"Playing the Hand You Are Dealt"
Joshua 17:14-18

C.I.T.—The Josephites were challenged to work their inheritance.
C.I.S.—We must work our allotment from the Lord.
Purpose—To encourage our people to accept and work their God-given lot in life.
Introduction—Play the hand we are dealt—Jesus deals the hands

I. A Selfish Complaint vs. 14
- a. Background of The Lord allotments.
  - i. Allotting the Promised Land to the tribes.
  - ii. Casting lots was a revelation of God's will.
  - iii. This allotment represented God's plan for that tribe as well as His provision to fulfill that plan.
- b. They complain about their allotment.
  - i. The allotment isn't enough—one possession
  - ii. Argued that they deserved more because of their size, and blamed it on God's blessing.
- c. This complaint reveals a heart that is not satisfied with God's revealed plan or His provision for their life.
- d. They thought they knew better.
- e. This land would never be enough because they were unwilling to accept it.
- f. Illus.—Ungrateful children
- g. Application
  - i. Lot in life—God's revealed plan and God's gracious provision.
  - ii. This refers to both our lives and our church
  - iii. Too many times we complain about what God has allotted us, thinking we know better.
  - iv. This is a rejection of God's Typically, it stems from an arrogant, self-centered perspective.
  - v. Nothing is joyful, because all we think about is how we were treated by God's allotment.
  - vi. We have been given a Great Commission and this is the church that we have been given.
- h. Takeaway: ***Consent to your allotment.***

II. A Sarcastic Comeback vs. 15
- a. Joseph's Allotment
  - i. The land was north of Judah's allotment and included a hill country with vast forests as well as some valleys and plain areas which were Canaanite strongholds.
  - ii. The land that the Lord gave them was more than sufficient to support their needs.
  - iii. They claimed it wasn't enough.
- b. Cut down the trees—while the land was plentiful, it required clearing the land to be livable, which would require hard work.
- c. This Revealed that they were lazy.
  - i. They wanted more land, but they didn't want to work it.
  - ii. They wanted to maintain their level of comfort.
- d. Illus.—Garden of Eden, given the whole world, but were tasked with cultivating the land
- e. Application
  - i. God's gracious lot in life is not a welfare state, but instead is an opportunity to work and cultivate.
  - ii. People don't want to work to cultivate life, because it is hard and requires sacrifice.
  - iii. Clear the woods

1. Declutter areas of our lives.
2. Money, time, energy—spending on things that don't matter.
3. Phones, credit cards, carbs, etc.
4. Commitments—ball, memberships, subscriptions, etc.
5. Proper stewardship is managing God's grace faithfully.

f. Takeaway: ***Cultivate your Allotment.***

III. **A Sacred Commission** vs. 16-18

a. Excuse—chariots
   i. The pagan nations were under the judgment of God because of their sin and wickedness.
   ii. They represented the sinfulness of this world.
   iii. God commissioned Israel to wipe them out.
   iv. Joshua and Israel had already defeated an army with many chariots.
   v. This wasn't a real problem or excuse.

b. Sacred commission to cleanse the land
   i. Another sarcastic comment about their strength
   ii. You are great and power—blessed of God
   iii. You should be able to clear out these chariots.
   iv. For some reason they were unwilling to do what it took to remove the wickedness.

c. This revealed a wicked heart.
   i. While this definitely is cowardice, it is more than that.
   ii. This represented cleansing the land from paganism and sinfulness.
   iii. However, a lack of desire to remove sinfulness from the land shows a desire to keep it around.

d. Illus.—AirBNB—one locked door

e. Application
   i. We can only fulfill God's commission and live in his allotment if we do so in holiness.
   ii. We must submit everything to His lordship.
   iii. Cleanse the wicked**.**
      1. Unconfessed sin and habits in your life.
      2. Each toe hold that Satan has limits what God can do.
      3. There is no room in your life for those things.

f. Takeaway: ***Cleanse your allotment.***

Conclusion

- This is what Reach Forward is all about—consenting to His plan and purpose, clearing out all distractions, and purifying ourselves to fulfill His purpose for our church.
- What hand has he dealt you in life?
- We must view that hand as a blessing in accordance with God's Will for our lives.
- Have you consented to His lot for your life?
- What do you need to clear from your life?
- What do you need to cleanse from your life?