

Right in the Eyes of the LORD

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[0 : 00] 2 Chronicles 28. We're going to start reading from verse 22 through to chapter 29, verse 2.

! We'll be reading from the ESV and it will be on the overhead behind me as well. 2 Chronicles 28. This is the Word of God.

3 Chronicles 28. In the time of his distress, he became yet more faithless to the Lord, this same king Ahaz.

4 Chronicles 28. For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that had defeated him and said, because the gods of the kings of Syria helped them, I will sacrifice to them and they may help me.

5 Chronicles 29. But they were in the ruin of him. 6 Chronicles 29. They were the ruin of him and of all Israel. 7 Chronicles 29. And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God.

[1 : 09] 8 Chronicles 29. And he shut up the doors of the house of the Lord and he made himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem. 9 Chronicles 29. In every city of Judah he made high places to make offerings to other gods, provoking to anger the Lord, the God of his fathers.

9 Chronicles 29. Now the rest of his acts and all his ways from first to last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 10 Chronicles 29. And Ahaz slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel.

11 Chronicles 29. And Hezekiah his son reigned in his place. Chapter 29. Hezekiah began to reign when he was 25 years old and he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem.

His mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. And he did that what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.

About three or four months ago, we got a new dishwasher. It was time. We had reached the point where I wasn't sure that the dishes were being cleaned. It didn't seem like there was any water that was in the dishwasher. It was making grinding noises to the point that we should have been saying, kids, you have to stay out of the kitchen when the dishwasher is running.

[2 : 36] So we got a new one. I yanked out the old one, installed the new, and took that old dishwasher and threw it in the shed. Closed the doors and I've left it there.

For like three or four months, just left the dishwasher in the closed door of the shed. But a day is coming soon.

In fact, it's less than a week away. When I'm going to swing the doors of that shed open again, and I am going to pull out that dishwasher and cleanse the shed, my fellow Bremenites should know the day that I'm speaking about.

Dump day. This weekend, Friday and Saturday, we get to take all of our old stuff to the dump. It's transformed from a place where usually you bring your yard waste.

Not this one weekend. One weekend out of the year, we get to take everything we've accumulated, all of our garbage, minus a few things that you'll have to make sure you don't take, and you get to take it to the dump.

[3 : 38] And you get to get rid of it. So I'm going to burst those doors open, and I am going to cleanse my shed of my old dishwasher. It's long overdue for that to happen.

In this passage this morning, God's people are going to also do some cleansing and some removing as well. But it's not in their shed in the backyard.

No, what needs to be cleansed, what needs to have its doors flung wide open again, is the temple of God. The temple has been defiled.

It's been desecrated. Its doors have literally been shut. So all of that needs to change. And Israel cannot wait until spring comes to get this done.

The problem needs to be remedied immediately. The doors need to be opened. The shed needs to be removed of all of the unclean things in it so that it can be cleansed and restored to its proper working order as God designed for it to be.

[4 : 45] So that is what we see this morning as a new king has ascended to the throne. King Hezekiah. What do we know of Hezekiah?

We often hear of him and perhaps think of when Sennacherib came to attack the kingdom of Judah and he failed. Or perhaps we think of when Hezekiah got sick and God restored his health and gave him a longer life.

Perhaps we think a book of the Bible is written, a book of the Bible is named after him. That's not true. Revelation is spelled with no S and there is no book of the Bible called Hezekiah.

We read of many of these things in Isaiah. We read of them in 2 Kings. But only here in 2 Chronicles do we read of Hezekiah cleansing the temple and restoring the temple.

Now Hezekiah was 25 years old when he came into the throne. He ruled over the southern kingdom of Judah long after Israel had split into these two kingdoms.

[5 : 53] The northern kingdom which retained the name Israel and the southern kingdom which took the name Judah. And as this 25-year-old young king, he followed the reign of his father Ahaz.

We just heard about Ahaz's reign. Ahaz was a wicked king. He sacrificed two false idols. He desecrated the temple of God.

He removed all of the furnishings that God had told the Israelites specifically to put into place there. He took all of those furnishings out and he scrapped it, replacing it with things that he wanted to put in place.

