

hear and obey

Looking at the life of King Josiah [2 Kings] presents a challenge to return to the basics with regards to the Word of God. As with Josiah we need to find the word, read the word and obey the Word.

Challenged about the spiritual condition of the nation, Josiah took the necessary steps to start getting back on track; then gathered the people to come under the teaching of the Word.

This was an important step because spiritual revival and awakening cannot be based on emotion and enthusiasm alone. Sometimes we can be moved by someone else's passion, but are not truly committed to revival or indeed truly convicted by the Spirit of God. Josiah's desire was that from the leaders down, all would hear the Word of God. In the Old Testament the word for **HEAR** and **OBEY** is the same. The point is that you have not heard God's Word unless you have obeyed the Word of God.

PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ Extra team members for our Impact Africa trip. We have a total of 19 coming from Australia with a possible four coming from the USA
- ★ The ongoing harvest of souls coming to know Jesus through the use of the paper. Example - commitment slip received from someone picking up the paper in SA who lives in Queensland
- ★ His blessing upon the Challenge newspaper as we continue to see it grow steadily
- ★ A number of gifts coming into the office for various project areas around the world

Josiah realised that what he had heard, read, and what the prophet had said, had national implications for the nation of Israel. We hear of all the sad steps on our society descending into a moral and spiritual abyss. Somehow we think that such decline doesn't affect us as a nation, when in fact it has a huge impact, especially on later generations.

We ask ourselves questions like; why are we the church not impacting our society? Why is it that we are ignored as the church when we protest about abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriage? The answer, I believe is relatively simple and challenging. The church has stopped being the church. We are seen more as some convenient welfare place, rather than an organisation committed to the transformation of people's lives.

The great struggle for the church is to keep a vital alive relationship with Jesus, so that we can have a dynamic outreach to those who don't know Jesus. Josiah recognised that the ramifications of an apostate people had both personal and national implications.

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Josiah also recognised that if the leaders of the nation were not convinced of the need for revival, it was most unlikely that the people would see the need for it. However, having said that, it is still no guarantee of revival in a church.

What is important to understand in today's church is that if the Word of God is not clearly taught and expounded to the people, it is not long before it affects things like worship. Proverbs 29:18 says this, *Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint. But happy is he who keeps the law.* A literal translation of the first half of that verse is, where there is no teaching of God's Word, the Lord's people run amok.

Being a
Christian
should mean
that we derive
our values and
standards for
life from God's
Word.

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ Testimonies for the various editions of Challenge. We are always looking for people willing to share their conversion story
- ★ Upcoming editions of Challenge with Easter content – Australia, Southern Africa, USA.
- ★ Our partners organizations around the world that the relationship will deepen so we can become more effective in the development of the paper
- ★ Overseas directors and their families – Andrew and Karen Trezona (USA); Cobus and Christa Britz (South Africa)

Such a problem impacts the lives of individual Christians in their lifestyle, living standards and choices in life. One example of this is the comparison, done recently of the entertainment habits of Christians and non-Christians. There was virtually no difference. The Word of God becomes our teacher and that is why Paul says to Timothy; *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* 2 Timothy 3:16-17

So apart from the teaching of the Word of God, we as the Lord's people need to stand for the Word of God. Being a Christian should mean that we derive our values and standards for life from God's Word. It is vitally important that we need to live these standards and not just pay them lip service. Sad to say we are seeing more and more that such standards have been diluted to such a state that they are almost non-existent.

Josiah and the people made a covenant with God publicly to stand for Him, despite the circumstances. This public stand involved removing all that took away or polluted the genuine love and worship of the one and only true God. The result of Bible knowledge ought always to be **obedience and service**, as a result of a genuine commitment to the God of the Word and the Word of God.

{ CARL CARMODY
EDITOR CHALLENGE }



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