

DROPPING YOUR GUARD: THE VALUE OF OPEN RELATIONSHIPS

WHEN THE FELLOWSHIP BREAKS DOWN

JOSHUA 7



The Heart of the Matter

Friction frays fellowship. Like a tire rubbing against the fender of a car, friction prohibits advancement. It isn't long before the heat creates greater complications. In God's family, whenever there is a breakdown in the fellowship, regardless of the reason, it impacts others. We see this vividly portrayed in Joshua 7, one of the least victorious chapters in the book. Even though these times were painful for the Hebrews, they are useful to Christians today. They teach us that we must not be idealistic in the matter of growing closer together. There *will* be times when the fellowship breaks down, but the growth can continue, and the body of Christ can ultimately become stronger and more mature.



Discovering the Way

1. Possible Reasons Fellowship Breaks Down (Acts 15:39)

Fellowship breaks down for several reasons: extreme suffering and sickness, burnout and fatigue, trouble in one's home or private life, friction between two or more Christians, and open disobedience against God.

2. A Biblical Event: Ai and the Hebrews (Joshua 7; Proverbs 18:19; 1 Corinthians 6:5; Galatians 6:1)

When Ai defeated the Hebrews, even though God had said He would give them victory over their enemies, it was a sign something was wrong among His people. Joshua followed a four-step process to identify and correct the problem.



Starting Your Journey

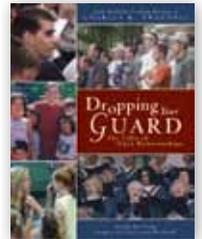
Most fellowship breakdowns will not heal themselves. Get involved! The longer the breakdown, the greater the impact. Start today! Solutions will be initially painful but ultimately rewarding. Don't quit!



Tools for Digging Deeper



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