

Hezekiah Trusted God, 2 Kings 18:1-8 and 2 Chronicles 29:1-31:21

Introduction

- Our Christian walk is made up of many facets. Each facet is important and each is integral to our lives. I became a Christian when I was a senior in high school. I had not grown up in a Christian home and so had no real knowledge of the Bible or Christians things. I knew that Christians study the Bible and spent time at church. Pretty basic stuff. I didn't realize that Christianity really made a difference in a life. You believed in Jesus and you were saved. God was God and I was just a person going through my life. I realized that hanging around Christians that Christianity was more than those few things. I realized that God wanted my life to change. So I dug into God's Word, became committed to attending a local church, attended a weekly Bible Study, and was baptized. God changed me and molded me. Time passed and I realized that God wanted me to be sold out to Him. Have you read the little book "*My heart - Christ's home?*" That book changed my life yet again and I took another step towards understanding what was required of me from God's perspective.

Lesson

- God desires those who are 100% sold out to him.** The prophet Samuel when he was confronting King Saul made the very insightful declaration in **1 Sam. 13:14** *The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.* God desired those who ruled for Him to be a "*man after His own heart*" and by application what He wants for all of us. It is not enough to attend church and go to Bible Study. God wants us to be committed to Him.
- The example of David's life was mentioned again and again in the Old Testament:
- 1 Kings 11:33** *...and they have not walked in My ways, doing what is right in My sight and observing My statutes and My ordinances, as his father David did.*
- 1 Kings 15:11** *Asa did what was right in the sight of the Lord, like David his father.*
- 1 Kings 22:43** *He (Jehoshaphat) walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the Lord.*
- Doing right** is more than just doing good things, but also **being the person God wants you to be**. It is a much a statement of **character** as of **actions**. A person who is after God's own heart is the one who does what is right.
- The passage before us today is bookended by two statements. The beginning of the passage for today begins with **2 Chr 29:2** and **2 Kings 18:3** both of which state: *He (Hezekiah) did right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.*
- At the end of the passage for today **2 Chr. 31:20** states *Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah; and he did what was good, right and true before the Lord his God.*
- Hezekiah was a person after God's own heart and a person who did what God wanted him to do. He did what was right in the sight of God.
- Point #1:** Doing right includes a passion for God
 - 2 Kings 28:6,7** *For he (Hezekiah) clung to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses. And the Lord was with him; wherever he went he prospered.*
 - Those who do right **cling** to God. They hold onto to Him. They desire what He desires and do what He wants them to do. Those who do right obey God and follow His commandments. The focus of their lives is on God and being the kind of person that God wants them to be.
 - Matt. 6:33** *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*
 - 1 Cor. 10:31** *Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

- **Deu. 6:4-6** *Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.*
- **Those who do right are those who have a passion for God, to be like Him, to do what He wants, and to focus on God and His desires.**
- **Point #2:** Doing right includes correct worship of God
 - The nation of Judah had a problem. Hezekiah's father Ahaz had closed the doors of the temple and prevented the worship of God in the way that God had provided for the children of Israel.
 - **2 Chr. 28:24** *Moreover, when Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces; and he closed the doors of the house of the Lord and made altars for himself in every corner of Jerusalem.*
 - Ahaz was not a person who did what was right. In fact, he turned away from the true God and worshiped false gods and idols. He rejected God and God rejected him. He was more self-focused instead of God focused.
 - When Hezekiah became king it says that his first order of business was to correct this problem: **2 Chr. 29:3** *In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them.*
 - The temple was where God's presence was manifested to the nation of Israel. It was where once a year the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement and make a sacrifice for the people and cleanse them from all sin (**Lev. 16:30** *for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord.*) It was where daily sacrifices were made. The temple was the focus of worship of Yahweh. Having the doors of the temple closed was tantamount to saying that Judah had rejected and turned their back upon God. The northern tribes had been conquered during the end of Ahaz's reign. Judah itself was on the verge of being led into captivity also.
 - **Those who do right need to worship the right God and worship Him correctly. There is a right way and a wrong way to worship God.**
- **Point #3:** Doing right includes being set apart for God
 - The passage tells us that Hezekiah called the priests and Levites to "consecrate" the House of the Lord and also to consecrate themselves. **Question:** What does "consecrate" mean? It means, "to be holy", "to be set apart for God", "to be sanctified." It is dedicating yourself to God and His ways. It means having sin removed from your life and becoming more like God.
 - **2 Chr. 29:4** *Listen to me, Levites! Consecrate yourselves now and consecrate the temple of the Lord, the God of your ancestors. Remove all defilement from the sanctuary.*
 - The temple and the Levites had both been defiled and they both needed cleansing in order to fully worship God. King Ahaz and others had defiled the temple by sacrificing in the wrong way, not the way that God had proscribed. The Levites had not followed the regulations that were directed by the Law to keep themselves clean and set apart for God. King Hezekiah tells them to consecrate the temple to prepare for the true worship of God. Judah had not been faithful in serving and worshiping God. Something drastic had to be done. Hezekiah called them to "clean it up". Hezekiah had a plan and that plan included preparing the Temple and the Levites before the next step could be accomplished.
 - The **New American Commentary** on 2 Chronicles by J. A. Thompson states, *From its misuse and disuse under Ahaz, the temple was still unclean, but the task of consecration had to be done by the priests and Levites, who were themselves in need of cleansing...In both cases the thought of making holy is prominent. The Levites needed to be holy themselves before they could undertake the task of making the temple holy.*
- Thompson
 - Unholiness in our lives includes those things that take us away from God. For the Israelites this included idols and other ungodly items of worship.
 - **2 Chr. 31:1** *Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah, broke the pillars in pieces, cut down the Asherim and pulled down the high places and the altars*

