

Message Reflections

a little something extra to keep you connected to Jesus this week

Message Reflections accompany the [weekly message](#).

The recent loss of the 'Titan,' the small submarine bound for the century old wreckage of the *Titanic*, surfaced stories regarding the *Titanic* and people who, for various reasons, canceled their plans of being on its maiden voyage.

Mr. George W. Vanderbilt, heir to the Vanderbilt fortune, canceled his plans on the luxury liner when a member of the family strenuously objected to their sailing aboard the new ship, "because so many things can go wrong on a maiden voyage." They canceled three days before *Titanic's* departure.

Reverend James M. Gray was a pastor, Bible scholar, editor and hymn writer, as well as the president of Moody Bible Institute. He was scheduled to speak at the graduation ceremony of Moody Institute and was about to head back from England to do so. However, a close friend urged him to change his plans and remain in England longer so he could be aboard the luxurious *Titanic*, and even provided him the ticket. But Gray refused because he felt duty bound to be at Moody Institute to preach to the graduates and canceled the tickets on *Titanic* taking an earlier steamship home—a week before the *Titanic* sank.

What must happen to be willing to change plans, to upset the expected pattern, to take a different route?

For George Vanderbilt it seems to have been a desire to ease the fears and concern of a family member; for Rev. Gray it was a sense of duty and responsibility.

Josiah, the young king of Judah, found himself the head of a nation that had come to expect its leaders to behave in certain ways. Preceding kings held to patterns, and paths of depravity that spiraled ever downward. The people came to expect kings who not only allowed them to behave in ways completely foreign to their nations' foundational values, but had grown used to kings who led the way in acts of selfishness, greed and lust.

How does a young man, carrying the burden of national leadership, born into a home where the example before him was of godlessness, and moral depravity; what could possibly happen to bring change in him?

Josiah listened to God's Word.

From God's Word, he learned what God expected, and that far outweighed the expectations of his people.

In reading through the account of Josiah's reign, it seems clear that as he began to deviate from the expected path, he would have been under mounting pressure. The kind of pressure that comes with significant change, whether it is change in a relationship, a family, a church, business or nation. But no one else could respond to what the Holy Spirit showed Josiah through God's Word, only Josiah. He alone recognized and carried the responsibility for what the Holy Spirit showed Him.

Josiah. It was his responsibility to respond and act on what he heard from the Lord. Even though Josiah is frequently overlooked, he was a man of great courage; and with the strength of his convictions, he took action and changed the expected course of his life.

²⁵ Never before had there been a king like Josiah, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul and strength, obeying all the laws of Moses. And there has never been a king like him since.
2 Kings 23:25

This story begs the question for all of us:

What is the Lord asking of us that we may want to avoid because the pressure or the risk seems too great?

Josiah is known for his willingness to do the right thing regardless of the personal pressure or risk.

Are you willing to do the right thing regardless of the pressure or risk?

It is important to keep in mind that we may not see the results we desire from our action of change. With all that Josiah accomplished, we find that once he died, Judah went back to how things had been before his reign; Josiah changed direction—but not the nation.

Are you willing to follow the leading of the Lord if no one else does?