

Faithful: The Life of Josiah

Faithful to Seek Him First • October 13, 2024

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A. Introduction

All in- story of Steph. We went on one date, and she was giving me some mixed vibes... I didn't have time to play games... you need to decide right now if you're in or not. I don't have time for this- and so I think I just pressured my wife into dating me...

But everyone has to have a defining moment when they decide if they're all in. This has to happen in our jobs, our relationships, and ultimately, in our relationship with God.

So today, I want to talk to you about being all in for God.

We must decide where we are at with God. Josiah modeled someone who was all in. Listen again...

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 (NLT)

B. All in means...

1. **SEEKING** God with your whole heart.

(2 Chronicles 34:3a, 30b; Psalm 63:5)

In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David.

2 Chronicles 34:3a (NIV)

He didn't sit back; he began to seek God. I will never forget a wise leader from my church who said to me, *if you tell me you love God, show me your calendar.* Because what you love, you invest in.

Josiah, he began to seek God. He began to chase after Him. He began to put Him first.

If you are bored with your faith, it's because you haven't given your whole life to God. No first-century Christian would claim Jesus if they weren't all in... it would cost them their health, their land, their job, and possibly even their life... because Ceasar was considered lord.

Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You. I will praise You as long as I live, and in Your name I will lift up my hands. I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise You.

Psalm 63:3-5 (NIV)

Notice, he's not bored; he's feasting on the love of God. We asked a friend to bring a Thanksgiving dish, and she brought quinoa mac and cheese... and we have never invited her to Thanksgiving again... there is grace with the Lord, but not in our house ... it was awful, right up there with cats, with the most awful things...

But stop treating God like He's spiritual quinoa. Notice it says *I will be satisfied with the richest of foods.*

If you're not experiencing those, it's because you're not all in. To be all in means you have to build your life around God.

You must seek God daily. That's why Jesus says give us today our daily bread!

God designed us to eat daily, 4 or 5 times each day... why didn't God design us to eat weekly, or monthly... He did that to remind us of Himself each day... daily bread is our way of saying every day we are going to trust You...

But to get daily bread won't always be easy or convenient... there will be times when we don't feel it.

So, the invitation from the Spirit is that God will grow your faith beyond your wildest imagination... God is in the business of taking small things and making them mighty... but what price are you willing to pay to protect and cultivate your heart? Are you willing to carve out time throughout the day to meditate to fill your heart with the Word of God?

Think about this: for a portion of Josiah's life, they didn't have the Word of God. It was lost, and notice what happened to the people without the Word of God. But as they began to dive into the Word, it transformed this...

I love this!

There the king read to them the entire Book of the Covenant that had been found in the LORD'S Temple.

2 Chronicles 34:30b (NLT)

One of the reasons we studied the Words of Jesus and now we are in the Old Testament is to notice the Word entirely... We want to be a church that doesn't cherry-pick topics... we want to preach the WHOLE BIBLE because we believe it takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian.... amen...

So, we must be people who study this... we must be people who meditate on the Words of God... people who draw near.

Do you have a:

Time:

Place:

Plan:

I felt the Spirit prompt me, not in a harsh way, that if I turned off the TV and invested in a little extra time with the Lord, He would fill me to overflowing. I still watch TV, but I take time to sit and be with God, and some of the most powerful moments have happened, just creating a little room for God.

B. All in means...

2. **BREAKING** our sin cycles.

You have to go to war with sin...

God is in the business of new things...

If no one in your family followed Jesus, God is calling you to be the first. He wants to break that cycle.

If you have struggled with some sin your whole life, He wants to break that cycle.

If you think you aren't worthy to be forgiven, and this thought repeats in your mind, He wants to break that cycle.

Let me remind you. Josiah didn't really know the Lord when he became king. He could've thought *it's too late*. His grandfather was the most wicked king that had ever ruled, 2 Kings tells us. His father was evil and killed, too. The culture he stepped into was wicked. Listen...

Josiah tore down the altars that the kings of Judah had built on the palace roof above the upper room of Ahaz. The king destroyed the altars that Manasseh had built in the two courtyards of the LORD'S Temple. He smashed them to bits and scattered the pieces in the Kidron Valley. The king also desecrated the pagan shrines east of Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of Corruption, where King Solomon of Israel had built shrines for Ashtoreth, the detestable goddess of the Sidonians; and for Chemosh, the detestable god of the Moabites; and for Molech, the vile god of the Ammonites.

2 Kings 23:12-13 (NLT)

Notice the kings of Judah. Notice what his family tree was. Notice his past...

Let me make two points about what we see here.

1.) Sin has a way of returning.

Palace roof- was a way of saying that they built worship spots on rooftops to the gods of the stars, moon, and sun they worshipped. Rooftops were flat so they built them there.

