

"The Word In The House" • 2 Chronicles 34:14-19

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Bible Or TV Guide*

On the table side by side; A Holy Bible and the TV Guide,
One is well worn but cherished with pride, (Not the Bible, but the TV Guide).
One is used daily to help folks decide, No! It isn't the Bible; it's the TV Guide.
As pages are turned, what shall they see? Oh, what does matter, turn on the TV.
So they open the book in which they confide, (No, not the Bible, it's the TV
Guide).

The Word of God is seldom read, Maybe a verse ere they fall into bed.
Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be, Not from reading the Bible, but
watching TV.

So, then back to the table, side by side, Is the Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
No time for prayer, no time for the Word; The plan for salvation is seldom
heard.

Forgiveness of sin so full and free, Is found in the Bible, not on TV!!

B. *Parallels*

1. The more I study the bible, the more I see the amazing parallels between what we find here, and our lives today
2. Things have not really changed that much
 - a. oh sure, technology has made a dramatic difference in our environment
 - b. but people have remained pretty much the same throughout the centuries
3. History keeps repeating itself
4. One man said that those who do not learn from the mistakes of history are doomed to repeat them
5. A reminder of that is found in our text today

II. TEXT

A. *Set The Scene*

1. Josiah was Judah's last good king
2. He gained the throne at a mere 8 years of age
 - a. his father Amon, had been a wicked king who ruled for only 2 years
 - b. but his grandfather Manasseh had taken first place in the bad king competition
 - 1) Manasseh was so corrupt,
 - 2) he's the one who is credited with taking the nation down
 - 3) and even though Manasseh repented and came to faith in God in his last days
 - 4) his previous sins had so defiled the land and it's people that the momentum was simply too great to reverse the judgment of God

- c. in His mercy and grace, God raised up Josiah as one last good king to provide the individuals of Judah the chance to repent and be saved
- d. but as far as the nation was concerned, she was doomed
- 3. So Josiah became king at the tender age of 8
- 4. When he was 16, he began to seek the Lord in earnest
- 5. Then, 4 years after that, when he was 20, he set out to bring reformation to the nation
 - a. he tore down the pagan altars and high places
 - b. any and all evidence of idolatry was removed
- 6. When he was 26 he began work on repairing the temple
 - a. this was a major undertaking because the house of God had been neglected for over 75 years
 - b. Manasseh had defiled it with the grossest of idols
 - c. and following that it had become little more than a dump site
- 7. So the first task of the priests and Levites was to clear the debris out of the temple grounds
- 8. That's where we pick it up at verse 14 . . .

B. Vs. 14-19

{14} Now when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD given by Moses.

{15} Then Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan.

- 1. One day as they were working at clearing out the temple, one of the priests found a scroll under some rubbish
 - a. as he lifted it, he realized what he was holding was the law of God
 - b. it had been lost in the temple for many years
 - c. and no one had read it for what seemed like ages
- 2. Hilkiyah, the priest who found it, immediately took it to Josiah's official, Shaphan, who was there overseeing the work

{16} So Shaphan carried the book to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "All that was committed to your servants they are doing.

{17} "And they have gathered the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen."

{18} Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

{19} Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes.

- 3. For the king to tear his royal robes was a sign of extreme concern and grief
- 4. But Josiah had good cause to rend his clothes
 - a. as he listened to the law of God read by Shaphan
 - b. he realized how desperate the situation for the nation was
 - c. the memories of his father's and grandfather's rule were fresh in his mind
 - d. just a few years before, until the reforms he had instituted, the nation had been filled with the evidences of rank paganism -
 - e. things that God's word said would result in God's wrath

- f. Shaphan would have read *this* to Josiah out of Deuteronomy 28
- {58} “If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD,
- {59} “then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues; great and prolonged plagues; and serious and prolonged sicknesses.
- {60} “Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you.
- {61} “Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.
- {62} “You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.
- {63} “And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.
- {64} “Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known; wood and stone.

g. no wonder the king tore his robes

C. *What's Startling*

1. But what's startling about this passage is that the Book of the law of God had been *lost*
2. And of all places that it could have been lost - it was lost in the temple!
3. This is the height of irony!
4. The Bible had been lost at church
5. And no one missed it till it was found
6. How long the Word of God had been lost, we don't know
 - a. but it had been long enough - that's its presence was not missed
7. It had been treated with such indifference for so long under Josiah's father and grandfather, that no one missed it
8. And note the ones who had treated it with such cold indifference
 - a. the kings and priests!
 - b. the very ones who had been appointed by God to guard it
 - 1) the main duty of the priests was to study and teach the Word of God
 - 2) the king was supposed to have his very own copy by which he was to govern the nation
 - 3) as God's people, the Jews were to be known as a people of the book of the law of God
 - 4) but the very thing that defined them had been forsaken through neglect and indifference
 - 5) BY THE ONE'S WHO HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH THE DUTY OF KEEPING IT THE MAIN THING
9. Do you see any parallels to today?
 - a. does any of this sound like anything happening in the modern church?
 - b. what is our authority as Christians?
 - c. what is the basis of our faith and practice?
 - d. what is it that defines who the Church is and what it is to do?

