

A Life That Pleases The Lord

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 March 2024

Preacher: Chris Baez

[0 : 00] I'm glad to be here today with you, with all of you sharing God's Word. And as you know, as Jared mentioned last week, it's the first time that I preach at church.

And it's the first time that I preach in a language that is not my first language. So I'm kind of nervous. But I'm happy to do it. And I'm happy to be here.

Also, I'm wearing green. I'm wearing green. Ashley told me that I had to wear green. Because it's a special day today. And so I'm doing it. I'm sad that Brian is not here because I know he was going to mention something about it.

But please open your Bibles in 2 Kings, in chapter 22. And today we are going to focus our attention on a king that, despite the idolatry of the nation of Israel, he decided to obey the Lord.

2 Kings 22. And as you probably see in the title of your Bible, in the title of the chapter, we're going to talk about King Josiah.

[1 : 17] And today, by studying Josiah's example, we will learn four characteristics of a heart that pleases the Lord. And I want you to give you a brief summary of what's going on at this moment in the nation of Israel.

We have been studying Judges with Jared for a couple of months now. And we know that at this point, there was no king in Israel. So when the time of Judges finishes, Israel requests a king to Samuel.

And they request to have a king like the other nations. We know that the first king was Saul. And after him was David.

And after David was Solomon, the son of David. These three kings reigned over a simple kingdom. So Israel was one nation. But do Solomon sin, which was worshiping the idols of his wives. And also do a power struggle between two of his sons.

[2 : 32] Israel is divided into two kingdoms. The kingdom of the north, that is Israel. And the kingdom of the south, that is Judah. And this is important to say it because Josiah belongs to the line of the kings of Judah.

The kingdom of the south. And at this moment of history, in the history of Israel, he was the only king in the nation.

Because the kingdom of the north was already conquered by the king of Assyria. And if you have read the books of kings, if not, you can read it later.

Israel and Judah, the two kingdoms, had different kings and many kings. Most of the kings turned their hearts to the idols and forgot God.

And only a small number of kings did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. And Josiah was one of them. His kingdom was blessed because he showed devotion and obedience to God.

[3 : 45] And today we are going to learn how he did it. And remember, we are going to talk about four characteristics of a heart that pleases the Lord. And we are going to go to the first characteristic.

And it is a righteous heart pleases the Lord. A righteous heart pleases the Lord. And we are going to see this in verse 1 and 2 of our chapter.

But to understand this, we are going to see two points in this point. And we are going to see these two points to how to develop a righteous heart that pleases the Lord.

And the first one is the early instruction produces righteousness. So let's go to our Bibles. And let's go to the verse 1. And let's read it.

And God's word says, Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign. And he reigned 31 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedida, the daughter of Adia, a boscat.

[4 : 56] I was thinking that I chose a really hard passage because I don't even know how to say this name in Spanish. And it's even hard to say it in English.

I'll do my best today. So we see that Josiah is placed on the throne after Ammon, his dad, was killed. You will find that in the chapter before this one.

And as the bird tells us, he started reigning when he was eight years old. He was way too young to be on the throne. I think the closest one in our church to this age is Harper.

Harper is eight years old. Can you imagine that? Can you imagine being at that age? He was a little kid. But he was the son of the previous king.

So he was the heir to the throne. The nation needed a king. So they had to place Josiah on the throne at his young age.

[5 : 59] And I want you to think a little bit about how royal children were instructed when they were kids.

The Bible doesn't tell us that in this passage. But for sure, they were thought in the Jewish traditions. And for sure, they were thought about the Lord. Because God was the God of their nation.

And this doesn't mean that they were going to obey. And we see that in the history of the kings. We see a lot of kings that didn't obey the Lord. And in fact, we see that in Ammon, his death. He didn't obey the Lord. But considering this, Josiah knew about the obedience of his predecessors. Around 50 years before, his great-grandfather, Hezekiah, implemented reforms in the nation of Judah. And a few years back, his grandfather, Manasseh, obeyed the Lord and his kingdom was restored.

[7 : 05] You can find this in chapters 19 through 21. We're not going to read it today. But you can read it at home. So, Josiah had these examples and heard about them as part of the history of the kings of Judah.

This for sure had an impact in his obedience at his young age. Another thing that we can consider is that during his reign, there were faithful men and prophets like Jeremiah and Sophaniah.

