

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord  
Joshua 24:15

### **I. Servants of the Lord**

“As for me and my house, we will **serve** the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

As we celebrate Fathers today, this declaration from Joshua exemplifies what it means to be an **Epic Dad** — a father who imparts a lasting spiritual legacy.

**Something is "epic" when it is remarkably heroic, grand in scale, or extraordinarily impressive.**

As we study the phrase, “serve the Lord,” we will define practical experiences that will enrich dads and bless families.

Joshua boldly declares his personal commitment: “As for me . . .”

**A. Epic Dads resist justifying, rationalizing, and blaming — embracing instead the truth that “. . . each of us must give an account of ourselves to the Lord” (Rom. 14:12). RESPONSIBILITY !**

- Epic Dads walk in the freedom for which they have been freed.  
“*It was for freedom that Christ set you free*” (Gal. 5:1).
- He gives freedom from the ways and words, priorities, and passions of THIS world.  
“*Let them curse, but you bless; when they arise, they shall be ashamed but your servant shall be glad*” (Ps. 109:28).

In contrast with others, Epic Dads have the freedom to pursue intimacy with the Lord and His kingdom calling.

Joshua’s personal testimony of “serving the Lord” is the foundation for “my house” serving the Lord!

Joshua gives leadership to his home through his declaration: “As for . . . my house, we will serve the Lord.”

**B. Epic Dads join Christ as the cornerstone to build a strong foundation for family life**

*Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, through living and loving as Jesus did* (Eph. 5:20).

## **II. Serving the Lord through a Lifestyle of Yielded-ness**

In biblical context, the Hebrew word **abad**, translated **serve**, merges the concepts of labor, service, and worship—describing both everyday physical toil (like cultivating the ground) and wholehearted yielding and devotion to serving God.

Fathers, this speaks to your allegiance and prompts the question, “To whom or to what are you yielding yourself?”

In a day when serving or giving allegiance to many false gods was commonplace, Joshua’s declaration was proactive and public:

- Being passive in a world of compromise was/is **NOT** an option.
- Being quiet about his stance was/is **NOT** an option.
- A proactive and public testimony gives credibility when leading your family to serve the Lord.

Question to ponder: What proactive and public steps are you taking in your life that give witness that you are serving the Lord (as demonstrated in your prayer life, diligence in the Word, being the first to apologize, etc.)?

Action step: Ask the Lord to remind and encourage you: “Lord God, remind me of ways to live my life so my family sees that I’m seeking to serve you.”

## **III. Serving the Lord in a World of Competing Priorities**

Countless distractions compete for our personal and family priorities—**materialism** and **the media** promote their wares; **technology** and social media provide pseudo-intimacy; success and position plead their case.

Jesus declared that life fulfillment is NEVER found in what we acquire, accomplish, or achieve, but only through loving, intimate relationships, beginning with Yeshua – *And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”* (Luke 12:15)

The Hebrew word for **serve** – **abad** – also conveys an urgency to put away hindrances and to choose intimate relationship with Him –

1 Sam. 7:3 *Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, “If you return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from*

*among you, and prepare your hearts for the Lord, and **serve** Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.”*

*2 Chron. 34:33 Thus Josiah removed all the abominations from all the country that belonged to the children of Israel and made all who were present in Israel diligently **serve** the Lord their God. All his days they did not depart from following the Lord God of their fathers.*

- Critical to removing hindrances to our intimacy with the Lord is asking the right questions, putting away the emptiness of vain priorities.

Questions like, “What have I accomplished with my life today?” and “Is He pleased with it?” need to be asked.

Questions like, “What do I have?” or “What am I getting?”

“Who am I giving to?” and “How is He being honored through my stewardship of life and resources?”

*“Considering that all these things [this world and its values] shall be done away with in this manner, what sort of people ought we to be” (2 Peter 3:11).*

#### **IV. Serving the Lord through a Father’s and Family’s Identity**

**“Serving the Lord” is NOT a list of THINGS WE DO but rather WHO WE ARE!**

Joshua’s declaration and that of an Epic Dad is simply this:

“I am joyfully and gladly His servant.”

