

2 Chron. 17:3-6 “The Example Jehoshaphat Followed”

For the Children: No boy or girl has perfect parents. No parents have perfect children, either! Your parents will make mistakes. But hopefully you will see past their mistakes, that they love the Lord. More than anything else in this life, they want you to love the Lord too. That is more important to Christian parents than education, earning money, or such things. You can learn much from their example in this. But you can learn much, much more from the Lord Jesus. Questions: How was Asa a bad example to his son? Who was the “father” Jehoshaphat listened to more than to Asa? What blessings come from following the Lord Jesus?

Introduction:

First Point: The Best Example

- 1) Not Asa’s Example: Asa started well in his reign, but later allied with Syria against Israel. He persecuted the prophet and others who opposed him. When the Lord sent disease upon him, he still did not turn to the Lord. Jehoshaphat did not, generally, follow his example.
- 2) A More Distant Father: Jehoshaphat followed another “father,” his ancestor David – especially the zeal for the Lord evidenced in David’s earlier life. As a result, Jehoshaphat opposed idolatry, sought God and delighted in His ways; appointed just judges; sent princes, priests and Levites to teach God’s Law in the Land; and refused to follow the evils prevalent in the Northern Kingdom.
- 3) An Even Better Example: However, David was not the perfect example. His greatness lay in that he pointed to Christ, the Great Example and Redeemer. That should be the aim of parental example today – to point to Christ, by their instruction and personal example of commitment and zeal for worship, obedience and witness.

Second Point: The Danger of a Bad Example

- 1) Easier to Follow: It is generally easier to follow a bad example than a good one. Jehoshaphat did not generally follow Asa’s bad example, but that bad example did influence him. He allied himself with the evil king Ahab, both by marrying his son to Ahab’s daughter and by agreeing to fight against the Arameans. At least he repented when Jehu rebuked him for it. But later, he allied himself with Ahaziah, to build a trading fleet – which God promptly sank! Today, it will also be all-too-easy for children to follow their parents compromise, lack of zeal, worldly priorities, lack of self-control and self-discipline, negativity about the church etc.
- 2) A Disastrous Course: The consequences of following the bad example can be disastrous! Jehoshaphat’s alliances led to defeat and further wars. It led to financial loss, for him and Judah. We trust God’s grace with respect to our children; but we do not want our bad example to harm them. Thankfully, the Lord does often overcome the effect of our inconsistencies, as He guards His covenant-children.

Third Point: The Blessing of a Good Example

- 1) God with Us: When Jehoshaphat followed David’s example, the Lord was with him. The Lord established the kingdom in his control – there was stability; the Lord gave peace for a time, and then victory in war; the king and his people – connected as they are - enjoyed great riches and honour.
- 2) A Picture of Spiritual Realities: This provides a “type” of the Great King, the Son of David, who perfectly obeyed His Father. He was rewarded above all others. He now shares His riches and glory, as well as His peace, with His subjects. This creates in us the same kind of joy in salvation one can see in Jehoshaphat’s reign. These are the blessings parents today desire for their children. That is why they seek to point them, by instruction, discipline and example, to the Lord Jesus – the only One who can give these blessings.

Conclusion: