

A HEART FOR THE LORD

“Walking in the Ways of the Lord”

2 Chronicles 17:1-10

Main Idea: Walk in the ways of the Lord by obeying the Word of the Lord.

Protect what belongs to the Lord (1-2).

Jehoshaphat was Asa's son. It didn't always happen this way among the good kings of Judah, but by God's grace, Jehoshaphat's heart followed his father's heart for the Lord. He was the second, good king of Judah, and like his father Asa, he was faithful but not perfect. He followed the Lord all the days of his life, and in doing that, he led many of God's people to do the same. In the opening verses in 1 Chronicles 17, Jehoshaphat's actions to protect what belonged to the Lord were a reflection of walking in the ways of the Lord. God protects his own! He protects those who are his, and he protects his glory above all. With the threat from the northern kingdom, Israel, Jehoshaphat followed the Lord's example. The wisdom of God gave him wisdom to know that steps needed to be taken to protect what belonged to the Lord. He placed forces and garrisons in key locations to defend against the attack of Israel, and in doing so, he protected God's people who were under his leadership. Today, his testimony is a model for faithfulness to walk in the ways of the Lord. The Lord still protects what belongs to him, so to walk in his ways, do the same.

1. What did Jehoshaphat do to increase protection against an attack of Israel? Did he do this alone and by himself, or did he have to rely on others?
2. Are their spiritual enemies around us – our church and our families – who are planning and actively attacking the hearts of God's people? If so, in what ways? What are some examples of how the enemy is trying to attack what belongs to the Lord today?
3. How do we protect against the attack of the enemy today? Talk about this question in the context of the church and in the context of your home. Can you do it alone? Do you need others to help? What's God's design for and provision for this help?
4. What do you need to do to protect those you lead, who belong to the Lord?

Seek the Lord, and obey his Word (3-5).

How did Jehoshaphat have the wisdom of God to protect the people of God? The answer is simple. The Lord was with him! The Lord was guiding and protecting Jehoshaphat. The Lord was leading and directing his leadership and his decisions. Why? Because Jehoshaphat was faithful in solely worshiping the Lord! Jehoshaphat refused to worship idols. Instead, he sought after the Lord. He didn't allow his heart to be pulled to worship anyone or anything but the one, true God. In seeking after the Lord, Jehoshaphat also followed the commands of the Lord. As he sought the Lord, he heard the commandments of the Lord, and although he was the King of Judah, God was the King of his life. Even the king obeyed the King of kings! In response to his faithfulness in worship, the Lord established Jehoshaphat's kingdom. Nothing has changed. Leading others to seek the Lord and to obey his Word starts with a leader who seeks the Lord and obeys his Word. From our church to our homes, we

need leaders who follow the faithful example of Jehoshaphat, setting their hearts to only seek and obey the Lord.

1. How do those who worship idols seek after those idols? What does it mean to seek after the Lord? What did this look like in Jehoshaphat's life?
2. How are you seeking after the Lord on a daily basis? What does this look like in your home? What does it look like as a member of a church?
3. How is obedience to the Lord's commandments connected to the reality of seeking after the Lord?
4. What is one thing that the Lord is calling you to obey right now in your life? Why is one step of obedience important in obeying all that the Lord commanded?

Live courageously for the Lord (6-10).

- *Remove idols that pull hearts away from God (6).*
- *Expose hearts to the teaching of God's Word (7-9).*

The more Jehoshaphat knew the Lord and his commandments, the more Jehoshaphat desired to live for the Lord and to see others in the kingdom do the same. Jehoshaphat lived courageously for the Lord, and God gave us two important examples of Jehoshaphat's courage. The first was something that Jehoshaphat did in following his father's example. He continued to remove from Judah the idols that pulled hearts away from the Lord. His father Asa had done this as well, and while neither one of them removed all the high places, they were obedient in removing many of the idols from the land during their time as king. Additionally, Jehoshaphat sent officials, Levites, and priests throughout the land of Judah in order to take God's Word to God's people. Before Billy Sunday and Billy Graham, Jehoshaphat organized "tent revivals" in all the cities of Judah, where these officials, Levites, and priests would read and teach God's Word to his people. The result was a great movement of the Lord in the hearts of his people, and this led to an added protection of God's people as the Lord put fear in the hearts of those kingdoms around Judah in order to give Judah peace and rest. What a call for us to still live courageously by faith today! The key to revival is simple: Remove idols and proclaim and teach the Word of God. God will always use these things to draw hearts to himself in faith and obedience.

1. What inspires you about those like Jehoshaphat who live courageously? Why are we inspired by courageous living? What makes courageousness possible when it comes to living out your faith?
2. Are there any idols that God's identified in your heart or in your home? What steps are you taking to remove those idols from your home? Discuss, and pray for one another.
3. How are you exposing your heart to the teaching of God's Word? For those the Lord has given you the responsibility to lead, how are you making sure that they are being exposed to the reading and teaching of God's Word? Talk about this in the context of your church and home.
4. How have you experienced the protection of the Lord in your home and church? Share, and praise the Lord for his protection in Jesus Christ that provides peace and rest for our souls!