

A Godly Influence: Human vs. God Mindset

Opening Question

- What are the top five things you think about on an average day?
- How many of these things include God, the Kingdom, and/or the spiritual realm? (Colossians 3:1-4)

This study is intended to help us go from having a worldly and human mindset to a God mindset. Only after we allow ourselves to be influenced by God are we able to have the kind of influence that is greater and bigger than ourselves: a godly influence.

There is no greater example of this in the Bible than that of King Josiah. Prior to Josiah, the kings of Judah and Israel had been living incredibly sinful and godless lives. In doing so, the whole nation was led astray. But all of this changed when the 26-year-old king decided to leave the human mindset behind and embrace a God mindset, starting with his desire and decision to rebuild God's temple.

Bible Study

Step 1: Admit your True Desires

In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the secretary, Shaphan son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the temple of the Lord. He said: "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him get ready the money that has been brought into the temple of the Lord, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people. Have them entrust it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the temple. And have these men pay the workers who repair the temple of the Lord..."

Then Shaphan the secretary went to the king and reported to him: "Your officials have paid out the money that was in the temple of the Lord and have entrusted it to the workers and supervisors at the temple." Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

2 Kings 22:3-5,9-10 NIV

- The first step in being influenced by God is to identify how God is trying to reach you and then to admit your true desires.
- Josiah's desire was to collect money in order to rebuild the temple. Because he acknowledged this dream he had, God was able to use his desires to reach him and help him rediscover what it means to have a relationship with Him.
- There is a way God is trying to reach each of us. It could be through our dreams and desires, our ambitions and successes, our troubles and hardships, or through our family and friends. How is God trying to reach you?
- This scripture begs the question: What do you want out of life? What is your focus and goal? What motivates you? Does your goal have more to do with this world or God?
- God was able to establish a deep connection with Josiah because they shared a common desire. Josiah showed a heart for God, and God used it to reach him.
- Believe, identify, and admit how God is trying to reach you. Then admit where your desires and God's desires may differ.

Step 2: Speak Your Truth

When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes. He gave these orders... "Go and inquire of the Lord for me and for the people and for all Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the Lord's anger that burns against us because those who have gone before us have not obeyed the words of this book; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written there concerning us."

2 Kings 22:11,13 NIV

- Josiah didn't follow those who went before him. Nor did he follow behind the crowd (the people of Judah who had deserted God and His Word). Instead, Josiah heard and followed God. He had a godly influence on his heart and in his life.
- Josiah was able to do this because of his ability to feel, communicate, and trust God with his truth (the truths about his heart, sin, emotion, desire etc.).
- Josiah teaches us that humility has a true and proper emotional response. He was able to reach this because he allowed himself to be deeply moved.
- In what ways do you need to allow yourself to be moved emotionally by God? What emotion are you afraid or unwilling to express and feel?
- Josiah communicated vulnerably, tearing his robe, and weeping. He did this to communicate the truth of what he felt in his heart. What stops you from giving your heart to God like this?

Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people---that they would become a curse and be laid waste---and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you,

declares the Lord. Therefore I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place...

2 Kings 22:19-20 NIV

- How do you respond to the truth? Compared to Josiah, where do you get stuck?
- Josiah's heart was responsive. Is your heart responsive? If not, what is hardening your heart that you are unwilling to be honest about and let go of?
- Josiah's response was humble. Are you, yourself, humbled before God? If not, what do you place before God? Where do you turn in your time of need? And what keeps you from seeing your need for God?
- Josiah's humility was vulnerable. Is your communication with God vulnerable? God just wanted to know that Josiah cared. Josiah believed this is who God is. He did not believe God was mean, indifferent, impersonal, or vindictive. How do you see God? How does this view of Him affect your communication with Him?

Step 3: Embrace God's Truth

Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. He went up to the temple of the Lord with the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the prophets---all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord. The king stood by the pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the Lord---to follow the Lord and keep his commands, statutes and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, thus confirming the words of the covenant written in this book. Then all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.

2 Kings 23:1-3 NIV

- Once we speak the truth of our heart, emotion, and sin to God we can properly embrace His truth. This is what it is to truly pray to God: giving God our truth and then embracing His.
- Josiah was able to truly reach an agreement with God in his heart because of his own honest vulnerability. Yet he did not stop there. He combined this with embracing and believing God's truth.
- What stops you from believing and embracing God's truth? Do you work and fight to believe God's truth in your prayer?
- When we truly agree with God, we are able to influence and impact those around us. Who in your life needs you to repent and develop conviction? Who needs you to have a godly influence?

Step 4: Make a Decision in Faith

He took the Asherah pole from the temple of the Lord to the Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem and burned it there. He ground it to powder and scattered the dust over the graves of the common

people...The king gave this order to all the people: “Celebrate the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.” Neither in the days of the judges who led Israel nor in the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah had any such Passover been observed. But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was celebrated to the Lord in Jerusalem.

2 Kings 23:6-7, 21-23 NIV

- True faith leads to proper action.
- Josiah did what many others before him could not! He was not influenced by the past. He was not influenced by the crowd. His standard was not humanly defined.
- Josiah lived by his faith: his devoted heart and conviction with God.
- How would your life be different if you lived by faith like Josiah?
- What fear stops you from living this way?
- What decision can you to make today to repent?

Step 5: Persevere in Devotion to God

Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.

2 Kings 23:25 NIV

- Josiah is remembered for his devotion to and heart for God
- How will you be remembered? How do you want to be remembered?
- As you read this study you may have had many different heart conditions.
 - **A hardened heart** - unable to feel and respond to God.
 - **A humanistic heart** - unable to focus on God due to the worries, pleasures, and ambitions in this life.
 - **A half-hearted/divided heart** - unable to decide and devote your heart to God through any circumstance.
 - **A hopeless heart** - feeling like you are unable to change
 - **A devoted heart** - motivated by and striving toward your relationship with God
- Where do you believe you are at in your heart with God? Do you believe it is possible to become as Josiah did? Giving your whole heart, soul, and strength to God? This is what we should strive for!



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