

LESSON PLAN

JEHOSHAPHAT BEFRIENDS AHAB 1 Kings 22

Lesson Memory Verse: James 4:4b “Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

Lesson Aim: Learn to choose friends that will help you live for God and friends you can bring to Jesus.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): How many of you can name one of your close friends? (Give them an opportunity to do so.) I hope all of your close friends are good ones and not bad ones. Can you think of some ways that you can tell good friends from bad ones? (Put **GOOD** on one side of the whiteboard and **BAD** on the other side, and make a list. Be specific as you make this list, i.e., “goes to church, is kind, reads the Bible, obeys parents,” or “swears, lies, steals.”) The best way to tell whether a friend is good or bad is to notice how he treats God. If he speaks well of God and the church, he will be a good friend. If he loves sin and doesn’t want anything to do with God, he will be a bad friend. God wants you to make friends with those who respect Him and His people. They may not be Christians yet, but they are not against Christians. Those who act sinfully are likely to cause us to sin. That is why you should be careful when you choose your friends.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse for today tells us how important it is to make good friends. It says that “Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” If you choose friends who are sinful, and you enjoy their sin, you are an enemy of God. You need to witness to them, but do not make them your friends until they begin to respect God and His laws. If they want to be your friend, even when you refuse to go along with their sins, there is a possibility that they will become a Christian like you. If they leave you because you do not go along with their sins, let them go. These “friends” can cause you to become an enemy of God. But, if any of them becomes a Christian, that one can become your close friend. God wants you to be kind to sinners so you can tell them about Jesus and what He has done for you. Maybe they will become Christians, but He does not want you to be friends with those who rebel against God. **Words and phrases to explain in the verse:**

“Whoever” – anyone including you

“Friend” – a person that you like to work and play with

“World” – the way that sinful people live

“Enemy” – a person who is against another person

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. King Jehoshaphat acted against the teaching of our memory verse. He was a good king, but became a friend to Ahab, a bad king that lived an ungodly life.

I. Compromise of Jehoshaphat (22:1-4)

Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, made a friendly visit with Ahab, the king of Israel (22:2). Judah and Israel had separated from each other over a dispute about increased taxes. Then the split was made stronger when Israel worshipped idols. Now Jehoshaphat shows Ahab that he wants to be friends with him and his country. Maybe Jehoshaphat thought that he could reunite Judah and Israel by showing himself to be friendly. For whatever reason that he had, it was a bad decision for him to think that a godly king could be friends with an ungodly king. Ahab dishonored God and worshipped idols. Whoever makes friends with an ungodly man is making friends with an enemy of God. There is no evidence that God told Jehoshaphat to do this. In fact, God later sent a prophet to tell him that he had done wrong; He was angry with him for his friendship with Ahab (2 Chr 19:1-2). Jehoshaphat’s friendship with Ahab caused him to lose his friendship with God.

Jehoshaphat’s friendship with Ahab also gave Satan an opportunity to mess up his life. During this visit Jehoshaphat agreed to join Ahab in war against Syria that almost took his life. Later, his son married Ahab’s wicked daughter, who brought a false religion to Judah, and it almost destroyed Judah. He made a foolish decision to be friends with an ungodly king.

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WE: If we become friends with ungodly children, we will be asked to join them in some sinful activity. If we yield and join them, we cannot expect God to join with us and protect us. We can expect many problems as punishment from God. He does not delight in such foolishness. The only way to be a friend to an unsaved person is to do things together that please God.

II. Contradiction Between the Prophets (22:5-28)

When Ahab made plans to go to war with Syria, Jehoshaphat heard 400 false prophets predict victory for Ahab. Jehoshaphat asked Ahab if there was a prophet of the Lord to tell them the outcome of this war. Ahab called for Micaiah to come and he predicted defeat and death for Ahab. The false prophets were many more in number (400 to 1), but they did not know the truth; they simply told him what he wanted to hear. God's prophet was the only one that told the truth. Ahab did not want to believe Micaiah, so he put him in prison for his prophecy. Jehoshaphat, however, should have believed Micaiah. He had asked for a man of God to tell them what would happen, but he did not believe Micaiah either, so he went to war with Ahab to fight the Syrians.

WE: We will have times in our lives where we will have to decide whether we should believe false preachers or true preachers. If we believe the wrong preachers, we will make the wrong decision. The true preachers will give us answers from the Bible. False preachers will give us answers from their own reasoning or experiences or from the experiences of others. They will not tell us what God says in the Bible. Trust the preachers to give you the right answers from God's Word, The decision that you make is going to tell what you believe.

III. Camouflage of Ahab (22:29-33)

Ahab thought that he could defeat Micaiah's prophecy concerning his death. He disguised himself so that he would not look like the king of Israel. However, he told Jehoshaphat to wear his own kingly robes at the battle. Ahab thought that no one would be able to spot him in the battle without his kingly robes, and if things went bad in the battle, Jehoshaphat would be the person they would try to get. This is exactly what happened. When the battle went against Israel, the Syrians attacked Jehoshaphat because they thought he was the king of Israel. He was the only one who had kingly robes. He cried out and the Syrian captains soon realized that he was not Ahab so they let him go. His friendship with Ahab almost cost him his life.

WE: We are in danger whenever you run with unsaved friends. We can get into much trouble by being with our friends in their sins and possibly lose our lives.

IV. Calamity of Ahab (22:34-40)

Ahab tried to prove that Micaiah's prophecy was wrong when he said that he would be killed on the battlefield. He disguised himself and he had Jehoshaphat dress in his kingly robes. He was very clever, but he could not change God's word that Micaiah gave to him. A random arrow was shot by a Syrian soldier and guided by the hand of God so that it hit Ahab between the joint of his armor. It badly wounded him and by that night, he had died. Micaiah was right; Israel lost the battle and Ahab lost his life. And what about Jehoshaphat? He lost his friendship with God. God was not pleased with him and He sent a prophet to tell him so (2 Chr 19:1-2).

WE: We can be certain that God's word will always be right. Those who preach it and teach it will give us the truth so we can make the right decisions. If we obey God's word, we will be friends with God. If we do not obey God, we will lose our friendship with God.

BE (for Action): It was wrong for Jehoshaphat to be a friend to Ahab, an ungodly man who had no desire to obey God. He almost lost his life, when he chose to go to war with Ahab to fight the Syrians. God never told Jehoshaphat to be a friend to Ahab. He made that choice of his own will. It was a bad decision. God used Micaiah to warn him to leave Ahab when he wanted to make war with the Syrians, but he did not listen to God's warning. **How will you decide who your friends should be?** (1) You should choose friends who love God and His word. God warns you: do not choose friends that love sin and refuse to listen to His word. (2) You can choose a friend that is not saved, if he does not speak against God and is open to go to church with you. Be a witness for God to your unsaved friend. Follow these two rules to have good friends. Then God will be your Friend. (Pray that they will follow these two rules.)