



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

**Session 3:** Remembering God's Works

**Suggested Week of Use:** June 21, 2026

**Core Passage:** Joshua 3:14-4:9

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### News Story Summary

In the 1800s, more than forty bodies were dug up from a burial ground in Richmond, Virginia, without authorization or permission. Medical faculty and students apparently used the bodies (primarily of slaves of African descent) for medical research before discarding them in a well. In 1994, the remains were re-discovered during the construction of Virginia Commonwealth University's Kontos Medical Sciences Center. Subsequent DNA testing conducted by the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History was able to provide a more accurate count of the bodies and determine that the people came from Central-West Africa.

Recently, the Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors voted to build a \$3.6 million memorial to provide a respectable burial spot to honor these individuals. The effort, known as the East Marshall Street Well Project, should begin construction in summer of 2027.

For more about this story, search "VCU African remains."

### Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, encourage adults to consider something in their home that reminds them of a past event, such as a photo or a souvenir. After allowing a few volunteers to share, challenge the group to think deeper by asking, *Do you have anything that reminds you of a time you'd rather forget?* (Examples: a loved one's purple heart or a dried wreath) Share the information from the News Story Summary about the VCU memorial being built to honor some people of color whose bodies were dishonored and why remembering it today is significant. Highlight that remembering is a vital part of our culture and of our faith. Explain that today's passage focuses on Joshua's instructions to build a memorial to God's faithfulness after Israel finally entered the promised land.

### Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, consider the memorial being built by Virginia Commonwealth University. Ask: *Why is it necessary to remember these anonymous people? Why is it important that we remember the past, whether good or bad?* Emphasize that such reflection allows us to recall God's work in our families, our churches, and our lives. Say: *Remembering helps us stay mindful of God's presence at every turn.* Challenge adults to reflect on their lives in the coming week. Urge them to create a "memorial" that will remind them of God's faithfulness and to place it in a spot where they will see it regularly.