



Leader Note: *We've given you more information than you may need, but we urge you to work through the text quickly and spend the majority of your time on the discussion questions and big idea rather than discussing the ins and outs of circumcision....You're welcome. Good luck!*

Introduction:

- What is the greatest group, sports team, or artist collaboration in history? What made them the greatest?
- Who would be on your "dream team" for: any sport, movie actor/actress duo, musician collaboration, etc. *(Easy answer here: Justin Timberlake and Jimmy Fallon as the greatest entertainers of our time.)*

The generation of Israel that we see in the book of Joshua is arguably the greatest generation of Israel that ever was. They conquered the land, and the whole earth acknowledged the greatness of God because of them. In the chapter we discuss today, we'll observe what made them such a successful generation.

Read Joshua 5:1-9

- What ritual or tradition do the people of Israel do? (circumcision -- **See note**)
- Why do you think is the point of this ritual?

A Note on Circumcision

This can be an uncomfortable topic, and we don't want you to get stuck on it. Point out this main idea, and move on.

While difficult to understand why God chose this specific action as a marker for His people in the Old Testament, we can know that the reason for circumcision was to be a physical way to identify themselves as People of God. (Genesis 17)

Read Joshua 5:10-12

- What was the next ritual or ceremony they did?
- Does anyone know what the Passover meal represented? (see note)

A Note on Passover Meal

This traditional dinner is practiced by the Jewish people to remember the Passover. (see Exodus 12)

Passover was done to remember that God saved them from death because of their faith and obedience.

Read Joshua 5:29-6:2

- What did Joshua do when he met the Captain of the Lord's Army? (He worshipped God. **Cool note:** Some scholars think this wasn't an angel, since no angel would accept worship, but that this is maybe an appearance of Jesus in the Old Testament. We also know from Scripture that Jesus is the leader of the Lord's army.)

Summary: Israel identified themselves with God, they were obedient to God, and they worshipped God.

Discussion Questions: *Really take your time here and challenge them to go deep!*

- Reread Joshua 5:1-2. The world recognized this generation of Israel as God's people. What is the world's reaction to most Christians today? Why?
- Do you personally identify yourself as a follower of Jesus? What markers in your life back that up?
- If God's people are known for obedience and worship of God, would you be recognized as one? Why?
- How about this cell group? Does the way we live and act as a group in front of the world show that we are followers of Jesus? Why or why not? What are we doing well? How could we improve?
- How can we commit to obedience and faith as a group and hold one another accountable in a loving way to live as true followers of Jesus? Split up in groups of 3-4 to discuss and pray about this.