

Title: Living Fully Committed: Lessons from King Jehoshaphat

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the life of King Jehoshaphat and his father Asa, drawing parallels between their faithfulness to God and our own Christian walk today. The central message emphasizes that God desires believers who are "fully committed" to Him with their whole hearts. Through the historical account of Jehoshaphat's reign, the sermon illustrates how seeking God wholeheartedly, prioritizing His Word, and teaching others about His ways leads to blessing, protection, and spiritual strength. The pastor challenges the congregation to move beyond mere salvation into active, passionate service for God, recognizing that believers are part of God's kingdom here on earth as a "priesthood of believers" - living stones built together. The sermon warns against the danger of starting well but finishing poorly (like Asa) and encourages believers to finish strong, fully devoted to God until the end.

Key Points:

- God's eyes range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him (2 Chronicles 16:9)
- Believers are called to be a priesthood of believers and living stones, holding each other in place and supporting one another
- King Asa started well but ended poorly by relying on foreign alliances instead of God, refusing to seek God even in illness
- Jehoshaphat learned from his father's mistakes and chose to fully follow God, teaching God's Word throughout his kingdom
- When God's Word was taught throughout Judah, the fear of the Lord fell on surrounding kingdoms, bringing peace and prosperity
- Full commitment to God means loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength - nothing held back
- We are stewards of everything God has given us: our personal lives, finances, work, relationships, and spiritual gifts
- Reading and applying God's Word transforms individuals, families, and entire communities
- Finishing strong for God is more important than starting well - faithfulness

to death is the goal

Scripture Reference:

- 2 Chronicles 16:1-13 (King Asa's decline and death)
- 2 Chronicles 17:1-19 (Jehoshaphat's faithful reign)
- 2 Chronicles 16:9 (Primary verse: "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him")
- Acts 2:42 (Devotion to the apostles' teaching)
- 1 Corinthians 10 (Things written for our example)

Stories:

- The account of King Asa making an alliance with Ben-Hadad of Aram instead of trusting God, leading to the prophet Hanani's rebuke
- Asa's angry response to God's messenger, imprisoning the seer and oppressing the people
- Asa's illness and refusal to seek God, relying only on physicians
- Jehoshaphat's decision to fortify cities and send teachers throughout Judah with the Book of the Law
- The ripple effect of teaching God's Word: surrounding nations, including the Philistines and Arabs (traditional enemies), bringing gifts and tribute
- The illustration of stacked stone fences in Indiana from Civil War times, demonstrating how living stones hold each other in place without mortar
- The metaphor of coming home angry from work and unleashing frustration on family members who had nothing to do with the problem