2 Kings 16 is a parallel account to ours. And Ahaz had a new altar installed in the temple. It was an altar that was modeled after the pagan altar of the Assyrians.

He had seen theirs. He was impressed by it. And he thought, I want that instead of the altar that we have now. Let's get rid of that one and let's put the pagan altar in place. Let's ditch the one that the Lord God Almighty told us to put in place and let's put the pagan one in.

[7 : 05] I think that one will do better. In a word, Ahaz was a syncretist, meaning that he was trying to blend the worship of the true God with the worship of false idols.

He was trying to bring that together, which of course in doing that completely tainted any worship of the true God. It was now false worship that was being offered. So what was the result of all of this? Was God impressed? Not at all. Just the opposite. 2 Chronicles 28.25 says that Ahaz was provoking to anger the Lord, the God of his fathers.

God was angry with Ahaz. Why is that? Because he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. 2 Chronicles 28.1 tells us that.

Ahaz then died. And in his place, his son Hezekiah was installed as king upon the throne. And from the very beginning of his reign, from day one, we see a very different king.

[8 : 14] We see a man who was nothing like his father. A man who is actually described in exactly the opposite terms of his father by God's word.

We see here, Ahaz did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. But Hezekiah? 2 Chronicles 29.2 says, He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

So we have much that we can learn from Hezekiah this morning. Hezekiah is an example to us. He's an example of someone worth following.

Do you want to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord? Do you want to lead a life that brings honor to the Lord? A life that the Lord takes pleasure in?

Do you want a life that aligns with what God says is good and right and true? Well then, let's pay attention to the life of Hezekiah here in 2 Chronicles 29.

[9 : 14] And let's see how he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Because that's what the rest of chapter 29 tells us. Chapter 29 tells us four ways that Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

So let's learn from him. The first way. Hezekiah acknowledged God's just judgment for sin. He acknowledged God's just judgment for sin.

Follow along as I read chapter 29 beginning in verse 3. In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them.

He brought in the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the square on the east and said to them, Hear me, Levites, now consecrate yourselves and consecrate the house of the Lord, the God

of your fathers, and carry out the filth from the holy place.

For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done what was evil in the sight of the Lord our God. They have forsaken Him and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord and turned their backs.

[10:24] They also shut the doors of the vestibule and put out the lamps and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. Therefore, the wrath of the Lord came on Judah and Jerusalem, and He has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes.

For behold, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. So Hezekiah is reminding them of what happened in the reign of Ahaz and the consequences that are now continuing to this day.

The consequences are severe. The kingdom of Judah has been attacked from literally all sides.

Now, not completely defeated. They are not yet being carried off into exile fully and finally.

That will come. But they have been taking devastating blow after blow from the hand of the king of Syria, from even the king of Israel.

Yes, from Israel. Israel had attacked and inflicted harm on Judah, their own brothers. 2 Chronicles 28.8 says that Israel took captive 200,000 of their relatives.

[11:48] So the northern kingdom is warring against the southern kingdom. It's gotten that bad. The Edomites had also successfully defeated Judah in battle, as had the Philistines.

And after all of this that's going on, King Ahaz, in his day, he went to the Assyrians to enlist their help. Judah was getting pummeled.

So in desperation, King Ahaz turned to another nation, a nation that was historically an enemy of God and his people. It had come to this.

And what did the Assyrians do? They were like lions seeing wounded prey. They did not help Judah. Instead, what did they do?

They got in on the kill. 2 Chronicles 28.20 says that the king of Assyria afflicted King Ahaz, instead of strengthening him.

[12:49] And Ahaz had even tried to appease the king of Assyria with tribute. Ahaz is thinking, okay, that was a mistake. I shouldn't have roused the Assyrians by asking for their help.

Now they're attacking me. I'll fix this by giving tribute. So he took valuable things from his own house. He took valuable things from the houses of others in high places in the government.

And he even took things from the house of God. He gave this tribute to the Assyrians. And 2 Chronicles 28.21 says very simply, but it did not help.

There it is. How humiliating for Judah. Everyone was attacking them, even those that Judah had turned to for help, and they gave tribute from God's very temple.