And faithful servants like Hilkiah and Shaphan. We're going to talk about them later on. Shaphan, sorry. These men could have motivated Josiah to obey the Lord.

And one last thing to think about this. It says, even though the Bible doesn't say it, his mom probably had something to do with his obedience.

We can't say the same about his father, Amon. Because if you read in the previous chapter, as I mentioned, he didn't obey the Lord and reign for a short amount of time. But thinking about his mom, we can see in the life of Josiah her faithfulness.

[8 : 19] In raising her son in a godly way. He was eight years old. He was still a child being raised by his mother. She could even have looked for godly men that instructed her son in the traditions of the nation.

But even though all of this had a role in shaping his heart, we can't ignore the fact that it was God who moved his heart to do what was right.

In 1 Kings chapter 8, we're not going to, you don't have to look at it. I don't want to read it. We find Solomon speaking to the nation of Israel regarding his obedience to the Lord. Solomon speaking to the nation of Israel. In verse 8, he tells them that he may, talking about God, incline your hearts to him to walk in all his ways and to keep his commitments, his statutes and his rules, which he commanded to our fathers.

Solomon knew that only God can incline their hearts or could incline their hearts to his obedience.

Paul tells us something, tells the Philippians something similar in chapter 2, verse 13.

And he says this, God places people around us as an example for our lives.

[9 : 50] But at the end of the day, God does the work in our hearts through his word. Parents, don't give up teaching your children God's word.

Proverbs says to train up a child in the way he should go, because even when he is old, he will not depart from it. God does the work in their hearts, but we can be an instrument to bring our kids into obedience and salvation.

Now, not only does the early instruction produce righteousness, but also commitment produces righteousness. And let's look at the verse 2 in our passage.

And it says, And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father. And he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

He, Josiah, did what was right and walked in the way of David his father. How do we know that he did what was right? Chapter 23, the next one, gives us more details about what he did, and so does the book of 2 Chronicles.

[11 : 08] Both 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles provides us with a summary of the reforms against idolatry that Josiah implemented. He cleansed the house of God.

That was one. He knocked down the altars, destroyed the idols, knocked down the high places where sacrifice were made or offered to other gods.

And he burned the bones of the priests that worshipped the false gods. His reform was radical. He was committed to obey the Lord.

How long does it take us to remove sin in our life? Are we radical about it? Last week in the Men Up conference, one of the preachers was talking about 1 Timothy chapter 6.

And he said that passivity affects believers. And he said that we cannot deal with sin lightly. And that we must fight against it.

[12 : 16] Josiah cleansed Judah from its sin. If you read the stories of the other kings, you will see that some of them didn't cleanse Israel the way that Josiah did. Some of them didn't destroy the altars of the high places.

And this led the nation back to their idolatry. Because they were not radical. But Josiah wiped out the idolatry in the nation.

And he commended everyone to obey and serve the Lord. And in 2 Chronicles chapter 33, verse 33, says that all his days, he's talking about Josiah, they did not turn away from following the Lord. That's what he did. Josiah did that with the help of the Lord. Josiah reigned with righteousness the rest of his life. In 2 Kings 23, 25, says that before him, there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might.

Nor did any like him arise after him. Josiah's heart was with the Lord. His commitment was to please him and to obey him.

[13 : 35] The fact that he didn't turn aside to the right or to the left, it's proof of his righteous heart. He followed the example of David, who set the pattern for the rulers of God's people.

He walked in a straight path, looking towards God, pursuing obedience to him. We are looking at four characteristics of a heart that pleases the Lord.

We just saw that a righteous heart pleases the Lord with early instruction and also commitment.

Now let's see how a diligent heart pleases the Lord. And we're going to read verses 3 through 8.

And it says, In the eighteen year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan, the son of Azaliah, son of Meshulam, the secretary, to the house of the Lord, saying, Go up to Hilkiyah, the high priest, that he may count the money that has been brought into the house of the Lord, which the keepers of the threshold have collected from the people.

And let it be given into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord.

And let them give it to the workmen that are of the house of the Lord, repairing the house, that is, to the carpenters, and to the builders, and to the masons.

[15 : 03] And let them use it for vying timber and queer storm to repair the house. But not a accountant shall be asked for them for the money that is delivered into their hand, for they deal honestly.

