As we focus on God so life becomes more fulfilling and worthwhile.

God is amazing. He can do things that we haven't even dreamt about yet. Mankind can do some brilliant things, but when compared to God the things we are learning about and doing are infantile.

Joshua gave the Israelites a black and white ultimatum: don't be daft, serve God and only Him. Don't waste your life with pointless trivialities.

Today, I am saying the exact same thing. This is important. Listen to God and follow Him. Obey Him and consecrate your life to Him. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one else is.