Nothing could stop this all-out assault on Judah. Because God's hand was behind it all.

[13:53] And nothing was going to stop God's hand. This was God's doing. This was God's fierce anger for all to see because King Ahaz had led the nation of Judah into sinning against God.

Now Ahaz had tried all kinds of man-made solutions. But of course those failed because Ahaz refused to address the real problem of sin.

He was like a man who was in need of open heart surgery. And instead of having the surgery done, he was just putting band-aids on his chest, hoping this will solve the problem.

Right? He would not humble himself before the Lord. But Hezekiah would. Hezekiah did. He acknowledged the sin that had landed the kingdom in such dire straits.

Hezekiah didn't gloss over the sins of his father's reign. He didn't try to rewrite the history of what had happened. He came right out and said it.

[15:00] Lots of different times. He says, Our fathers were unfaithful. He says, They have forsaken God. He says, His wrath has been upon Judah and Jerusalem.

And then perhaps the most piercing of them. He has made them an object of horror and of astonishment and of hissing as you see with your own eyes.

So Hezekiah acknowledged the sin of the past. The sins committed by his own father and those who had come before him. And Hezekiah submitted himself to God's standards.

He agreed with God. This is a very simple but so important truth. Those who do what is right in the eyes of the Lord, they agree with God in all things.

In what God calls good and in what God calls evil. Hezekiah modeled this for us. He called sin what it is. Sin.

[16:06] And he wasn't shocked. He wasn't surprised at what happened as a result of sin. He wasn't looking at God and questioning God and God's standards.

He wasn't saying, how could God be so harsh? And we shouldn't say that either. Because if we do, we are disagreeing with God.

We are telling God, I know better. My standards are superior to yours. We are telling God that He needs to get on board with us rather than us needing to get on board with Him.

And at the root of this kind of arrogance in our hearts, we are saying, sin isn't so bad. Sin can be overlooked.

Sin can be excused. In fact, we're thinking, we shouldn't even call sin, sin. So we should come up with something else that sounds more palatable.

[17:07] Like, I made a mistake. Like I had an error. A moment of poor judgment. A misstep. We could go on and on with terrible synonyms for sin.

Synonyms that only serve to downplay how terrible sin is. And it matters. How we view our sin matters. It has real implications for how we live.

Think about our relationships with one another. When we sin against each other, if we've got this distorted view of our own sin, guess what we won't do? We won't truly have a contrite heart.

We won't truly apologize for our sin. We'll give this quasi-apology. We'll say things like, maybe you've heard it, maybe you said it. I'm sorry if I hurt you.

Or we'll say things like, it wasn't my intention to hurt you, but if I did, I'm sorry that it happened. I'm doing everything there to distance myself from my sin.

[18:14] Something happened. I'm sorry if it hurt you. We are skirting around the reality of our sin. And there are real consequences. There's real harm that's done in that when we don't take responsibility for our sin.

We downplay it. We try to move on. But what does that do with our relationships with one another? How we distance ourselves from each other. We grow bitter.

We are holding things against one another because we're not genuinely asking for forgiveness, and we are not then genuinely giving forgiveness in return.

If we do that with each other and it's bad, how much worse if we do it with God? All sin is ultimately against Him.

So how much worse if we downplay our sin toward Him? And can't we easily convince ourselves of that? Oh, He'll forgive me. He is a forgiving God. It's no big deal.

[19:14] And we don't actually acknowledge the reality of our sin. We don't come to Him in humility. We don't directly ask Him, forgive me. As I've sinned against you. Oh, how this hurts our relationship with Him when we don't see our sin the way that He does.

When we fail to agree with Him about our sin. And then on top of that, when we brush off the seriousness of our sin, well then, of course, we're going to be shocked and we're going to be surprised by what God does in passages like 2 Chronicles 29.

How we view our sin goes hand in hand with how we view consequences for our sin. So if we think that sin is trivial, we're also going to think, really?

God, you would do that? You would punish the people of Judah? How? You'd make them an object of horror, of astonishment, of hissing?

He had the men killed by the sword, the text says. He had the women and the children carried off into exile where all kinds of terrible atrocities could be committed against them.