throughout all Judah and Benjamin, as well as in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the sons of Israel returned to their cities, each to his possession.

- God is serious about us becoming “holy”, being set apart for God. The New Testament restates this desire. Easton’s Bible Dictionary states in its article on sanctification, the process of becoming holy:
- *Sanctification involves more than a mere moral reformation of character, brought about by the power of the truth: it is the work of the Holy Spirit bringing the whole nature more and more under the influences of the new gracious principles implanted in the soul in regeneration. In other words, sanctification is the carrying on to perfection the work begun in regeneration, and it extends to the whole man – Easton’s Bible Dictionary*
- **1 Pet 1:14-16** *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.*
- **2 Cor. 3:18** *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*
- **Those who do right need to be set apart for God, to have God as the focus of their lives and not their self-centered interests.** Being holy means to be become more like God.
- **Point #4:** Doing right includes worship that is multifaceted
 - A) Worship includes the correct object – This was the primary error of the nations of Israel and Judah. They failed to worship the true God and settled for idols and false gods.
 - The Ten Commandments start with this in **Ex. 20:2-3** *You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*
 - B) Worship includes the right offerings – The Jews had multiple offerings that they were to bring: burnt offerings, sin offerings, thanks offerings, grain offering, etc.
 - **2 Chr. 29:21-22** *They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs and seven male goats for a sin offering for the kingdom, the sanctuary, and Judah. And he ordered the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the Lord. So they slaughtered the bulls, and the priests took the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. [They also slaughtered the rams and sprinkled the blood on the altar; they slaughtered the lambs also and sprinkled the blood on the altar.]*
 - For us, the offerings we are to bring are different. **Heb. 10:11-14** *Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.*
 - It is by the blood of Jesus that our sins have been forgiven and He has offered himself once for all time to pay the price for our sins. Our offering?
 - **Rom. 12:1** *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*
 - We are to offer ourselves to God to be used by Him and to be changed by Him. We are called to give our best to him.
 - **Illustration:** *(Several years ago I read an article about) Queen Mary, who made it her practice to visit Scotland every year. She was so loved by the people there that she often mingled with them freely without a protective escort. One afternoon while walking with some children, she went out farther than she'd*

planned. Dark clouds came up unexpectedly, so she stopped at a nearby house to borrow an umbrella. "If you will lend me one," she said to the lady who answered the door, "I will send it back to you tomorrow." The woman didn't recognize the Queen and was reluctant to give this stranger her best umbrella. So she handed her one that she intended to throw away. The fabric was torn in several places and one of the ribs was broken. The next day another knock was heard at the door. When the lady opened it, she was greeted by a royal guard, who was holding in her hand her old, tattered umbrella. "The Queen sent me," he said. "She asked me to thank you for loaning her this." For a moment the woman was stunned, then, she burst into tears. "Oh, what an opportunity I missed," she cried. "I didn't give the Queen my very best!"

