

- life.
- 4) God has given parents a promise found in (Proverbs 22:6) "*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*" It is a mystery how God weaves together His sovereignty, a parent's frail efforts and a child's freewill to fulfil this promise. I know that God will do His part, so if my child goes astray, I cannot blame God. It is likely due to a failure in my training. I believe it is an extremely rare thing that any parent truly fulfils his part of the equation flawlessly, yet that must be our aim.

#### **b. True character must be personally acquired.**

- 1) Once Jehoiada died, Joash revealed that he had never sincerely and personally acquired godly character (24:17).
- 2) He did not have true godly character **residing in his heart**. He soon hearkened to the people's desire to return to idolatry (24:18).
- 3) God sent prophets to them to bring them back again to God, but they would not listen (24:19).
- 4) Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, who was like Joash's own brother, spoke out against these evils (24:20). For this, Joash had him stoned to death (24:21).
- 5) Within a year, two of Joash's own servants assassinated him (24:25).
- 6) True godly character **must** reside in the **heart**. Each of us must take the training and mentoring we have received and form our **own** convictions and character.

**Conclusion:** God wants you to develop godly character. If you were not privileged to grow up in a godly Christian home, you have a handicap, but you can still succeed with effort. Study the Scriptures. The Proverbs are very helpful. Make developing godly character your life's goal for God's glory.

If you have children at home, the teaching and mentoring task before you is vitally important. It is not easy. When you make mistakes, admit them and seek to change. Take the task seriously. Pour your whole heart into it. Make it a priority. Pray, pray and pray some more.

**Pray**

# Developing Godly Character

3 May 2020 PM - 2Chronicles 23-24 - Kings20 - Scott Childs

**Welcome:** Welcome to our **Sunday evening** online church service.

**Prayer**

**Introduction:** The next king in our study of the kings of Israel and Judah is a young man named Joash (Jehoash). He was a good king during the first part of his 40-year reign, but then turned bad. What went wrong? He lacked personal godly character.

What is character? "**Character can be defined as what makes a person distinct from others, often with a particular emphasis on moral qualities. When we think of a person who has good character, we often describe them with terms like integrity, honesty, strong moral fiber, care and concern for others, and the like. Character is demonstrated in actions but true character resides in the heart.**" CompellingTruth.org

**Transition:** This evening I want us to examine **three ingredients** that are often part of developing godly character. I say "often" because some people who do not receive the first ingredient may also develop godly character, but it will be a greater challenge.

## **1. Early Biblical Training**

### **a. Joash was reared by the High Priest**

- 1) When Azariah the king died, his mother Athaliah killed all of the royal family and proclaimed herself queen. (2 Chronicles 22:11) "*But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.*" (cf., 1Ki 11:2)
- 2) For the first six years of his life, Joash lived in hiding inside the temple.
- 3) Jehoiada the high priest, his uncle, became his adopted father. He cared for him just as a father.

### **b. Joash learned to do what was right (24:2)**

- 1) God tells us nothing about Joash's early biblical training, but we do know the character of his adopted father.
- 2) Jehoiada was a God-fearing priest with a lofty character

and devout spirit. (Lockyer)

- 3) We are confident that during those six years he poured his heart into training young Joash in the things of the Lord.
- 4) A child's early formative years are very important in the development of godly character. Consider some of the qualities that are best learned during those early years.
  - a) Fear of God
  - b) Honesty and truthfulness
  - c) Obedience complete and without delay
  - d) Respect for authority
  - e) Morality – a purity of mind, eye, and action
  - f) Sharing, not selfish
  - g) Kindness
  - h) Wholesome speech
  - i) Genuine confession when wrong
  - j) Humility
  - k) Discernment
  - l) Personal relationship with Christ
- 5) These and similar qualities are not inherited but are learned from caring parents. Parents must teach such qualities first by example, then by thoughtful and persistent training.

## 2. Consistent Godly Mentoring

### a. Mentoring is a step beyond training

- 1) A mentor is “a wise and trusted guide and advisor.”
- 2) Once Joash became king, Jehoiada continued to be his mentor. He was Joash's guide and counsellor, especially in spiritual matters. While Joash was still young, Jehoiada probably mentored him regarding the political matters of the kingdom as well, but we cannot say for sure.
- 3) During his reign, Joash had a mind to repair the house of God (24:4). This was a big success as Jehoiada worked with him on this project (24:14).
- 4) As a child continues to grow and mature, he needs consistent godly mentoring.
  - a) Such mentoring needs to be consistent based on the

unchanging solid principles of the Bible. It must also be consistent in that it continues on a regular basis.

- b) This mentoring needs to be godly so that it points the young person in God's direction. It must reflect the holy character of God in its delivery and goal.
  - 5) To make mentoring successful, the mentor must develop a friendship, respect, and open communication with his pupil. With the busyness of life, parents (especially dads) often fail to build the necessary friendship, respect and open communication with their children. As a result, many children get to a point when they either openly or inwardly reject parental mentoring.
- ### b. Mentors fortify character throughout life
- 1) Jehoiada's mentoring kept Joash going in the right direction for many years. (2 Chronicles 24:2) "*And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.*"
  - 2) God graciously gave Jehoiada a very long life to extend his mentoring influence. (2 Chronicles 24:15) "*But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died.*"
  - 3) Jehoiada, like any parent mentor, probably made mistakes. He was human. Yet, the fact that Joash followed his counsel until he died is commendable.
  - 4) As parents, once our children leave home, our mentoring must change. Every parent must let his child grow up and become an adult. However, if we have built a close friendship, respect and open communication with the child, he or she will still value and seek our counsel.

## 3. Sincere Personal Acquiring

### a. Teaching and mentoring are only influences

- 1) Dale Carnegie wisely stated, “Those convinced against their will are of the same opinion still.”
- 2) Yes, both training and mentoring are only influences.
- 3) As parents, we must teach, train, instruct, discipline, and most of all pray for our children, but every child is an individual. He or she must make his or her own path in