

Day 6

Courageous and Set Apart

Now the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to the acts of Israel. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah gave presents to Jehoshaphat, and he had riches and honor in abundance. And his heart took delight in the ways of the Lord; moreover he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah.
2 Chronicles 17:3-6

“If everyone jumped off a cliff, would you do it too?” How many concerned parent have asked their peer-pressure tempted child this question? This question is met with sighs and eye rolls as it seems ridiculous... of course we wouldn't do that! And yet, many of us can recall moments in our past when we inched toward the cliff either so slowly it was nearly imperceptible, little compromises giving way to bigger ones; or perhaps, caught up in the excitement of belonging, we find ourselves justifying rather quickly that maybe it wouldn't be so bad after all. Until one day we notice our toes nearly dangling over the precipice's edge, and we've got a choice to make.

How do we avoid falling into sin or compromising our convictions while the world around us runs towards the proverbial cliff, even celebrating those who jump off it? In 2 Chronicles we see that Jehoshaphat doesn't join the idol worship that was common in his culture, but “sought the God of his father and walked by His commands.” Not only did Jehoshaphat refuse to do what was detestable to God, but he used his power and influence to actively help others turn from sin. “His mind rejoiced in the Lord's ways, and he again removed the high places and Asherah poles from Judah.” It's interesting that first Jehoshaphat thought on God's ways and rejoiced in them, and then found the courage and conviction to remove his people's idols.

With the accuser's schemes, the evil borne of a lost world's misplaced affections, and our own flesh's determination to rule over our hearts, we need boldness to walk in righteousness and call others up to God's standard. May we, as King Jehoshaphat did, seek the Lord and in our minds and rejoice in His ways. From this foundation of intimacy, may the Holy Spirit empower us to point lost ones to the Truth, tearing down idols and breaking strongholds by the power of Jesus' name.

Reflection:

How is the Holy Spirit leading me to seek God right now? From His Word, what do I know to be God's ways and how can I fix my thoughts on them, rejoicing in them? Is there a courageous step the Holy Spirit is leading me to take to help tear down idols, and further build God's house to reach the one?