- e. THE WORD OF GOD, THE BIBLE, THE SCRIPTURES
10. Has the Bible been forsaken by the Church?
 - a. sadly, in many quarters, the answer is "YES!"
 - b. the Bible is given mere "lip service"
 - c. but in *fact*, it is no longer the basis of faith and practice
 - 1) how else can we account for denominations debating the issue of homosexuality
 - 2) our extra-marital sex
 - d. in other places the authority of the Bible has been replaced with the authority of the so-called "experts"
 - 1) no longer is God's word sufficient to meet our needs
 - 2) but now we need the latest theories of psychology and practices psychotherapy
 - e. then again, some churches have replaced God's word with a reliance on experience
 - 1) rather than testing all things as we are commanded to do in 1 Thess 5:21
 - 2) people are being told by the very ones who are supposed to be the guardians of the Word of God to accept what is happening as from the Lord without testing it
 - 3) 1 John 4:1's command to test the spirits to see if they are from God has been cast aside in favor of a dramatic encounter with spiritual forces
 - 5) after all, who can argue with experience?
 - 6) my beloved brothers and sisters; remember this, the devil is a master counterfeiter
 - 7) he and his servants masquerade as angels of light
 - 8) experiences, even profound religious experiences are not sufficient to base our faith and practice on
 - f. the only safe authority for our lives is God's unchanging and inerrant Word
 11. Jeremiah was a prophet who spoke some revealing words to Josiah's father and grandfather
 12. See if these words couldn't be said with equal force today . . .
- (Jer 2:13) "My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *And* hewn themselves cisterns; broken cisterns that can hold no water."**
- a. how perfectly these words fit so much the modern church
 - b. we have turned from loyal faith in God to the experts
 - c. we have turned from the Lord to programs and plans
 - d. no longer do we define success by faithfulness to God's Word
 - e. now success is numbers, budgets, and buildings
13. It's time to forsake our clever and slick self-reliance and return to the Lord
 14. It's time we abandoned our broken and empty self-dug watering holes and returned to the Fountain of Living Water

D. Band This Drum

1. I know I bang this drum a lot
2. And to be blunt, let me say that you can expect me to in the future
3. I will continue to hold forth the *centrality of the scriptures* for the rest of the time the Lord gives me to be a teacher and pastor
4. And the reason I will is because I believe it is the main challenge that faces the church
5. The church is weak and ineffective today for the one reason and that is that it has lost the Word
6. The only hope for the Church is a new Reformation
7. When the Word was re-discovered during Josiah's reign and brought back to the forefront of national life, the nation experienced reformation and judgment was delayed
8. In the 16th century, after the Word of God had been locked away and the public ministry of the scriptures had been neglected for generations, Martin Luther blew the proverbial dust of the Bible and returned it to its central place in the church, and once more reformation took place
9. What we need today is reformation
10. But this will only take place when the Bible is returned to its rightful place at the center of Church life

III. CONCLUSION

A. *Making It Practical*

1. Now here's where you and I can apply this
2. First of all, at Calvary Chapel
 - a. we must make sure we don't just give the Bible lip-service
 - b. we must labor to ensure that we study it
 - c. and having studied it, we need to be diligent to make sure we are doing it
 - d. but we can only do that with your help
 - e. and here's how you can help
3. What role does the Bible play in your house?
4. It's one thing to talk about the Word of God being lost in the house of God
5. But what role does the bible play in your home?
 - a. I take it that you attend of Calvary Chapel because you agree with our philosophy of ministry
 - b. that you agree God's Word should have the central place
 - c. okay - does it have the central place in your home?
 - d. does your house operate by the principles of God's Word
 - e. or does another set of rules apply at home?
6. Are you one person at church, but an altogether different one at home?

B. *Men*

1. This is a good morning to share this message because we have over a hundred women at their retreat in Malibu this weekend
2. And while there are some ladies with us this morning, we have a higher

- proportion of men than usual
3. Men, I want to challenge you today
 - a. God has called you to be the priest and leader of your home
 - b. it is part of your solemn duty to keep the main thing the main thing
 - c. and as a follower of Jesus, the main thing is a relationship with Him based on and nourished by His Word
 - d. don't let the Bible become a dust catcher
 - e. don't let the Word of God become something that is good for governing church life but finds no application to your home life
 - f. God calls you to be the pastor, the shepherd of that flock called your family
 - g. you must lead, feed, and protect them
 - h. your rod and your staff are the Word of God
 4. In the long run, what real good is it if we remain faithful to the Word of God in our *creed*, but we never apply it in our daily lives
 5. Take this Word home today - Live it!
 6. Don't let the Bible be lost in your house!