

Is My Child's Profession of Faith Real?
II Kings 11:1-4,8-16; 12:1-7 II Chronicles 24:1-3,15-25

Based on Philippians 1:10 I know that it is the will of God that as many of you as possible, become increasingly skilled at examining spiritual experience: Philippians 1:10 “that you may approve (put carefully to the test) things that are excellent; that you may be sincere without offense till the Day of Christ (Judgment day).”

Judgment Day will probably be the most surprising day any of us ever experience. The text of today's sermon is stunning and should constrain you to desire a clear understanding of what scriptural assurance of salvation is.

Today's sermon was spawned in part by George Machen's about his unbaptized daughter, 10 year old--RUTH. Is her faith in Jesus saving faith? Is she ready to be baptized? We have no particular commands about this. But we have scriptural history that provides general criteria: the books of Kings and Chronicles are inclusive history books. This is the sections of redemptive history that God has chosen for you to have and know. Our text begins with a seven year old boy becoming king of Southern Israel: Note our seven year olds; Eli Canady, Mallory Oswald, Will Havner, Ruby Olson is about 8. Question before we read the text--Boys and girls; mothers and fathers--WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

I. A bright beginning is a good thing that ignites hope.

A. **The story of Joash is a story with a very hopeful beginning:** II Kings 11:1-3 (Athaliah was Ahab and Jezebel's daughter. She married Jehoram good king Jehoshaphat's son. She had a son named Ahaziah; both her husband and son were killed, one by a disease, one by the hand of Jehu in the plain of Meggido.)

1. Joash was rescued at great risk by his aunt.
2. Joash was protected and tutored by a very old priest to whom he was related: 11:4
3. Joash was dramatically inaugurated as king in the lineage of his blood relative KING DAVID.

Marginal note on 11:12 “put upon him the crown and the testimony”—that is the scriptures on his head.

4. This inauguration was accompanied with shouting and rejoicing and renewed hope: “clapped...God save the King” 14 ...all the people of the land rejoiced and blew trumpets... 11: 20 the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet...

B. Children can be saved at a young age and should be encouraged to seek the Lord and call on His name.

1. However, a child's profession of saving faith should be scrupulously examined over time.

This is the case because the Bible itself assumes the immaturity of children: I Corinthians 13:11. Here we have a simple Bible statement about the fundamental difference between children and adults--their apprehension of things is less mature than that of an adult.

" If I ask a seven-year old boy whether he intends to follow the lord all the days of his life and never turn back--come what may--if the seven-year old boy says, "Absolutely yes!", we all know that very few children, if any, could convince us that such a commitment is reliable. The fact is, in dealing with souls, it is often reckless and inexcusable to accept every profession of faith at face value: rich young ruler.

2. **Count on it:** There are difficulties in recognizing a genuine work of saving grace in a young child.

II. The law of moral gravitation among persons is increasingly observable with the passing of years.

A. The law of physical gravity has to do with the drawing power of physical objects. The law of moral gravity has to do with the drawing of moral persons together: Judas went to his own place. Went the authorities let the apostles go from incarceration they went to their own company--so do we all sooner or later. see Acts 4:23.

1. Joash restarted a dead project, and did it well; got the money and handled honestly. Joash insisted that the building be extensively repaired and was right to do so: II Chronicles 24:4-10.
2. We can only wonder if Joash would have been a better man, if the priests had been better.

B. When should children be baptized? Not in infancy--Christian Baptism is for Christian believers.

"One German Anabaptist who ministered during the early part of the 16th century adopted this procedure in the church when dealing with children: he did not set a specific age... Instead when he and his other elders could tell that a child had self-consciously felt the tug and attraction of the world, and for Jesus' sake had refused it, then he was willing to baptize the person.

1. II Chron. 24:15,16
2. With the old priest out of the way, things begin to appear that couldn't have appeared while the old priest was in the way: 24:17
3. Joash is not what we call "a backslider"—a carnal believer; Joash is an apostate: "the abandonment, the forsaking of what you once professed to believe."

C. **Apostasy becomes visible**: two distinct features

1. **Surprising yielding**: 24:17, 18 "He hearkened"...they left for what they wanted all along:
2. **Strong resisting**: 24:18-20 Spirit filled God-sent messengers.

D. **How do you account for what you read in II Chronicles 24:21? Romans 8:7**

1. Observe that a Spirit filled priest/prophet is addressing Joash and other "**worshippers**": 20a
2. Observe the courageous clear message: 20b
3. The response? conspiracy, **a consensus led by Joash**, STONE HIM TO DEATH.
4. All this took place where? 21B!! This is where the young lad was rescued and hid.
5. Apostates have aggravated guilt: 24:22. This forgetting makes the murder **aggravated**.

III. The stakes are high in this life and the one to come with reference to true or false professions of faith.

A. Joash had great woes in this life.

1. 24:23 robbed and punished with the sword.
2. Hazael's invasion: **its resistless character**. It is a small group that overcame a great host—army” because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers ...against Joash.
3. Sick, so sick he can't rise from bed, then murdered in bed.

4. Assassinated by his own people: What happened to “God save the King”?

The origin of the conspiracy: most likely it grew out of the seething discontent of the people. They saw the kingdom collapsing in the hands of an unfaithful king. They saw righteous blood shed. They suffered from invasion—which was a judgment brought on by King Joash.

When the bonds of godliness are loosed, the bonds of fidelity between men and women are loosed too.

B. He has another reckoning: Revelation 20:15

1. Did my servant rescue you? Did he tutor and protect you? Did he live a godly life before you? Did I send you prophets, Spirit-filled prophets?

SO HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE IN JOASH'S SHOES?

DEAR CHILDREN, WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

2 Peter 2:21—For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

Can you explain why people need to be born again—regenerated? Why do people need to be made new creatures? What is wrong with the old creature—what we are by nature?

How do we discern Plum trees?

Dear people young and old, What is important to you? Are you pursuing supernatural charity athletically? Who are you yielding to? Is God calling you?

Why were you created? Berg—Created for His Glory. Why not at your home? If not us who? If not now when?