[20:26] Really? All because King Ahaz replaced the altar and took some things out of the temple and shut the temple doors for a time? If we think that God is going too far, then we've just fallen into the age-old trap that Satan loves to set.

Replacing God and what he says as the standard for right and wrong, for just and unjust, and making up our own. How did Satan lay that trap for Eve in the Garden of Eden?

After God had given the good commandment to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he came to her and he posed a question beginning with these words.

Did God really say? Did God really say? What he's implying is clear. Wow. God is harsh.

Now he had twisted God's words even in that, but still the question was driving at, really, God's standards? Should you listen to what he says?

[21 : 31] Can we really trust him to give us good standards? Hezekiah didn't fall for this trap. And so we must be on guard as well that we would not fall into that trap either.

So we must not be shocked at God's standards and God's judgments. We must not be interested in glossing over sin, including our own. If we are to do what is right in the eyes of God, then we must not do what is right in our own eyes by adopting our own standards of right and wrong, good and evil.

So Hezekiah acknowledged God's just judgment for sin. And so should we. Let's see the second way he did what was right in the eyes of God. He took action to bring about obedience.

He took action to bring about obedience. And we see this in verses 10 to 35. This is basically the rest of the chapter. It's a long reading, so I'm going to read all of it.

There's a lot going on here. Lots of details, but we need to see two main things and the uninspired heading in your Bible should help you. We should see that Hezekiah cleanses the temple and he restores the temple worship.

[22 : 50] He resets the temple according to God's standards and then he reinstitutes all of the proper activities of the temple. So let's read how all of this unfolds.

Beginning in verse 10. Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord, the God of Israel, in order that His fierce anger may turn away from us.

My sons, do not now be negligent, for the Lord has chosen you to stand in His presence, to minister to Him and to be His ministers and make offerings to Him.

Then the Levites arose, Mahath, the son of Amasai, and Joel, the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites, and of the sons of Merari, Kish, the son of Abdi, and Azariah, the son of Jehalilol, and of the Gershonites, Joah, the son of Zerah, and Eden, the son of Joah, and of the sons of Elizapham, Shemri, and Jehul, and of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah, and Mataniah, and of the sons of Haman, Jehul, and Shimei.

And of the sons of Jehul, and Shemaiah, and Uziel. They gathered their brothers and consecrated themselves and went in as the king had commanded by the words of the Lord to cleanse the house of the Lord.

[24 : 13] The priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord. They went, pardon me, verse 16. The priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it. And they brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the Lord into the court of the house of the Lord.

And the Levites took it and carried it out to the brook Kidron. They began to consecrate on the first day of the month. And on the eighth day of the month, they came to the vestibule of the Lord.

Then for eight days, they consecrated the house of the Lord. And on the sixteenth day of the first month, they finished. Then they went to Hezekiah the king and said, we have cleansed all the house of the Lord, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils and the table for the showbread and all its utensils.

All the utensils that King Hezekiah discarded in his reign when he was faithless, we have made ready and consecrated. And behold, they are before the altar of the Lord.

Then Hezekiah the king rose early and gathered the officials of the city and went up to the house of the Lord. And they brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats for a sin offering for the kingdom and for the sanctuary and for Judah.

[25 : 25] And He commanded the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the Lord. So they slaughtered the bulls and the priests received the blood and threw it against the altar. And they slaughtered the rams and their blood was thrown against the altar.

And they slaughtered the lambs and their blood was thrown against the altar. Then the goats for the sin offering were brought to the king and the assembly and they laid their hands on them.

And the priests slaughtered them and made a sin offering with their blood on the altar to make atonement for all Israel. For the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

And he stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, harps, and lyres according to the commandment of God and of Gad the king seer and of Nathan the prophet. For the commandment was from the Lord through his prophets.

The Levites stood with the instruments of David and the priests with the trumpets. Then Hezekiah commanded that the burnt offering be offered on the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the

song to the Lord began also and the trumpets accompanied by the instruments of David, king of Israel.

[26 : 32] The whole assembly worshipped and the singers sang and the trumpeters sounded. All this continued until the burnt offering was finished. When the offering was finished, the king and all who were present with him bowed themselves and worshipped.

