



Near and Now

For Good – Josiah

By Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

Warm-up Question

*Who or what in your life has helped you know when you are on the right path?
Share an example.*



Photo by Alexander Milo on [Unsplash](#)

Discussion Questions

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

He Did What was Right in the Sight of the Lord

Read [II Kings 22 – 23](#) (especially 22:1-2)

Bible Story Reflection

It's never too late to get back on the right path. The stories of I and II Kings are full of examples of flawed and imperfect leaders; some of whom tried their best to lead the people wisely, and some of whom allowed evil to corrupt their hearts and lead the people astray. The chapters prior to II Kings 22 tell of Manasseh, who not only began the worship of idol statues within the Temple, but also instituted child sacrifice. This was the state of the people of Israel when Josiah began to reign at the young age of just eight years-old. Yet, despite his youth and inexperience, it is recorded that he did what was right in the sight of God, staying true to the path of righteousness as did his ancestor David.

Josiah ruled with a kind and just heart – so when the lost book of the law of the Lord was discovered and Josiah learned just how deeply the people of Israel had angered their God, he was devastated and longed for a way to help restore the people to righteousness. He set an example for the people and led them in renewing their covenant with the Lord; he destroyed the false idols and saw an end to the practice of child sacrifice; he did all that he could to set the people of Israel back on the path of what was good in the sight of the Lord. And yet, it is written that the provocations of Manasseh were so evil that the wrath of God against the people could not be tempered.

So, was all of Josiah's work and devotion for nothing? Of course not. The problems between the people of Israel and YHWH had been worsening for centuries – this was not a relationship that could be fully repaired by any one human leader. And yet, even though Josiah knew that practically all hope was lost for the people, he still did all that he could to help them. Josiah shows us that even when it feels as though our individual actions may not make a difference in the grand scheme of things, this work still matters to God; for any work that we do that brings even a little more good into the world is work worth doing.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you connect with the experience of Josiah?
2. What, in particular, is difficult about getting back on the right path after going astray?
3. Who do you reach out to when you need help discerning what God is calling you to do?
4. How do you think Josiah would tell his own story?
5. Is there any work you do in which your own personal efforts feel insignificant in the larger picture? How do you help yourself recontextualize your work?
6. How do you remember the ways in which God sees you striving to bring goodness into the world?
7. In what ways do you help others find their way back to their true selves when they have been led astray?
8. Are there wrongs in this world that you feel God calling you to correct? Give example

Activity Suggestions

Write a letter of encouragement to yourself, for you to read on a day when you feel like giving up on the work you've been called to do.

Think of something small someone has done for you in the past that made a much larger impact on your life. Take turns sharing these moments with one another and reflect on how your small actions may have larger impacts.

Create an illustration/visual representation of the path you feel God calling you towards, and the distractions/discouragements that are present along the way.

Prayer Concerns

For those making hard changes in their lives.

For those who strive towards justice and righteousness, even when it feels futile.

For those who make an effort to bring goodness into the world.

Closing Prayer

Help me to know what is good and to do it in both the big things and the small things of life. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.