And Hilkiyah, the high priest, the high priest, said to Shaphan, the secretary, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

After Josiah cleansed Judah from his idolatry, he starts with the restoration of the temple, the house of the Lord. The house of the Lord at this time represented the presence of God among the nation.

Taking care of the house of the Lord must have been a priority for every king in Israel, but only a few of them work in its restoration.

We see in the passage that Josiah sends Shaphan, the scribe, to the temple to collect the money that the nation had given, to give it to those who were in charge of the restoration.

[16 : 18] It is possible that this money was collected, not at this moment, but when Josiah started reigning.

And this can show us the diligence of Josiah and his government. He was not only cleansing the nation from his idolatry, but also he was working towards something important, the adoration of God.

Now, I want you to think about this. As I mentioned, the books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles have a similar narrative of the story of Josiah, but there is a slight difference between the both of them, and it doesn't affect the story, and they don't contradict each other.

And I hope you can follow me on this. The reforms, we're going to put in the middle when the book of the law is found. So, there are reforms that Josiah made in 2 Chronicles and in 2 Kings.

2 Chronicles placed them before the discovery of the book of the law when Josiah had reigned for 12 years by then. So, we have the book of the law that is found.

[17:40] Chronicles places these reforms before this. Well, I will do this because you can see it better. So, this is the founder of the book of the law. Chronicles places the reforms before the book is found.

But 2 Kings places them after the book is found. This doesn't mean that they are contradicting each other. This means that 2 Chronicles is placing this story in a chronological order.

Okay, so... But 2 Kings is not doing it. It doesn't... Again, it doesn't really matter to affect the Bible. It's not that the Bible is contradicting to itself.

It's just the way that the writers wrote these books. Now, on 2 Kings, we see Josiah at the beginning of his reign.

And the next verse that we see is Josiah at the eighth year of his reign. So, there is part of the narrative that the writer of 2 Kings didn't add until chapter 23.

[18:52] It's there. Whatever we find at the beginning in Chronicles, whatever we find at the beginning, before they found the book of the law, it's there in 2 Kings until chapter 23.

So, it's not that it's missing. It's just... It's after it. And, again, 2 Chronicles is in a chronological order in the story.

So, these reforms that Josiah was doing in the nation of Israel are before they found the law. So, what could this possibly tell us in a practical way?

Think about this. Our hearts need to be cleansed before we can worship the Lord. We can come to the Lord praising Him for who He is, but still having idols in our hearts.

We can't obey the Lord if our hearts are not fully committed to Him and holiness. And that's what Josiah did with the nation. He set the reforms in the nation of Judah.

[20:02] He wiped out the idols of the nation. And after he did that, he starts the restoration of the temple and they find the book of the law. So, he was thinking about God's adoration by restoring the temple.

But he had to cleanse Israel for their sin before he can do that. And that's, we need to think about it. We need to cleanse our hearts before we can worship Him.

Josiah had cleansed the nation from his idolatry so that the nation would be fully committed to God's adoration. Now, I want to show you that having a diligent heart has an impact in the people around us.

Let's read verse 8 again. And it says, Josiah's diligence had an impact on Shaphan.

He obeyed. He went to do what he was commanded to do because he knew the nature of the commandment and he trusted his king, his righteous king.

[21:31] And we see also that Josiah's diligence had an impact in Hilkiah. He found the book of the law and he didn't hide it.

He gave it to Shaphan because he knew it was going to be delivered to the king. I was reading that it's possible that several copies of the law were destroyed by the previous kings.

And it is possible that this book was one of the original copies remaining in the nation that someone faithful to the Lord hid in the house of the Lord.

So, his immediate reaction, the immediate reaction of Hilkiah, was to give it to Shaphan so he could give it to the king.

He knew that this discovery was going to contribute to what Josiah was doing in the nation. He had a faithful heart for the Lord in the same way that his king had it.

[22:33] See the reaction of Shaphan when he gets the book at the end of the verse eight. What he did? He read it. He couldn't wait to see what the Lord had written in it.

He did it. He read it at that moment. And this is an incredible scene. Two men influenced by the king, by his obedience to the Lord, now inquiring God's will with urgency.

And people around us can be influenced by what we do. Sometimes we think that we wouldn't do that, but sometimes we think that people are not going to be influenced by what you do, but they do.

This could be our co-workers, this could be our neighbors, our friends, our family. Remember that we should show Christ in our lives, so whenever someone sees our lives, they praise God. Not us, but God. Paul tells Timothy the following in 1 Timothy 4, 12, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

[23 : 54] Don't give up obeying the Lord, and don't be ashamed to show people that you are a Christian, that you belong to God. We don't know the work that God can do in other people through our example.

people. We're looking at four characteristics of a heart that pleases the Lord. We saw that a righteous heart pleases the Lord, a diligent heart pleases the Lord, and now we'll see how a fearful heart pleases the Lord.

chapter. Let's read verses 9-11. And Shaphan, the secretary, came to the king, and reported to the king, Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord.

Then Shaphan, the secretary, told the king, Hilkiyah, the priest, has given me a book, and Shaphan read it before the king. When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. We don't really know what was written in the book. Some say that it was only the Torah, which is the first five books in the Bible, and some say that it could have been the reonomy, but whatever was in the book created an urgency in Shaphan to read it to the king and created great sorrow in Josiah.

[25 : 36] The action of tearing the clothes was an expression of deep sorrow. Sometimes people did it when a relative died, like Jacob, when he did it when they told him that Joseph, his son, had died.

Also, it was a reaction that showed indignation for something and sorrow for something bad that happened. Think about Josiah with this reaction.

Josiah didn't know anything about the book, not even about the content of the book at this point, but when he heard it, he didn't justify himself about not knowing what was in the book.

He showed deep sorrow for the judgment that was over him and the nation. The law was broken and forgotten.

They were destined to receive God's wrath. But also, Josiah didn't show a superficial repentance. Josiah was deeply moved by what their disobedience to God entailed.

[26 : 49] God gave them the commandment to keep his love and obey it. At this point, they had forgotten it and followed all their gods.

They didn't take care of the commandment to teach their kids in God's word and this was the result of this. Let's look at God's command in Deuteronomy 6 chapter 6 4 through 9 and let's go to look in our Bibles Deuteronomy chapter 6 verses 4 through 9 and it says hear O Israel the Lord our God the Lord is one you should love Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart you shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk to them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes you shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates this is probably something of what

Josiah heard when the book was read by Shaphan they had disobeyed the Lord they didn't pass through every generation they just decided not to do it at one point they didn't know anything about this this is terrible this is so sad no and sometimes we don't realize that we behave like this we forget to read the Bible we skip our devotional time with our family just because sometimes we are tired just because sometimes we just forget it this might seem like it won't create any impact in our lives but it will if we don't study God's word and we don't teach our families or kids there is a huge risk of disobedience a huge huge risk to break God's commandments now what makes Josiah righteous was not this superficial act of tearing his clothes we know that it wasn't it was the attitude of his heart he feared the Lord he feared his command this sorrow happened inside of Josiah think about what David recognized about God in one of his psalms and I'm going to read it the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit a broken and country heart oh God you will not despise God doesn't want a superficial Christianity everyone can behave like a good Christian in fact we live in a time where everyone thinks that they are good Christians that they are good people but the Lord wants more than that he wants a deep change in our hearts and this can only happen when we go to his word when fear his when we fear his word and his commandments the real change in our

lives begins we are looking at four characteristics of a heart that places the Lord we saw that a righteous heart places the Lord a diligent heart places the Lord a fearful heart places the Lord now let's see our last point a heart that repents places the Lord and let's read verses 12 through 17 of today's chapter 2nd Kings 22 verses 12 through 17 and it says and the king commanded Hilkiah the priest and Ahicham the son of Shaphan and Achor the son of Micaiah and Shaphan the secretary and Asiah the king's servant saying go inquire of the Lord for me and for the people and for all Judah concerning the words of his book that has been found for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book to do according to all that is written concerning us so

[31 : 49] Hilkiah the priest and Ahicham and Agor and Shaphan and Isaiah went to Huldah the prophetess the wife of Shalom the son of Tikvah son of Harhas keeper of the wardrobe now she lived in Jerusalem in the second quarter and they talked to her and she said to them thus says the Lord the God of Israel tell the man who sent you to me thus says the Lord behold I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place and it will not be quenched after