- Epic Dads are focused more upon identity than activity; more upon daily life than formalized gatherings/events or happenings.

Tracing the Hebrew word **abad** through the scriptures highlights several dimensions of epic fatherhood:

##### **A. Epic Dads serve the Lord in joyful, liberated worship and reverence**

(Ex. 4:23, 7:16, 10:26; Ps. 2:11; Deut. 6:13).

- Moments of private and family prayer are commonplace, both planned and spontaneous.
- Worship is extended into moments of everyday life, and His presence is acknowledged on all occasions.

## **B. Epic Dads cultivate a family culture of gratitude.**

Epic Dads serve the Lord with glad hearts. *“Serve the Lord with gladness”* (Ps. 100:2).

- “Loving the Lord” with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength is more about relating to Him than doing things for Him!
- Epic Dads often lead their families into times of sharing with Him our glad hearts, forgetting none of “His benefits” (Ps. 100:3).

One of the simple but profound ways we “serve” the Lord is with our glad heart—our rejoicing.

*“Let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you . . .”* (Col. 3:16).

Are you allowing God to work in your life to:

- Reprioritize your prayer life?
- Stir up your gratefulness?
- Challenge yourself to listen more and ask less?

Practice having your family celebrate more together by asking, “What was the highlight of your week?”

Guard your home from an ungrateful, critical spirit. Focus instead on: “What we do have.” “What we can do.” “What is right.”

## **C. Epic Dads serve the Lord through embracing His Word (Ex. 3:12).**

- Just as Moses was challenged to live out God’s word of deliverance for His people (Ex. 3:12), Epic Dads are called to embrace and experience His Word as the foundation for legacy.

### **Hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on the Word**

Epic Dads experience the Word. **They literally “do the book.”**

- They confess when they have been wrong (Jas. 5:16).
- They speak words that build up and never tear down (Eph. 4:29).
- They respond with gentleness in the face of others’ anger (Prov. 15:1).
- They think first of others (Phil. 2:3).

## **D. Epic Dads serve the Lord with a “listening,” attentive heart.**

*“Speak Lord, Your servant is listening”* (1 Sam 3:9).

- We serve the Lord by listening for Him. Just as young Samuel had his spirit trained to hear God, so also does an Epic Dad.

**E. Epic Dads serve the Lord through longing to know and please Him.**

- Moses began his journey of serving the Lord through his burning bush encounter of knowing the Lord: *“I AM WHO I AM . . . I AM has sent me to you”* (Ex. 3:14).
- In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul would describe His commitment to “serve the Lord” like this: *“I count all things as loss for the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord”* (Phil. 3:8).

**F. Epic Dads give priority to knowing Jesus because to know Him is to love Him, and to love Him is to serve Him.**

*“Let the Word of Christ dwell deeply in you”* (Colossians 3:16).

**IV. Encountering Jesus**

***“Who do you say that I am?”*** (Matt. 16:15).

Pause and meditate on Jesus.

However you imagine Him, meditate on the resurrected Christ – His nail-pierced hands and feet – His glorified body.

Imagine that He asks you the question He asked His followers.

Let His Spirit search your heart for response: **“Who do you say that I am?”**

**Ask Him:** “What other priorities, activities, or things do I need to ‘count as loss’ so that I might better know You?”

**Listen** for Him to speak: “Speak Lord, your servant is listening.”

**Yield** these things as “loss.” “Lord, my success and career are nothing in comparison to life with You. My possessions and status mean nothing in the light of You.”

Make now your declaration as Joshua and Paul did:

**“I want to know You... to love You...to serve You!”**

**Your wife, your children, your community are counting on you, as a man who professes faith, to live up to your words and your commitment to reflect Jesus in all areas of your life.**