

Welcome to

BULL CREEK



COWBOY CHURCH

Lone Oak, TX

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Sermon

The Church & the Crisis of Biblical Illiteracy Outline *Joshua 1:1-9*

Jeff Jackson

“Living For the One Who Branded Us...Jesus”

Christians claim to believe the Bible is God's Word. We claim it's God's divinely inspired, inerrant message to us. Yet despite this, we aren't reading it. A recent Lifeway Research study found only 45 percent of those who regularly attend church read the Bible more than once a week. Over 40 percent of the people attending read their Bible occasionally, maybe once or twice a month. Almost 1 in 5 churchgoers say they *never* read the Bible—essentially the same number who read it every day.

Because we don't read God's Word, it follows that we don't know it. To understand the effects, we can look to statistics of another Western country: the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom Bible Society surveyed British children and found many could not identify common Bible stories. When given a list of stories, almost 1 in 3 didn't choose the Nativity as part of the Bible and over half (59 percent) didn't know that Jonah being swallowed by the great fish is in the Bible.

British parents didn't do much better. Around 30 percent of parents don't know Adam and Eve, David and Goliath, or the Good Samaritan are in the Bible. To make matters worse, 27 percent think Superman is or might be a biblical story. More than 1 in 3 believes the same about Harry Potter. And more than half (54 percent) believe The Hunger Games is or might be a story from the Bible.

But it's more than simply not knowing stories from Scripture. Our lack of biblical literacy has led to a lack of biblical doctrine. Lifeway Research found that while 67 percent of Americans believe heaven is a real place, 45 percent believe there are many ways to get there—including 1 in 5 evangelical Christians. More than half of evangelicals (59 percent) believe the Holy Spirit is a force and not a personal being—in contrast to the orthodox biblical teaching of the Trinity being three Persons in one God. As a whole, Americans, including many Christians, hold unbiblical views on hell, sin, salvation, Jesus, humanity, and the Bible itself.

Results:

1. Laziness within our society
2. Lack of personal discipline
3. Misplaced priorities
4. Lack of personal experience with God
5. Lack of ever being taught how to read the Bible
6. Spiritual apathy
7. Disbelief

TEXT

Joshua 1:1-9

After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said,² "Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them.³ I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you—⁴ from the Negev wilderness in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, from the Euphrates River in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, including all the land of the Hittites.'⁵ No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.

⁶ "Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them. ⁷ Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. ⁸ Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. ⁹ This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

I. DEDICATION (6-7a, 8)

Notes: _____

C.S. Lewis

If you don't listen to theology, that won't mean you have no ideas about God, it will mean you have a lot of wrong ones.

1 Samuel 12:24

But be sure to fear the LORD and faithfully serve him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you.

II. DEVIATION (7b)

Notes: _____

Lee Iacocca

The main thing is keeping the main thing, the main thing.

Psalm 119:105

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

III. DEMAND (9)

Notes: _____

John 17:17

Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth.

Deuteronomy 5:31-33

³¹ But you stand here with me so I can give you all my commands, decrees, and regulations. You must teach them to the people so they can obey them in the land I am giving them as their possession.’ ”

³² So Moses told the people, “You must be careful to obey all the commands of the LORD your God, following his instructions in every detail. ³³ Stay on the path that the LORD your God has commanded you to follow. Then you will live long and prosperous lives in the land you are about to enter and occupy.

CONCLUSION

What we need in the church is a Great Awakening of the power and the presence of God in the lives of His people. We need a revival of heart to influence society rather than our society influencing us. We need to rescue the future of the church from Biblical illiteracy so that future generations may come to know the only book that holds the words and promise for eternal life.

Psalm 119:156

LORD, how great is your mercy; let me be revived by following your regulations.