

A Renewed Commitment

Today's Treasure

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

1 Chronicles 7:14 ESV

Little did Jehoshaphat know that his response to Jehu's rebuke was preparing him for the battle of all battles. Rather than imprison Jehu as King Ahab had imprisoned Micaiah for speaking truth, Jehoshaphat humbles himself and rebuilds the spiritual foundation of his country. Just as he did at the beginning of his reign, he commissions teachers, priests, and judges to teach the Law of God with genuine hearts of faith. Remember his army is over 1,000,000 fighting men, all with families. Jehoshaphat ruled millions of people. Putting this leadership structure in place strengthened their bonds to him so when disaster loomed, they trusted him to lead them.

Jehoshaphat loses no time in exchanging his independence for dependence on God. I believe the story of God's interchange with King Solomon during the celebration of the building of the temple many years before came to mind:

Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's house. All that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the LORD and in his own house he successfully accomplished. Then the LORD appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:11-14 ESV

At first glance, God's words may sound like a bucket of cold water on Solomon's celebration, yet once more we see grace in God's instructions. Under Solomon's leadership a beautiful temple is built and God tells Solomon he approves. However, He also lets Solomon know that the people are frail, they will sin. God expects His people to sin, but never fear, where there is sin, there is hope. God has provided a way to healing.

LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

We often see *Today's Treasure*, 1 Chronicles 7:14 on plaques and hear it used by speakers to rally people around a patriotic theme. It's important to note that God gave these instructions before the people needed to hear them, before they had sinned after making a commitment to worship only Him at the celebration of the completion of the new temple. Isn't that amazing grace? This is not a "to do list" to get a sinner back on track. Rather, it is a call to God's people, identified as belonging to God, to recognize the privilege of belonging to the One true God. He invites us to humble ourselves (repent), to come back to worship (pray), to search the scriptures for His wisdom (seek), and in response to the grace and love of God to repent (turn from their wicked ways). Then His perfect love rushes in to fully forgive and lead us to a place of redemption.

I believe Jehoshaphat embraced these words as a roadmap that showed him how to find his way back to the Lord and to lead the people of Judah to do likewise. When disaster caused by his own sin devastated Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah, Jehoshaphat's auto response was to return to what he knew was true – God's Word, and he responded in obedience.

My friend, is there a sin holding you back from experiencing intimacy with Jesus, a sin that seems too horrific, too unforgivable? Hear the Word of the Lord and run to Jesus. He's waiting for you.

STORE UP MORE TREASURES

At some point in our lives, we or someone we know will go through great suffering. I encourage you to go to the MARKINC website and listen to the interview "[Motherhood and It's Idols](#)" so that you can store up treasures of encouragement for the next rainy day in your life or someone else's. Here is a summary of this resource:

"I end every day feeling defeated because I lost my temper with my kids, vowing tomorrow will be better, but it usually isn't."

"I don't want my kids to be "less than" their friends. I also want them to stand out as college applicants. But I don't think I can keep up with this schedule of activities. They are ages 5 & 9."

"Whenever my child fails at something, I'm the one who feels guilty and judged."

“When is it my turn? I look forward to an hour of quiet time after the kids are in bed and no matter how hard I try, something robs me of my time”

Christina Fox addresses these parenting concerns and much more in this conversation with Sharon Betters and Melissa Weisenfels. How can good parenting motives turn into idols? What should we do when we discover that our motives for doing good things for our kids just might be wrong?

