

## CAN I REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

APRIL 2, 2023

## WORSHIP

No Other Like Jesus, As  
We Pray, I Will Bow To You,  
Worthy Is The Lamb

## WELCOME

Look at your palm or hand.  
What can you do with it  
that can make a positive  
difference in someone's  
life this week?

## WORD

(READ 2 KINGS 22-23 AND  
2 CHRONICLES 34-35)

## 2 KINGS 22:1-2

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. <sup>2</sup> He did right in the sight of the Lord and walked in all the way of his father David, nor did he turn aside to the right or to the left.

## CHRONICLES 34:31-33

<sup>31</sup> Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book. <sup>32</sup> Moreover, he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand with him. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. <sup>33</sup> Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve the Lord their God. Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from following the Lord God of their fathers.

This Change Makers series is about God. It centers on Him because God is the change maker. He then allows us to be agents of change in this world. It is not about you and me! It's about how a change-making God can make His changes in this world through ordinary people like us.

Let's look at how He took a young man named Josiah, made him king and used him in amazing ways.

Josiah ruled during the divided Kingdom of Israel: Israel on the north and Judah on the south. Between these two kingdoms, there were 39 kings; only 8 of them were "good kings", all from the Kingdom of Judah --- Josiah was one of them.

Josiah had to deal with the sinful practices of his grandfather, Manasseh (**2 Kings 21:1-2**) and his father, Amon (**2 Kings 21:19-21**) have done before him.

The Kingdom of Judah was in deep spiritual darkness and dryness. By the grace of God, King Josiah came (**2 Kings 22:1-2**) and even at a young age, he was seeking the Lord and began to make changes in the kingdom (**Chronicles 34:3**).

Josiah's life teaches us the following:

## I. CHANGE STARTS WITH GOD IN YOU

The people of God have turned their backs from the Lord to worship idols, and the temple of God was in a state of disrepair. Josiah had set to do physical repairs to the temple of the Lord (**2 Kings 22:3-6**) but the people of God needed far more than just renovating a place. They needed a change of heart and to see that in the young king.

The high priest, Hilkiah, found the Book of the Law by accident in the temple and the scribe, Shaphan, refers to it as "a book", but that book was the Law of the Lord (**2 Kings 22:8,10**).

God's command was for the king is to read and write a copy of the Law for himself (**Deuteronomy 17:18-19**). Josiah understood that he needed to assume responsibility for where God has placed him. He responded with deep sorrow and repentance, and by knowing more of what's on God's heart (**2 Kings 22:11-13**). **Deuteronomy 28** lists blessings for obedience (**vv. 1-13**) and curses for disobedience (**vv.15,41**). King Josiah heard a doomsday scenario for the kingdom of Judah (**Deuteronomy 28:49-52**).

Is there something in our lives that we need to repent of?

## II. COMMIT TO GOD'S WORD

The judgment of the people's sin was unstoppable and remind us of the truth of the stewardship of influence (**2 Kings 22:14-20**). We are given a certain circle of influence by God, but we cannot change people's hearts. God is the real change maker. Huldah, the prophetess, declared that for as long as Josiah was the king, follows God, and does everything he can to influence everyone else to do the same, judgement of Judah sins can be delayed. But in the end, people will have to make their own choice.

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### WORD

Josiah wanted the people to hear the Word of God (**2 Kings 23:1-2**). Leading by example, he made a public covenant before the Lord and all the people joined him (**2 Kings 23:3**). The Word of God is not just a book; it is a person — Jesus is the Living Word! When we help bring people into the refreshing presence of the Word, we bring them into the refreshing presence of Jesus. **Psalm 1:1-3** describes a person refreshed by God's Word. It begins with God in us. Before we can even refresh others, we need to make sure we ourselves are refreshed.

How much time do you spend in God's Word?

### III. CLEAN OUT IDOLS

This is not just a matter of what we need to start doing but also what we need to stop doing. There were representations of false gods inside the temple of the Lord (**2 Kings 23:4**). King Josiah had them burned and had their ashes carried outside his territory.

The people of God were burning their children as a sacrifice to Molech (**2 Kings 23:10-11**). This whole society had become deeply depraved with idolatry for a long time. Solomon, supposedly the wisest man who ever lived, loved many foreign women and his wives turned his heart away from the Lord worship idols (**2 Kings 23:13**). The Ark of the Covenant was not even in the temple anymore (**2 Chronicles 35:3**). God was replaced by idols in the hearts of the people. King Josiah ordered the Ark of the Covenant returned to where it belonged.

Is it possible that when we come to worship, we bring our idols -- people, pleasure, possessions, power, etc. -- with us?

### IV. CELEBRATE GOD'S GRACE

Finally, we celebrate God's grace because a changed life used to help change other people is lived only by God's grace. This happened in Josiah's time by observing and celebrating the Passover (**2 Kings 23:21-23**) once again.

Today, we celebrate the Lord's Supper and telling others what He has done in our lives so that they can be drawn to the real change maker. Celebrate the grace of God by telling someone about Jesus—that way we can be God's change makers on Earth. That's where the change begins, when God is in us and when God is in that person.

**2 Kings 23:25** was not just about God's change in Josiah's life. This was also about how God used him. This is about the stewardship of influence. Josiah did everything he could to influence people towards the Word of God, to clean out their idols, and to celebrate His grace (**2 Chronicles 34:33**).

Judah was eventually conquered a hundred years later, but the prophet Zechariah prophesied that God would send a King, into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Jesus, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords! God sent Jesus so we could have complete forgiveness and be spared from God's wrath by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. God sent the King who saves forever (**John 3:16-17**).

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

#### 1. Self-Check.

How can you be more committed to knowing and applying God's Word? How can you help others (family, friends) do the same?

#### 2. Setting It Right.

What idols do you need to get rid of in your own life? How can you help others do the same?

#### 3. Living It Out.

With whom can you celebrate the grace of God by sharing the gospel to them and possibly discipling them? week?

### WORKS

#### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for our hearts to change so that we can be change makers and for people's hearts to change—to turn away from sin and towards God. Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can, as long as ever you can (John Wesley). Share your testimony and the gospel to others this Holy Week

### WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

#### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

#### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort for Turkish and Syrian people devastated by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.

#### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

#### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

#### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

### MEMORY VERSE

#### 2 CHRONICLES 34:33

Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel and made all who were present in Israel to serve the Lord their God. Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from following the Lord God of their fathers.