

# Whole life discipleship

Steve Walton

# What is whole life discipleship?

- Applying Jesus' teaching on wholeheartedness in each area of our lives
  - loving God with all our heart
  - loving God with all our soul
  - loving God with all our mind
  - loving God with all our strength

# Two key passages

- Colossians 3:22-24
  - 22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favour, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.
  - 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,
  - 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

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- Jeremiah 29:4-7
  - 4 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. 6 Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. 7 Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

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# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his heart
  - 11 When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes. 12 He gave these orders to Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Akbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah the king's attendant: 13 "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

# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his soul
  - his response to God's word
    - 'When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes.' 2 Kings 22:11
    - '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.' 2 Kings 22:19

# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his mind
  - active submission to God's word
    - **Covenant renewal** | Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 2 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. 3 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

# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his mind
  - active submission to God's word
    - **Covenant renewal** 2 Kings 23:1-3
    - **Wrong religions removed** 2 Kings 23:4-20, 24

1 These are the decrees and laws you must be careful to follow in the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you to possess—as long as you live in the land. 2 Destroy completely all the places on the high mountains, on the hills and under every spreading tree, where the nations you are dispossessing worship their gods. 3 Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and burn their Asherah poles in the fire; cut down the idols of their gods and wipe out their names from those places.

Deuteronomy 12:1-4

# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his mind
  - active submission to God's word
    - **Covenant renewal** 2 Kings 23:1-3
    - **Wrong religions removed** 2 Kings 23:4-20, 24; Deut 12:1-4
    - **Passover reinstated** 2 Kings 23:21-23; Deut 16:1-8
      - 21 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." 22 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. 23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was celebrated to the LORD in Jerusalem.

# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his strength
  - his reforms were costly
    - 'Josiah provided for all the lay people who were there a total of **thirty thousand lambs and goats** for the Passover offerings, and also **three thousand cattle**—all from the king's own possessions.' 2 Chronicles 35:7

# Josiah's wholehearted response

- loving God with all his strength
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    - '8 His officials also contributed voluntarily to the people and the priests and Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah and Jehiel, the officials in charge of God's temple, gave the priests **twenty-six hundred Passover offerings and three hundred cattle.**  
9 Also Konaniah along with Shemaiah and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah, Jeiel and Jozabad, the leaders of the Levites, provided **five thousand Passover offerings and five hundred head of cattle for the Levites.**' 2 Chronicles 35:8-9



# Josiah's wholehearted response

- God's assessment of Josiah
  - '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
  - judgement postponed 2 Kings 22:19-20;  
23:26-27
  - but Josiah could disobey God too  
2 Chronicles 35:20-24

20 After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, Necho king of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah marched out to meet him in battle.

21 But Necho sent messengers to him, saying, “What quarrel is there, king of Judah, between you and me? It is not you I am attacking at this time, but the house with which I am at war. God has told me to hurry; so stop opposing God, who is with me, or he will destroy you.”

22 Josiah, however, would not turn away from him, but disguised himself to engage him in battle. He would not listen to what Necho had said at God’s command but went to fight him on the plain of Megiddo.

23 Archers shot King Josiah, and he told his officers, “Take me away; I am badly wounded.” 24 So they took him out of his chariot, put him in his other chariot and brought him to Jerusalem, where he died. He was buried in the tombs of his ancestors, and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him.

2 Chronicles 35:20-24

# Josiah and us

- Josiah models what a young person can do if they are wholehearted about serving God
  - what happened to Josiah between 8 and 26?

Your majesty is God's vice-gerent and Christ's vicar within your dominions, and to see, with your predecessor Josiah, God truly worshipped, and idolatry destroyed, the tyranny of the bishops of Rome banished from your subjects, and images removed. These acts be signs of a second Josiah, who reformed the church of God in his days. You are to reward virtue, to revenge sin, to justify the innocent, to relieve the poor, to procure peace, to repress violence, and to execute justice throughout your realms.

Thomas Cranmer, at the coronation of Edward VI

# Josiah and us

- Josiah models what a young person can do if they are wholehearted about serving God
  - what happened to Josiah between 8 and 26?
- Josiah models what a leader can do if they are wholehearted about serving God
  - ‘It is not great talents God blesses, but great likeness to Jesus.’ Robert Murray M’Cheyne

# For reflection and discussion

- How can I 'seek the peace and prosperity' of my workplace?
- What might that look like in how I relate to others
  - when they make errors?
  - when I make errors?
  - see Colossians 3:1-14

You can get these slides from:

**Acts and More**

<http://steve walton.info>