- C) Worship includes music, song, praise, giving – Worship demands our response, which is not just passively receiving what is presented. We are called to respond in praise and thanksgiving to God.
- **2 Chr. 29:25,29** *He then stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with harps and with lyres...While the whole assembly worshiped, the singers also sang and the trumpets sounded; all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.*
- We are also called to bring our tithes, our money, to God. We are called to give to God from what He has provided for us. The Israelites brought so much that the tithes had to be piled into heaps...
- **2 Chr. 31:6** *The sons of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of sacred gifts which were consecrated to the Lord their God, and placed them in heaps.*
- *In effect, Hezekiah restored the pure worship associated with David and Solomon...The occasion was solemn and grand. Hezekiah had fulfilled his covenant, and worship of the true God in the manner he had prescribed resumed. - Thompson*
- **Those who do right need to worship God fully, truly, including song, music, offering, giving, thanks, and studying God's Word.** We are called to worship God and respond to His guidance.

- **Point #5:** Doing right includes reaching out to others

- The nation of Israel had not celebrated the Passover for many years. The Passover is a feast designed by God to remember what God had done for the nation in rescuing them from slavery in Egypt by applying blood to their doorposts so that they would not die and they would be passed over. Hezekiah wanted all the Jews to gather and to celebrate the Passover, including the remnant of the northern kingdom.
- **2 Chr. 30:1** *Now Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover to the Lord God of Israel.*
- Hezekiah stated in his letter to them, **2 Chr. 30:6,9** *O sons of Israel, return to the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, that He may return to those of you who escaped and are left from the hand of the kings of Assyria...For if you return to the Lord, your brothers and your sons will find compassion before those who led them captive and will return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and compassionate, and will not turn His face away from you if you return to Him.*
- We are called to reach out and tell others about Jesus. Church is not an exclusive club that has a closed and locked door. Jesus has told us to tell others about Him and to invite them to receive Jesus as their Savior and become part of the church body. We are not responsible for the result, but we are responsible to tell others about the Lord and Savior.
- **Acts 1:8** *...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*
- Hezekiah took the step and some responded and some rejected him, but the opportunity was presented for each to make their own decisions.
- **1 Chr. 30:10-12** *So the couriers passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. Nevertheless some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded by the word of the Lord.*

- Thompson in his commentary makes an interesting statement: *Returning to Jerusalem after so many years of independence required more humility than the majority of northerners could muster. How often pride has expressed itself in scorn and ridicule. The positive response of those in Israel as well as Judah was due to the “hand of God,” as are all true revivals.* – Thompson
- The Passover was postponed one month in order to allow as many as possible to participate and to allow the priests to be consecrated. Many came who had not been “consecrated” themselves and yet they were still allowed to participate. Our God is a loving and gracious God and He understands and looks at the heart and their desires.
- **2 Chr. 30:18-20** *For Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “May the good Lord pardon everyone who prepares his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though not according to the purification rules of the sanctuary.” So the Lord heard Hezekiah and healed the people.*
- God wants us to turn to Him. He is merciful and kind. He is willing to forgive and to provide for all to come to Him.
- **Those who do right reach out to others, to preach the gospel, to include that who put their faith in Jesus. We are not called to close and lock the door but to go out and find others to bring in.**
- Application: **Question:** Do you want to be the person who “does right”? Follow the example of Hezekiah:
 - **1 - Doing right includes a passion for God:** Those who do right are those who have a passion for God, to be like Him, to do what He wants, and to focus on God and His desires.
 - **Prov 3:5,6** *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*
 - **2- Doing right includes correct worship of God:** Those who do right need to worship the right God and worship Him correctly. There is a right way and a wrong way to worship God.
 - **John 4:24** *God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*
 - **3 - Doing right includes being set apart for God:** Those who do right need to be set apart for God, to have God as the focus of their lives and not their self-centered interests. Being holy means to be become more like God.
 - **Eph. 5:26-27** *...so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.*
 - **4 - Doing right includes worship that is multifaceted:** Those who do right need to worship God fully, truly, including song, music, offering, giving, thanks, and studying God’s Word. We are called to worship God and respond to His guidance
 - **Col 3:16-17** *Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. [Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.]*
 - **5 - Doing right includes reaching out to others:** Those who do right reach out to others, to preach the gospel, to include that who put their faith in Jesus. We are not called to close and lock the door but to go out and find others to bring in.
 - **Rom 10:14-15** *How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!”*
 - Summary