And Hezekiah the king and the officials commanded the Levites to sing praises to the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness and they bowed down and worshipped.

Then Hezekiah said, You have now consecrated yourselves to the Lord. Come near. Bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the Lord.

And the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings and all who were of a willing heart brought burnt offerings. The number of the burnt offerings that the assembly brought was 70 bulls, 100 rams and 200 lambs.

All these were for a burnt offering of the Lord. And the consecrated offerings were 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep. But the priests were too few and could not flay all the burnt offerings.

[27 : 35] So until other priests had consecrated themselves, their brothers, the Levites, helped them until the work was finished. For the Levites were more upright in heart than the priests in consecrating themselves. Besides the great number of burnt offerings, there was the fat of the peace offerings and there were the drink offerings for the burnt offerings.

Thus the service of the house of the Lord was restored. In reading all of this, I think it's abundantly clear, Hezekiah and the people took action.

They rightly assessed the situation before them. They agreed with God and then they got to work.

They were meticulously cleaning and cleansing the temple.

They were getting everything out that was unclean. It didn't belong. It was offensive to God and His holiness. And they cleaned everything up. They brought back the furnishings that Ahaz had wrongly taken out.

And when that temple was made ready, they then held that first worship service of this new era.

Singing praises to God while simultaneously offering up sacrifices to God.

[28 : 49] Now for the singing, they were following David's commandments, verse 25 says. And they were ultimately understanding that any commandments that came from David came from God.

So they were obeying God in the way they were going about their singing. They were also obeying God in the way that they were going about their sacrificing. They followed God's detailed instructions for how this was to be done.

You can read about it in Leviticus chapter 4. All of this demonstrates the obedience of Hezekiah and the people. We can learn from them that obedience is an outflow of the Christian life.

Yes, it is good and we should acknowledge God's just judgment for sin. We should agree with God about sin in general. We should agree about our sin in particular.

It's a key component of confession. We agree with God. I have sinned against you. I have transgressed your laws in that we're acknowledging God's just judgment for sin and we're pleading for God's mercy which we have if we're in Christ.

[30 : 00] But that confession is not where the matter ends. There must then be obedience that follows. That is the natural outworking of confession for the Christian. Think about Hezekiah.

Hezekiah would be a bad example to us if he had simply gathered those priests and Levites together in the temple court if he had explained to them the connection here between the present judgment and the past sins and then just left it at that.

If he had only agreed with God, yep, we're suffering some great consequences because of our sins but then done nothing, we would say something is wrong here. This is an empty pep talk.

Hezekiah, you can't leave the temple in the state that it's in. You need to get to work. You need to clean it up. You need to cleanse it. You need to take out what's defiled. You need to make it holy again.

You need to restore the temple worship. Bring back the singing and the sacrifices. You can't just agree with God and then go back to living your life unchanged as it was before, pretending the situation with the temple doesn't matter.

[31 : 13] The same is true for us. We ought to confess. We ought to agree with God about our sin, but confession is not where it ends. We then work hard to change, to live differently than before.

That is what true repentance is. It's turning away from our sin. It's turning toward Christ. And this is something that we then do throughout our Christian lives.

We continually turn away from our sin and we turn toward Christ. It's the basics that we just keep coming back to. If we make no turn away from our sin towards obedience, then aren't we just continuing in our sin?

Do you see remaining sin in your life? Good. God is gracious to reveal it to us so that you can then change.

Multiple times in Paul's letters to Timothy, he speaks of both fleeing from sin and pursuing righteousness. I mean, he's using action words there.

[32 : 24] He's not just saying like, say no to sin, say yes to righteousness. He is saying, flee, do something. Run, pursue, do something.

There's nothing passive about that. Nothing passive about obedience. It's not just something that happens to us. As Hezekiah and the priests stood there in the temple courts, their thinking was right.

But their thinking was not going to cleanse the temple. Right action that flowed from their thinking needed to follow. And just to be clear, we're talking about the Christian life here.

You don't become a Christian by cleaning yourself up. You don't obey God in order to be saved. But those who are saved, as we often say, obey God.

