

life groups

NorthStar Church

Fearless Pt 4

Lessons from the life of King Josiah

2 Kings 22 & 23

06/17&18/2017

Main Point

God is gracious to restore and renew His people when they repent and live in light of His revealed truth.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

In 2 Kings 22:8, the Book of the Law was found in the House of the Lord where it had been forgotten.

Tell about a time when you found something in a closet, storage unit, garage or drawer that you had forgotten about or thought you lost some time ago. How was it forgotten and how did the discovery make you feel? (have fun with this!)

Josiah was a young king who discovered a yet to be finished story. He could ignore what he discovered, or he could act; it was his choice. Whatever he did would impact his generation.

Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

God's chosen people had completely lost touch with Him, had lost the Book of the Law, and had not been following God's commands for quite some time. Read the following passages that go along with the points that Scott made about Josiah, and discuss each one in your group.

He repented of his sins and the sins of the nation. 22:10-11

He read the Word of God to all the people. 23:1-2

He renewed his relationship with God. 23:3

He removed all the idols from the House of the Lord. 23:4-7

He reinstated the public worship of God among the people. 23:21-24

He returned to God with all his heart. 23:25

Josiah became king at the age of eight following the assassination of his father, King Asa. The kings before him had turned away from God, supporting idol worship. According to 2 Chronicles 34, Josiah sought God and began to purge Judah of some idol worship early in his administration and was in the process of restoring worship of God in the temple. While restoring the temple, a book that included part of the Mosaic law was discovered.

Josiah realized his sin and the sin of his country, and expressed personal repentance. He realized that previous generations had led them astray, but did not use that as an excuse for him to continue on that same path. He then sought the council of someone who could help him better understand the ramifications of what he had discovered.

A delegation was sent to the prophetess Huldah to inquire of the Lord concerning Judah's fate. She prophesied that the Lord would destroy Judah for its idolatry but that Josiah would not witness it because he had repented.

Josiah called all the leaders and people together to hear God's Word. He then made a public declaration, committing to live by God's Word. In effect, he was renewing Judah's commitment to God's covenant with the hope that it was not too late.

Josiah then led the people to remove all evidence of pagan worship and moved them toward instituting a centralized worship of Yahweh alone in Jerusalem (see 2 Kings 23:4-20 and 2 Chronicles 34:33). In a way, Josiah was preparing them for the reinstatement of the Passover observance.

Josiah led the people to reinstitute the Passover observance. While it reminded them of God's deliverance from Egypt, it also pointed them to the coming of the future Passover Lamb that would deliver them from the guilt of sin. God was true to His word, not bringing judgment on Judah while Josiah was king. Jehoiakim became king and unfortunately failed to follow in his father's footsteps.

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What can we do to put ourselves in a position to hear God's Word on a regular basis?

If the Word of God is so important, and it is, in what context are you spending time in the Word individually and corporately?

Notice the pattern in Josiah's life: heard God's Word, repented, sought to understand, committed to follow God, shared with others what he heard, lived out his commitment. Where do you find yourself in that process? What is the next step you must take? How can you help others understand their need for repentance and the truth of the gospel?

Pray

Lord, give us the courage to faithfully follow You. Remind us afresh of our need for your salvation and of the truth of the gospel of Christ. Help us point others to your Word.

Commentary

2 kings 22:1-20

22:1-20. Josiah (640–609 B.C.) began to reign at age eight after the assassination of his father. In his eighteenth year of reign (621 B.C.), Josiah initiated repairs on the temple Manasseh and Amon had neglected. The high priest Hilkiah recovered the book of the law among the rubble of the temple. When the book was read before the king, he feared the Lord's wrath and sent a delegation to the prophetess Huldah to inquire of the Lord concerning Judah's fate. She prophesied that the Lord would destroy Judah for its idolatry but that Josiah would not witness it because he had repented. Scholars generally agree that this "book" was Deuteronomy or some part of it.

2 kings 23:1-30

23:1-30. Josiah renewed the covenant with the Lord and celebrated the Passover in an unprecedented way. He removed all evidence of pagan worship and centralized worship in Jerusalem. As the prophet had predicted (1 Kgs. 13:32), Josiah tore down the shrine at Bethel, which Jeroboam had erected three centuries earlier. The biblical writer gave Josiah the highest commendation of all the kings: "Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did." Jerusalem enjoyed a national revival under Josiah. However, it came to a crashing halt when the king was killed at Megiddo by Pharaoh Neco. Josiah had attempted to block Neco's efforts to aid the faltering Assyrians in their last stand against Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian armies.