

# **How to Fill an Empty Church**

(A Message to Ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ)

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*(Preached on Saturday Evening, May 9, 2020)*

“His mother saith unto the servants, *‘Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.’*”

(John 2:5)

Preacher! Yes, this message is for you. For you, o’ preacher, priest, pastor, minister, bishop, apostle or whatever else you are calling yourself to clarify your leadership of the church of God. And a leader you are; and so shall you reap the available benefits, and judgements, of your leadership of God’s people: reaped now in this life, and in the life to come.

O’ preacher, would that we could review the entire Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, the Bible, here and now, during this message, together. Josiah did. As we read in 2 Kings,

“And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord.” (2 Kings 23:1-2)

“All the words of the book of the covenant.” Hallelujah! “All!” All you need, preacher, is found within the Book, the counsel of God, the book of the covenant.

Who was Josiah and what was going on in his world? He was the king of Israel, and like you, he presided over the congregation of God at the end, at the last possible chance that such a good thing could be done. He gave it his all and he was right to do so.

Judgement was coming. The end was at hand, and he, as the 12-year-old Jesus, was “about [his] father’s business.”

To clarify where he was at in the history of the Church, the called out of God, see the chart which we have reprinted with slight modification from Bible-History.com.

| <b>List of the Kings of Judah[ Reigning After Solomon]</b> |                                      |                |                |                     |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Kings of Judah   | Good/Bad                             | Years of Reign | Books of Kings | II Chronicles       |
| Rehoboam   | Bad                                  | 17 years       | I Kings 12:1   | II Chronicles 10:1  |
| Abijah   | Bad                                  | 3 years        | I Kings 15:1   | II Chronicles 13:1  |
| Asa  | Good                                 | 41 years       | I Kings 15:9   | II Chronicles 14:1  |
| Jehoshaphat  | Good                                 | 25 years       | I Kings 22:41  | II Chronicles 17:1  |
| Jehoram  | Bad                                  | 8 years        | I Kings 22:50  | II Chronicles 21:1  |
| Ahaziah  | Bad                                  | 1 years        | II Kings 8:24  | II Chronicles 22:1  |
| Athaliah   | (Bloody Queen-in-law from the North) |                | II Kings 11:1  | II Chronicles 22:10 |
| Joash  | Good                                 | 40 years       | II Kings 11:4  | II Chronicles 23:1  |
| Amaziah  | Good                                 | 29 years       | II Kings 14:1  | II Chronicles 25:1  |
| Uzziah   | Good                                 | 52 years       | II Kings 15:1  | II Chronicles 26:1  |
| Jotham   | Good                                 | 16 years       | II Kings 15:32 | II Chronicles 27:1  |
| Ahaz   | Bad                                  | 16 years       | II Kings 15:38 | II Chronicles 28:1  |
| Hezekiah   | Good                                 | 29 years       | II Kings 18:1  | II Chronicles 29:1  |
| Manasseh   | Bad                                  | 55 years       | II Kings 21:1  | II Chronicles 33:1  |
| Amon   | Bad                                  | 2 years        | II Kings 21:19 | II Chronicles 33:21 |
| Josiah   | Good                                 | 31 years       | II Kings 22:1  | II Chronicles 34:1  |
| Jehoahaz   | Bad                                  | 3 months       | II Kings 23:31 | II Chronicles 36:1  |
| Jehoiakim  | Bad                                  | 11 years       | II Kings 23:36 | II Chronicles 36:4  |
| Jehoiakin  | Bad                                  | 3 months       | II Kings 24:6  | II Chronicles 36:9  |
| Zedekiah   | Bad                                  | 11 years       | II Kings 24:17 | II Chronicles 36:11 |
| The Babylonian Captivity 586 BC                            |                                      |                | II Kings 25:1  | II Chronicles 36:13 |
| Kings of Judah   | 8 Good, 11 Bad                       | 387 Years      |                |                     |

("List of the Kings of Judah - Old Testament Charts (Bible History Online)."  
*Ark of the Covenant - Bible History Online*, Bible History, 9 May 2020,  
[www.bible-history.com/old-testament/kings-judah.html](http://www.bible-history.com/old-testament/kings-judah.html).)

Yes, as the chart shows, for a long time before Josiah’s ministry and for the few years left after it was done, all the way until the bitter frightful end of the world at that time, the spiritual condition of God’s people, of the churches of God, was bad, bad – bad, bad, bad, *bad!*

And what of the condition of the churches during our Lord’s time? And what of yours?

To conduct ourselves today in *this* world, we must see *his*. We must know what the Bible has to show us about that time. We must know what our Lord did, what He said, how He responded, what *He* shows us must and should be done when the church of God is empty of God.

Dear modernized neo-evangelical minister and the liberal ministers and liberal seminary professors who helped to modernize and minimize the so-called Christianity that you serve:

## **I. How Did Your Church Become So Empty?**

“Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.” (2 Kings 22:16-17)

“(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)” (Philippians 3:18-19)

### **a. False Idols: Your people brought the world into the church**

- i. They did what the famous did.
- ii. They worshipped who the famous worshipped.

### **b. False Religion: You made the world’s religion your religion**

- i. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”
- ii. But you said, “All religions are the same.”

### **c. False Leaders: You brought the world into your church**

- i. You followed your people and worshipped and did as they do.
- ii. Because your real idol... is money!

## **II. How Does Your Church Remain So Empty?**

John 2:1-10:

“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, ‘They have no wine.’

“Jesus saith unto her, ‘Woman [Lady], what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.’

“His mother saith unto the servants, ‘Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.’

“And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins [100 – 150 gallons] apiece. [Each pot could hold 17 – 25 gallons: six very big pots.]’

“Jesus saith unto them,

1. ‘Fill the waterpots with water.’
  - And they filled them up to the brim.’

“And he saith unto them,

2. ‘Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.’
  - And they bare it.

“When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, ‘Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.’” (John 2:1-10)

**a. The Party: Your people are in the world without Christ**

- i. Empty People, Empty Jugs

**b. The Pots: Your church is in the world without Christ**

- i. Watery Ministry, Watery Jug
  1. Bad water: Was the water you used even clean?

2. Just water: "after the manner of the purifying of the Jews."

**c. The Preacher: You continue not focused & directed by Jesus?**

- i. Therefore, you continue leaving your people the same...
- ii. Therefore, you continue leaving your church the same...
- iii. Therefore, yours is a "Stone" Ministry
- iv. Bu remember: One Divine Touch to the Six Jugs – *Wine!*

**III. How Do You Fill Up Your Church Again?**

John 2:11-25:

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

"After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

"Then answered the Jews and said unto him, 'What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?'

"Jesus answered and said unto them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'

"Then said the Jews, 'Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.

“When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

“Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.” (John 2:11-25)

### **a. How to Begin**

“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.” (John 2:11)

### **b. How to Keep Going**

“And his disciples remembered that it was written, ‘The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.’” (John 2:17)

### **c. How to Never Go Back Again**

“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.” (John 2:24-25)

## **Conclusion:**

“His mother saith unto the servants, ‘Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.’” (John 2:5)

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## **OUTLINE:**

### **How to Fill an Empty Church**

- I. How Did Your Church Become So Empty? (Philippians 3:18-19)
- II. How Does Your Church Remain So Empty? (John 2:1-10)
- III. How Do You Fill Up Your Church Again? (John 2:11-25)

“Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.” (John 2:5)