Both in how we think and in how we live. That's the second way that Hezekiah models for us what it looks like to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord.

[33 : 27] He took action to bring about obedience. Let's consider now the third way. He exhorted the people toward this same obedience. Now we see this sprinkled throughout the passage.

Hezekiah was not alone in this great act of obedience. He gathered the people together, beginning with those priests and Levites. And he gave directions to them to consecrate themselves and then to consecrate the temple.

And when their task was finished, we see that he's exhorting the people towards obedience as they begin offering sacrifices. And as they're offering those sacrifices, what else is he doing?

Oh, he's directing the Levites to be making music and for the people to worship. All through this passage, the people are following his lead.

Hezekiah obeyed and he's exhorting, he's admonishing the whole nation towards this same obedience. obedience. We see this perhaps most prominently in verses 10 and 11 when Hezekiah says, Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord, the God of Israel, in order that his fierce anger may turn away from us.

[34 : 40] My sons, do not now be negligent, for the Lord has chosen you to stand in his presence, to minister to him and to be his ministers and make offerings to him.

So do you hear how he's urging those priests and Levites? He's earnest in this. We're seeing something of his heart. He's calling them his sons.

There's a warmth to his words. He's endeared to them. He wants them to obey along with him. He wants that to be in obedience from the heart.

My sons. And then he exhorts them. Do not now be negligent. There it is. He's calling them to this heartfelt obedience. Now, of course, Hezekiah is the king.

The priests and the Levites, they will do what he says because he is the king. So yes, this is a command, but there's also a real encouragement here as well.

[35 : 45] Hezekiah even gives them motivation. Remember, my sons, the Lord has chosen you to stand in his presence. What an honor. What a privilege.

What a great responsibility as well. It's such a privilege that their names then get recorded in God's word for us to read. They got to do something few others could.

So Hezekiah is saying, don't be negligent. Don't waste this opportunity. Don't be unfaithful to the Lord. Don't turn your faces. Don't turn your back against him the way that Ahaz did.

But do what is right in his eyes by obeying. So you see, Hezekiah wasn't alone in his obedience. He wasn't alone there at the temple from the cleansing to the worship service with the singing and the sacrifices.

This was not a one-man job of obedience. obedience. He brought the people of Judah with Him and He helped them to see and to understand their roles and their responsibilities in the temple worship.

[36 : 53] None were to stay silent. None were to just stand off on the side and observe what was going on. They were to participate in this grand act of obedience.

Some were leading, but all were participating. All were involved. And they're not just giving this mere lip service. They're not just like going through the motions with hearts that are cold and uninvolved.

They aren't just watching like they're at a concert as the Levites lead the worship. They weren't dragging their feet and sighing as they brought their sacrifices.

Like, this is such a cumbersome thing for us to do. The people are worshiping with all of their hearts. We see it all over the passage. Look at the end of verse 30.

They sang praises with gladness and they bowed down and worshiped. Look also at the end of verse 31. And the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings and all who were of a willing heart brought burnt offerings.

[38 : 01] Now, in case we're wondering, well, how many had willing hearts? It doesn't say that everyone had a willing heart. Just those who had the willing heart brought the burnt offerings. Well, how many burnt offerings did they bring?

God's Word tells us, verse 32, 70 bulls, 100 rams, 200 lambs, 370 animals in total. That sounds like a lot.

Is it? We might not really have a framework for this kind of ceremony. Is 370 animals considered a lot for a burnt offering? Verse 35 tells us, besides the great number of burnt offerings, or as the NIV says, there were burnt offerings in abundance.

This was a wholehearted worship service as Hezekiah exhorted the people towards obedience. This wasn't just him getting right with God.

He was helping the people, instructing the people, and he was encouraging them towards obedience. So are we helping each other in this way?

[39 : 06] Are we encouraging one another towards obedience? Like Hezekiah saying to the priests and the Levites, my sons, do not now be negligent.

Or if we frame that in a positive way, be attentive, be careful. The Bible says this all the time. Pay careful attention.

Are we helping each other towards that? To pay careful attention in the Christian life? And that must involve pointing each other to God's Word and helping each other to put it into practice.

