

## He Did What Was Right

by Heath Rogers

Do you remember those television ads for frozen pizza that asked, "What do you want on your tombstone?" The victim facing the firing squad would reply, "Pepperoni," and the soldiers would have to wait while he enjoyed his last meal.

What do we want on our tombstones (burial markers, not frozen pizza)? That's a good question. It is hard to summarize an entire life in just a few words. What would you want future generations visiting your gravesite to read and remember about you?

While we are thinking along these lines, I turn your attention to the record of the kings of Judah and Israel as recorded in the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles. A simple, summarizing statement is made about each of the kings. The good kings are said to be those who *"did what was right in the sight of the Lord"* and the bad kings are those who *"did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord."* Although the text often gives more details concerning their lives, these simple epithets tell us what kind of men they were.

There are many decisions that we have to make in this life. Most of them are insignificant, but some of them are very important. One's character and values are revealed when he makes a decision. This is because important decisions are made based upon the experiences of one's own life and the direction he wants his life to go.

When faced with a difficult decision, some will ask questions like, "How much will it cost?" or "How much fun can I have doing this?" or "What is best for my family?" or "What do people expect from me?" Christians have a simple question to ask when making a difficult decision: "What is the right thing to do?"

Of course, one problem that man has when using this standard is that of actually determining what is right. In today's world of "no absolutes" people are encouraged to set their own standards and live life by their own rules. In a world where no one is wrong, how can anyone be right?

The children of Israel had this problem. The period of the judges was a turbulent time, primarily because *"everyone did what was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 21:25). Solomon wrote,

*"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

*"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the hearts"* (Proverbs 21:2).

Thus, we see that a standard higher than ourselves must be used to determine what is right. The Bible tells us that God's Word is this standard.

*"For the word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth"* (Psalm 33:4).

*"Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way"* (Psalm 119:128).

*"Who is wise? Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them."*

*For the ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them" (Hosea 14:9).*

The good kings were good because they did what was right in the sight of the Lord (according to God's standard). Could the same thing honestly be said of you and me? It can be, if we will walk in the Ways of the Lord.

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