

Sunday Morning Message

April 28, 2019

Bad Advice

Topic – Friends, Accountability Partners, Godly counselors, Ahab, Jehoshaphat

Text – 1 Kings 22

Congregational Reading – 1 Kings 22:1 - 5

Introduction

In the Bible story that we will read and study this morning, we will see the king of the northern kingdom of Israel who desires to go to battle with Syria, which is a neighboring nation to the north and east of Israel. He wants to take back Ramoth in Gilead, a city that had at one time belonged to Israel, but at some point was taken away from Israel by the Syrians, and was supposed to have been returned to Israel:

"And Benhadad said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then said Ahab, I will send thee away with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away." (1 Kings 20:34)

King Ahab has a friend who is willing to join him in the Battle with Syria to take back Ramoth-Gilead. Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, has made a friendship with Ahab, and he is willing to go with Ahab and fight with him, but first, he wants to make sure that God is for what they are about to do. He wants Ahab to check with a prophet to see if this battle was, in fact, the will of God.

Jehoshaphat was very wise in seeking counsel from the Lord regarding this battle. We will learn that King Ahab was determined to do what he wanted to do, and he didn't really care what God said.

Transition

After we examine this story from the Bible, I will give you some principles regarding friendships, accountability partners, and wise counselors; all of which, if chosen carefully, are helpful to us as we seek to determine God's will, and then stay in the center of God's will.

I Jehoshaphat Suggests to Seek God's Counsel (vs. 1 – 5)

Jehoshaphat was wrong to be hanging around with Ahab, because overall Jehoshaphat was a godly king, but Ahab was not. Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, were very wicked people.

Note – be very careful about hanging around with the wrong crowd. They may influence you, or they may negatively influence the people you love. Jehoshaphat's son ended up marrying Ahab's daughter.

However, Jehoshaphat was a good friend to Ahab in insisting that they check with God before they make this decision about going to battle.

II Jehoshaphat Stresses to Ahab the Need for a Real Prophet (vs. 6 – 28)

Ahab had surrounded himself with people who would tell him what he wanted to hear. That is not wise. You need to have counselors in your life that will help you discern the Lord's will. Sometimes their advice may go against what you want to hear.

Finally, Micaiah, is brought in and tells Ahab that he will not come back alive from the battle.

III Ahab Suffers the Consequences of Not Heeding the Warning of the Man of God (vs. 29 – 38)

Neither Ahab nor Jehoshaphat listened, and Ahab ended up getting killed, just as the man of God had told him. Jehoshaphat escapes from the battle, but came close to losing his life also.

Conclusion

If you are serious about serving in the will of God, you will have to be very careful about the friends you choose, and you will have to add to your life an accountability partner, and a multitude of wise counselors.

1. Friends

Be careful about the friends that you choose. You may have many acquaintances that you are friendly with, but you will be very blessed if you have just a few, godly friends.

Jonathan was a good friend to David.

Jonadab was a bad friend to Amnon. (see 2 Samuel 13:1 – 5)

- a. Choose friends that are saved.
- b. Choose friends that are serving the Lord.
- c. Choose friends that are separated.
- d. Choose friends that will stress to you the importance of staying in the will of God.

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3)

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Proverbs 27:17)

2. Accountability Partner

An accountability partner is a higher level of friendship. This may be a person that you are not super friendly with. It probably should not be your spouse. It may not be your best buddy. This is the person that you will include in your life that will help you stay in the direction that you want to go and help you meet your goals, or he may help you stay away from something that will cause you harm. This person will hold you accountable.

Jehoshaphat was a good accountability partner for Ahab – he was honest enough with Ahab to tell him what he needed to hear.

- a. Look for a person that you can be completely honest with – transparency.
- b. Look for a person that you can trust to be discreet.
- c. Look for a person who will be honest with you.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." (Proverbs 27:6)

- d. Look for a person who can meet with you regularly, perhaps even once per week.
- e. Look for a person who has nothing to gain from you.

The purpose of this relationship is to have someone who will help you do what you have already determined that you need to do. They will hold you accountable to your own goals.

They need to hold you accountable by asking you specific predetermined questions whenever you meet.

Did you read your Bible this week?

Did you share your faith with anybody this week?

Did you fall into any area of sin?

The questions will change as the areas to be worked on change. After you get some victory in an area, you will move on to new areas of growth.

3. A Multitude of Counselors

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."
(Proverbs 11:14)

"Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established." (Proverbs 15:22)

"Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war." (Proverbs 20:18)

"For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety."
(Proverbs 24:6)

Counselors are particularly necessary for the important decisions in life. A godly counselor will help you discern God's will and guide you in a right direction.

Sometimes they can be a sounding board for you to bounce off your ideas.

Sometimes they will help you discern the difference between what is good, and what is best.

Who do you look for?

- 1 People who are very spiritual. They walk with God; they know the Scriptures. They have a proven testimony.
- 2 People who are already where of what you want to be.
- 3 People who are wise in the area where you need advice.
- 4 People who are not personally advantaged or disadvantaged about the decision you need to make. (Illustrate – Pastor Wedemeyer and Pastor Doster; me with Phil)
- 5 You will want to include different counselors for different areas (i.e. financial counsel, child rearing, marriage, Bible questions, ministry responsibilities, etc.)

- 6 You may want to include your pastor or Sunday School teacher in your cabinet of counselors, but you may also want to have a few people who are not too intimate with your life. They can be more objective and less subjective.
- 7 You don't want too many counselors. You don't want to shop for counsel.

When?

1. When you have a decision that will change your course.
2. When you have a question that you cannot answer.
3. When you have a battle between two opinions.
4. When you have a major disappointment and need help handling it.

The right friends, and accountability partner, and godly counsel are all imperative if you and I are going to successfully navigate in the will of God. They are not a substitute for prayer or personal responsibility, but they are certainly assets and tools used by the Lord to help us do what God wants us to do.

Who are your friends?

Who is your accountability partner?

Who are the counselors in your life? Who is included in your cabinet of counselors?

King Ahab surrounded himself with a bunch of people who told him what he wanted to hear and he ended up dead. Who do you surround yourself with?