I think the New Testament parallel to this Old Testament example is found in Colossians 3.16. All that we see going on here in this whole chapter that took a little while to read.

It's a lot of verses. It's captured in, I think, one verse in the New Testament. A very efficient verse. Colossians 3.16. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thanksgiving in your hearts to God.

[40 : 22] That's what we should be doing with one another. Hezekiah modeled it for us. Don't be negligent. Rather, let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly so that you can then share it with one another so that we can then remind each other of the truth that we are so often forgetful of.

There are definitely times that we're not thinking rightly and we need a brother or a sister to remind us of the truth, to encourage us, to exhort us, to admonish us, as Colossians 3.16 says.

So yes, we need loving correction at times. We need speaking the truth in love to happen with one another. Saying like Hezekiah, do not now be negligent.

Don't grow cold in your heart. Don't become sloppy in living out the Christian life. So let's be like Hezekiah in this way. Those who do what is right in the eyes of the Lord, they exhort their brothers and their sisters towards obedience.

obedience. And finally, the fourth way that Hezekiah is an example to us. He recognized God's sovereign hand and rejoiced. We see that at the end of verse 35.

[41 : 41] Thus the service of the house of the Lord was restored.

And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because God had provided for the people for the thing came about suddenly. So Hezekiah and the people understood that their success, their success in cleansing the temple, their success in restoring the temple worship, they understood that God brought this about.

That their success was owed to God's hand. There was no other way to explain how quickly they were able to get this done. As verse 36 says, the thing came about suddenly.

This massive undertaking that they accomplished. It only took them a little over two weeks. Now how did they do it? Well they could have thought to themselves, oh we had a great leader in our king.

Oh we had great teamwork as we were passing the utensils to one another to cleanse it in the river. They could have thought we put together a great game plan that worked.

[42 : 51] They could have attributed their success to all kinds of human factors. But they knew ultimately where their success came from. God's sovereign hand.

He gave them the strength. He gave them the endurance. He gave them that unity of heart and mind. He gave them the skill and the wisdom to accomplish the task quickly.

They knew God brought this about for us and they rejoiced in that. They were glad to give credit to God. They were saying look at what God has done for us.

They weren't bitter about it. They weren't discouraged like oh man we just realized God made all this happen. Why did I wish we did it? No they rejoiced in that. Look at what God has accomplished for our good and for his glory.

And that's one last example for us. As we see any success in living out the Christian life as we see any fruitfulness in our lives any growth in grace in our lives we should be quick to say look at what God has done.

[44 : 01] Yes we ought to work hard we see that in our text the people worked very very hard and they gave credit to God. They didn't steal his glory they acknowledged who had provided for them.

And they did it together. They did it corporately. This is like one of a million examples in scripture of corporate worship of reasons that we gather together to worship.

We see Hezekiah and God's people doing it here in 2 Chronicles 29. We too likewise gather to worship. And I don't know about you but that singing this morning I know I already was thinking about this sermon passage.

I had a little bit of a head start but I was thinking as we were singing wow this is like 2 Chronicles 29 what a joyful noise to the Lord was being made.

So let's continue in that gathering to joyfully recognize God's sovereign provision for us. Let's be quick to say look at the grace that He's given us.

[45 : 11] Look at what He has brought about for His people. So in humility we rejoice. We rejoice in the sovereign hand of God.

Hezekiah So what have we seen this morning in the example of Hezekiah? We've seen that he acknowledged God's just judgment for sin that he took action to bring about obedience that he encouraged the people towards that obedience and he recognized God's sovereign hand and rejoiced.

All of this helps us to see Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Unlike his father Ahaz. Hezekiah said Ahaz brought the wrath of God upon Judah.

So we've seen this morning how Hezekiah turned back that wrath through obedience. But this isn't the end of Hezekiah's story in Scripture.

He would not come to a finish as strongly as he started. If you turn over in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles chapter 32 we see near the end of Hezekiah's life a very sad account.

[46 : 25] Chapter 32 beginning in verse 24. In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death and he prayed to the Lord and he answered him and gave him a sign.

But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him for his heart was proud. therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem.

But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the wrath of the Lord did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

That was a long sermon to come right back to where we started. Like father like son. God's wrath has returned and Hezekiah did humble himself.