But notice where it says he destroyed the altars that Manasseh had created. Manasseh was the most wicked king around... but towards the end of his life, he turned towards God.

Listen to what it says in 2 Chronicles 33:15...

And he took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem, and he threw them outside of the city.

2 Chronicles 33:15 (ESV)

Notice that he took them down, but he didn't destroy them. He threw them outside the city. So, more than likely, his son Amon found them and rebuilt them.

Also, the idols of Solomon mentioned would have been destroyed through the years, but one of the kings, possibly Manasseh, had restored them.

And for most of the time of kings, it's like there are glimpses of hope, but it seems like people keep returning and falling over and over again to sin.

For Christians, so many I talk to, they feel like they are going to overcome some sin pattern, some thought, some thing... they are good for a while they have moments of light, but it seems like they just can't overcome some sin because sins have a way of returning.

If you are really wanting to change, I want you to see two things in this text...

... The king destroyed the altars that Manasseh had built in the two courtyards of the LORD'S Temple. He smashed them to bits and scattered the pieces in the Kidron Valley. The king also desecrated the pagan shrines east of Jerusalem.

2 Kings 23:12-13a (NLT)

Notice what Josiah does. He smashed them to bits. He desecrated. Some versions say he ground them into powder. In fact, we will see that Josiah is so committed to going all in with God that he takes the bones of evil kings and grinds them down to a powder...

Why do this... He's showing sin must be completely cast out, it must be thrown out, it must be killed in our life...

And if we're honest, sometimes we don't really want to change. We are double-minded; we want Jesus, but we also want that thing... so we sort of part-way remove sins, but we don't "kill the sins."

Let me ask, how desperate are you? How much do you want that thing to change in your life?

Because until you can say like Josiah, I'll do whatever it takes for this thing to be gone. I don't care how extreme it looks to people around me... but I'm all in with God, then you won't change...

I want to show you something good... you ready? I'm not sure...

The king also desecrated the pagan shrines east of Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of Corruption, where King Solomon of Israel had built shrines...

2 Kings 23:13a (NLT)

Do you know what the Mount of Corruption was? It was the Mount of Olives.

In the Old Testament, there are really two encounters with it.

First comes from 2 Samuel 15:30...

But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went.

2 Samuel 15:30 (ESV)

So, David's son betrays him, and he is fleeing, and he's weeping. It's overwhelming; it's sad and painful.

Then, it's the reference above where Solomon takes the mountain and puts these idols. He made it a mount of scandal, darkness, corruption, and offense.

Now, in the New Testament, there are countless references to the Mount of Olives.

It's where Jesus taught the disciples how to pray, it's where Jesus regularly visited, it's where Jesus ascended back to heaven (Acts 1:9), it was where Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, but let me just give you two examples...

One is the triumphal entry we read about, where Jesus comes in riding on donkey, and the whole thing is about triumph and faithfulness.

But the other happens on the backside of the Mount of Olives... is the resurrection of Lazarus, which is all about victory and hope.

Mount of Corruption	Mount of Olives
Shame, weeping and sadness. (2 Samuel 15)	Triumph and faithfulness. (Luke 19:28-40)
Scandal, darkness and offense. (2 Kings 22:13)	Victory, hope and resurrection. (John 11:32)

In the Old Testament... this mountain represents what we see with David: shame and weeping. Then, in the story with Josiah, it's a place of darkness and scandal.

When Jesus enters the picture, this dark thing gets a new name... and it now becomes a place of triumph, faithfulness, victory, hope and resurrection.

So, I don't care how much shame there is... I don't care how much sadness there is... I don't care how much darkness there is. It doesn't matter how much of a scandal there is. It doesn't matter how great the offense is... When Jesus enters the picture, everything changes...

When Jesus enters the picture... Triumph comes.

When Jesus enters the picture... Faithfulness is possible.

When Jesus enters the picture... victory is here.

When Jesus enters the picture... resurrection life is available....

Let me ask you, church, do you believe God can do anything? Then why can't He break that thing in your life? Why can't He free you from those thoughts, that past, or addiction? Why can't you be transformed even today?

There was a story of Alexander the Great's general who asked Alexander the Great if he would pay for his daughter's wedding... and the story goes that he said yes...

One of the concerned people, probably the accountant, came up concerned, and said, *Alexander, you've got to stop this general... he's spending too much money, and he's saying you approved it... he's taking advantage of you...*

It was said that Alexander paused and said, *no, no...*

I'm honored that he would think of me as that powerful to spend that much and that he would think of me as that kind to ask... He gives me a great honor.

Church, let me remind you, that you have a God who is powerful, who is rich in love, and God is kind, and loves to give good gifts to His children, so let's ask Him!