Josiah hears the law his reaction was also to look for an answer from God he knew that he was going to obtain an answer by seeking the Lord and he sent this man to look for answers as I mentioned at the beginning there were important prophets during Josiah's reign but they didn't go to them it is possible that they were not in the region or they were just not available but they waited until they were available and went to hold that this is the only time this lady is mentioned in the Bible besides second chronicles and it is possible that she was known in the kingdom because of her husband position in the kingdom and they went to her to obtain their answer and we are going to see two parts of God's answer the first one is the judgment for the nation and the second one is the mercy for

Josiah let's see first the judgment to the nation and the verses that we read and as we see in this passage God was not going to change his mind regarding his judgment at this point there was nothing Judah could have been made to avoid it they provoke his anger by praising other gods before they only got last year I got my driver's license in Mexico we don't the system works differently we don't do a driver test we don't they don't ask you any questions you just need to be 18 and have your ID with you and you can get your driver's license and I had to study so hard for this test so hard and when

I was at the DMV I was so happy because I passed the test and I remember standing happy in front of the desk waiting for the lady to give me my provisional license and I was ready to be done there until she told me okay let's go to your car man I was sweating I was so nervous I couldn't even understand her her English was so hard to understand and I was there the first five minutes I did everything right I drove at 20 miles per hour I turned on my blinkers to go to the right I even remember how to do the three points turn around I was so proud of myself when I did it I fully stopped at every single stop sign and finally when we were on the way back just one more minute with that lady in the car with me and it was going to be done but there is always a but at the light when it turned

I was at the light and when it turned green I forgot that to turn to the left in a two lane road the cars in the left have the right of way so I started going not fast it was slow and the next thing that I remember is this lady screaming so hard that I didn't stop because I thought I did something wrong I stopped because I thought something was wrong with her and then I realized that I did something wrong and we got to the building I knew she wasn't happy I remember feeling so guilty and disappointed of myself and I was hoping she was going to forget what I did of course she didn't forget it she told me you have good driving skills but only for that mistake I can't give you your license so come back next week I was so embarrassed

[37 : 14] I knew I broke a law in front of someone that had the authority to approve of denying my license and I think I said I'm sorry to her like three times and I even told her that it was because I was so nervous hoping it was going to work that that was going to work for her but she was not going to change her mind she didn't and it was because I broke a rule the same happened with the nation of Judah they broke God's commandments there was not going to be a second chance this time they had several warnings before they didn't even have the book of the law with them they

forgot their God and this wasn't just forgetting something for their bad memory it was intentional they decided to forget it forget God they decided to disobey him

God was not going to change his mind about their judgment this time although there was a judgment for the nation look now the mercy that God showed to Uzziah in verses 18 through 20 but the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the Lord thus shall you say to him thus says the Lord the God of Israel regarding the words that you have read because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard how I spoke against this place and against this inhabitation that they should become a desolation and a curse and you have torn your clothes and wept before me I also have heard you declares the Lord therefore behold I will gather you to your fathers and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that

I will bring upon this place and they brought back word to the king God's answer had blessings for Josiah his reign was going to be peaceful and the judgment for the nation was not going to happen while he was alive Josiah humbled his heart before the Lord the King James version says that his heart was tender which means that was easily affected by a sense of his guilt before the Lord a person with a tender heart easily recognizes the sin in his life and this causes pain this type of heart turns away from sin in repentance and looks for God's forgiveness but a hard heart is insensitive to God's word and doesn't allow the spirit to work in it what kind of heart do you have God tells Isaiah the following in Isaiah 62 verse 2 but this is the one to whom I will look he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word God wants humble hearts that seek him and tremble at his word he wants us to grow in the image of Christ and he has given us his Holy Spirit because he knows that we can do it by ourselves he defeated sin on the cross Jesus said and we have been set free from condemnation we don't have to look back to our previous sins asking for forgiveness again because his blood covered them all through his sacrifice what else do we need to realize that he has done everything to set us free from the slavery of sin and that the only thing that he asks us is obedience to his word

Josiah didn't see the destruction of the nation because he obeyed the Lord and brought blessing to the nation during his reign his obedience should impact our lives to do the same to be faithful and to be righteous today we learned four characteristics of a heart that pleases the Lord a heart that is righteous a heart that is diligent a heart that is fearful and a heart that repents may the Lord guide us in his word and help us to obey him let's pray