Judah wasn't punished for his sins in his lifetime in his days but that wrath was still to come not just for Hezekiah's sin but for all of the sins of all of the people as they rebelled against God time and time again.

[47 : 37] Judah would be carried off into exile. That's how 2 Chronicles finishes. It's a sad finish. Punishment came and it was severe.

God's wrath for Judah's sin was brought in full and it was brought through the Babylonians. So you can't read 2 Chronicles without seeing how far short even the best of human kings came.

How far short they fell of God's glory. Hezekiah he said to have done what was right in the eyes of the Lord and yet he still sinned and like all sin his sin brought God's wrath.

Too often sin is made light of like it's just no big deal to God but if we are careful readers of his word we cannot miss it.

Sin all sin brings God's wrath. No matter how much Hezekiah obeyed no matter how much he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord sin his sin brings God's wrath.

[48 : 53] So Hezekiah he is a positive godly example to us in so many ways. We should learn from his life. We should not discredit what took place in his life leading up to the end otherwise that sermon really shouldn't have been preached.

He is an example to us. But even more so he is a reminder. Hezekiah is a reminder that we need someone else to take away God's wrath.

We need someone else to turn away God's wrath. So Hezekiah is a reminder to us that we need Jesus. We need Jesus.

When we look at the broad brushstrokes of some of the lives of some of the kings in 1st and 2nd Chronicles we can see generally speaking that they did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

Not so with King Jesus. He only ever in every thought in his mind in every situation he encountered in every moment even when he was hungry even when he was tired even as he hung upon that cross suffocating to death he only ever did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

[50 : 20] And it was because of his perfect obedience that he could successfully totally completely turn away God's wrath. God's wrath was satisfied.

And it wasn't by obediently offering 370 burnt offerings. It was by obediently offering one himself. The sinless one paid the price for all the sins of his people so that God's wrath was satisfied.

So that God's wrath was satisfied. It wasn't just postponed for us. Like in the days of Colin God's wrath isn't coming.

No. Not at all. It wasn't put off for a later date. It's been turned away for all time. We are safe and secure for all of eternity in Christ.

He didn't put off God's coming wrath for a time satisfied it fully for us. He endured it. He took it completely upon himself because God's justice demanded payment for sin.

[51 : 30] It wasn't as though Jesus negotiated for us and got us a good deal. It wasn't as though Jesus was simply really diplomatic and able to have a good talk with God like he successfully ratcheted down God's anger.

It wasn't as though God was saying, oh, okay, I'll give them a pass. You have a point. I'll let their sins go. That's not how it worked. Jesus was no diplomat. Jesus was a substitute.

He took our place. Jesus wasn't in essence saying, couldn't you go easy on them? He said, give it all to me. All that wrath stored up for them, give it all to me.

You see, God's wrath was indeed poured out for our sins. There was no getting around that, but it wasn't poured out on us who have trusted in Christ. It was poured out on Christ himself.

The one in whom the fullness of God dwelt, received God's wrath in full as he hung upon that cross.

[52 : 37] God's God's wrath still remains on you. If you haven't, John 3, 36 says, God's wrath still remains on you.

So there is only one avenue of escape because apart from Christ, one day, if you are not in Christ, you will have God's wrath poured out on you in full.

That is an approaching day for those outside of Christ. So there is only one avenue of escape. Only by putting your trust in Jesus Christ.

Only Jesus can deliver you from the wrath that is to come. So look to him and live today. Turn from your sins. Agree with God about your sins.

Stop disagreeing with him, trying to minimize your sin. No, agree with God about your sins and trust in Jesus. If you do, you will be forgiven.

[53 : 39] God's wrath will be turned away from you, and for all of eternity you will not have his face against you. You will have his face smiling upon you. Beloved by him, blessed by him for all of eternity.

So come to Christ today. See what love the Savior shows. What wondrous love has been shown to us. A love that we should be in awe of.

Romans 5 beginning in verse 8. But God shows his love for us in this. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since therefore we have been justified by his blood, much more shall we be

saved by him from the wrath of God.
Amen. Amen. Amen.