

Lessons From Kings - Josiah

This morning we're going to look at the life of King Josiah who started his kingship as a small child, grew a heart for the Lord, purged the land, restored the house of God and made a nation changing discovery!

2 Chronicles 34:1-2 (NKJV)

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. 2 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Josiah's father and grandfather were wicked kings and after the people killed his father, they made this 8 year old king to preserve the Davidic line.

Can you imagine an 8 year old as king? We're talking about a 2nd grader...he probably afraid of the dark and here he's running a kingdom!

It said he did what was right in the sight of the Lord. This boy, even though his father and grandfather were wicked, somehow did what was right in God's eyes. This speaks volumes of the importance of godly influence wherever we can get it.

It's why we are to be the light everywhere we go. You have no idea how God might use you to shape someone's life!

In the midst of the wickedness, Josiah knew of his heritage, the ways of David. He must have heard the stories of David's heroic acts and dedication to God.

This speaks to the importance of leaving a legacy...but a legacy that points to Jesus. It wasn't just that David did great things, it was that he did them for God! Josiah took note...followed that example and he did not waver!

Can we believe this morning for the 8 year olds in our lives will #1 have godly examples to follow and then #2 will follow those examples and never get off course?

2 Chronicles 34:3 (NKJV)

For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images.

In Josiah's 8th year, when he was 16 years old...he began to seek God!

Can we believe this morning for our teenagers to seek God? I believe this is a prophetic word to be spoken and received by the church!

Josiah was seeking God...not the false gods of his father and grandfather, but the God of David! The Living God! The Great I AM!

Proverbs 8:17 (NKJV)

I love those who love me,
And those who seek me diligently will find me.

See it's a PROMISE from God that if you seek Him, you will find Him.

If you go golfing, there are times when you hit a ball that you aren't even willing to look for. If you're not sure where it's at and you know that you have little chance of finding it, it's not going to be worth the search. However if it's a valuable ball...you'll be more inclined to look. And if you know you WILL find it, you're even more likely to search for it!

If you search for Jesus, you WILL find Him! He's worth looking for!

Josiah seeks out the Lord and he finds Him...the text doesn't explicitly say that he finds God...but it says what he DID...he began to change things. We see the effect of finding God play out in his life.

It was about 4 years that passed in this verse. At the age of 16, Josiah began to cultivate a love for God in his heart and by the age of 20 his character was strong enough in devotion to God that he went into action to purge his nation!

Church...it is so important that we pour into people. It takes years of caring and nurturing a person's soul for them to become mature in their faith. It takes a bit for them to grow THEIR faith instead of depending on the faith of others...how much more so for our youth?

Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Early training secures lifelong habits. If we teach God's word AND model it consistently, it will take root and spring up in genuine faith!

Josiah at 20 years old got rid of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images...sound familiar? Asa did this too, so did many other kings but the people kept going back to them.

Over in 2 Kings 23 we see some specifics of what Josiah purged the land of...

If you wonder about the parallels between Kings and Chronicles...1 and 2 Kings are written from a historical perspective while 1 and 2 Chronicles are written from God's perspective. So you find different specifics in one or the other because of the viewpoint.

But in 2 Kings 23, it lists some things that Josiah purged from the land.

v7 - tents that were set up in the house of the Lord for homosexual acts of worship to Asherah

v10 - Topheth, the place where children were sacrificed into a fiery furnace to Molech

v24 - mediums and spiritists (psychics, astrologists, soothsayers, witches)

Some of the very same issues we deal with today! They are back AGAIN. These things are plaguing our land! And I've got to tell you, they have no place among the children of God!

Josiah loved the Lord and as that love grew, he began to recognize the sin and purged it from the land...but this didn't happen overnight! It took persistence! He began this when he was 20 (12th year) and it took until he was 26 (18th year).

We often don't see change because we give up too soon! This is what faith is all about...being constant, steadfast, persistent, not giving up...pray...seek Jesus...declare...prophecy the Word of God...UNTIL SOMETHING HAPPENS!

2 Chronicles 34:8 (NKJV)

In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the Lord his God.

The house of the Lord had been decimated during the rule of Josiah's father and grandfather. It was used for all things "not God"...and now that those things have been driven out, it was time to repair the house of God for the things of God!

But there was one thing that was missing...as they began to make repairs and remodel the temple, something was discovered. Some think it was misplaced, others think it was hidden to protect it from being destroyed...

2 Chronicles 34:15 (NKJV)

Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan.

Isn't it interesting that the Word of God was lost or forgotten in the house of God?

I can tell you with complete confidence that when the Word of God is not the center in the house of God...it will turn into a place of sin and perversion. Because then people begin to make decisions based not on the things of God but on the lusts of man.

Do you see God's Word being lost in the church today? NOT IN THIS ONE!

But in some movements it has been. In some, there are "progressive" leaders who are more interested in restoring the things Josiah tore down than they are to uphold the Word of the Lord!

- We see this in the ordaining of homosexual ministers.
- We see this in the silence on abortion and the supporting of political candidates that are pro-choice and fund Planned Parenthood.
- We see this in mixed worship where they say they worship Jesus but consult "other spirits". There's only ONE spirit you should consult and that's the Holy Spirit!

It's time for the church to "find" the Word of God again!

What if we read the Word as much as we read the news, or facebook, or watch Youtube? We don't need a better worldview, we need a better God view! Because if we can begin to see the world with the eyes of God, we will have the correct view.

2 Chronicles 34:18-19 (NKJV)

Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. 19 Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes.

Josiah was grieved when he heard the Word of God. He was distressed.

I'm sure he couldn't believe how far off track they were, even after the years of cleanup. He saw the commands the Lord had given all those years ago...and he also saw the consequences the Lord had laid out for turning away from his commands...

Josiah consults Huldah, a prophetess. Did you know that during the time of Josiah's reign we had the prophets Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Nahum...yet the king consults Huldah...

Yet some will tell you that women shouldn't have a voice for God...

Huldah tells the king that the Lord will bring judgement on the land and the curses written in His Word because they people have turned away from Him, worshipped other gods, and angered Him.

BUT Josiah would not see this disaster because his heart was responsive to God, he humbled himself, he spoke against the evil and God heard him.

Then Josiah went to the house of the Lord and read the Word of the Lord. He made a covenant before the Lord to follow Him, keep His commandments, and follow His Word.

And there was revival in the land!

“All His days they did not depart from following the lord God of their fathers”

Church, our land needs revival! We say that a lot but have you thought about what that means? It means restoration of life.

It means the heart that people used to have for Jesus would be restored. It means not just praying grandmas but godly mothers and fathers both natural and spiritual.

It means people reading and obeying the Word of God and being moved by the Spirit of God.

Revival is like a new production of an old play or movie. Do it again...but bigger and better!

I've had enough of expecting the Holy Spirit to magically transform every soul. I'm willing to say "Holy Spirit start with me!" We have a responsibility...we have to soak up the Word. Discuss the Word. Understand the Word. Be challenged and changed by the Word!

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (NKJV)

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Let your gates be the gates to revival!