

Title:                    **RESTORING**  
**THE WORSHIP OF GOD**

Text:                2 Chronicles 34:14-21

Subject:        *Hilkiah Finding the Book of God*

Date:             *Sunday Morning — May 27, 2012*

Tape #        AA-60

Reading:    *2 Kings 22:1-23:7, 21-24*

Introduction:

Someone said, “We ought to take a big, black paint brush and paint ‘*Ichabod*’ (the glory of God has departed) on the door of the church in this age.” God has done just that. The most proper and fitting name for the professed church of this day is “*Ichabod*”! The glory of God has departed from it. There was another such day. You can read about it in the book of 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles.

My text is 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 34:14-21. I’ve spent a great deal of time preparing this message. It has been on my heart for a long, long time. I’ve tried to seek the direction of God the Holy Spirit. And I believe he has given me the message needed for this hour. I hope you will listen carefully to the Word of God and to the message God has given me for you. My subject is

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**RESTORING THE WORSHIP OF GOD.** Have you found my text? — 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 34:14-21.

“14 ¶ And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, **Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD** [given] by Moses. 15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, **I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.** And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. 16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do [it]. 17 And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen. 18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, **Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.** 19 And it came to pass, **when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.** 20 And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of

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Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying, 21 Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great [is] the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book." (2 Chronicles 34:14-21)

The nation Israel had departed from the true worship of God. The temple was deserted and laid in ruins. Evil kings had reigned, and covetous priests and prophets had led the people into all forms of idolatry, turning the hearts of Israel and Judah away from the living God.

### JOSIAH

Then a young man was made king by the name of Josiah. They crowned him king of Judah when he was a very young man, just eight years old. In 2 Chronicles 34:3 we are told that when Josiah was sixteen years old he "*began to seek after the God of*

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*David.*” And when he was **twenty** years old Josiah began purging idolatry from Judah and Jerusalem, destroying the idols, the groves, the priests, and the sodomites whose numbers are always multiplied by idolatry. By the time he was **twenty-six** years old, he had purged the land of idolatry and began “*repair the house of the LORD his God*” (v. 8). **Josiah was determined to follow the God of his fathers. He was determined to restore the worship of God in his day.**

I am no Josiah, but that has been the ambition of my heart and the labor of my life, since I was just a boy. Soon after God saved me by his grace as a sixteen year old boy, I began to see that the worship of God had fallen to the ground and the Word of God was trampled in the streets by the very people who claimed to represent and speak for God. From those earliest days, I’ve been trying by every means given me to restore the worship of my God. I guess you could say that God has been preparing me to preach this message for forty-five years.

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Josiah ordered the idols to be destroyed and that the reprobate priests to be put to death. He sent word for the temple to be cleaned out and the worship of God to be restored.

### **BOOK FOUND**

While they were cleaning out the temple, **Hilkiah the priest found a Book**, a most important Book. This was the Word of God written by Moses. This Book was “*the Book of law of the LORD God given by Moses*” (v. 14), — the first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Hilkiah the priest found the Book, the Word of God, and he dusted it off and brought the Word of God to the young king Josiah. Hilkiah the priest and Shaphan the scribe brought this Book, the Word of God to this young king Josiah.

**He had never read the Word of God. He had never even heard anyone read it.** — “*And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the LORD,*”

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when they read the Scriptures to him, “*he rent his clothes*” (v. 19).

That was a sign of great grief and great sorrow on the part of people back then. **He rent his clothes and said to the priest**, — “*Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great [is] the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book*” (v. 21).

(1 Corinthians 10:11) “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

## TODAY’S RELIGION

It must be acknowledged, it must be confessed, it must be said, — “**Our fathers and our church leaders have not taught nor preached the words of this Book.**” The religion of this age (I’m talking

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about professed Christianity!) no more resembles New Testament Christianity and the Church of the New Testament than a brothel resembles chastity! In Baptist churches these days (to say nothing of the others), in Baptist churches you find...

- Candles Burning
- Crosses
- Religious Images
- Altars
- Icons
- Stained Glass
- Clerical Robes
- Choir Robes
- And Programs Galore!

**The churches, preachers, and religious leaders of this age have neglected the Word of the Lord.**

What God has written has been lost and ignored in all the ceremonies of religion, in all of the customs and rituals and traditions. In 2012 the entertainment and foolishness that go on in the name of religion would make the prophets of Baal blush with shame. It is utter foolishness, theatrical productions, and

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entertainment in the name of God with no preaching of the Scriptures, no reverence, no regard for the Word of God, the will of God, or the glory of God. **The most contemptible thing in this apostate religious world is its religion!** You know that and I know it. I am determined, as God enables me, to lift up my voice and cry against it.

Our Lord said, “**God is Spirit and they who worship him must worship Him in Spirit and truth.**” Will we ever return in our churches to the worship of God? Today, preaching the Gospel and preaching the Word of God has been literally pushed aside to make room for every imaginable thing. Will we ever return in our churches to the worship of God? Only if the Lord God is pleased to...

- Restore the preaching of the Gospel.
- Pour out His Spirit upon us.

In this day, preaching and teaching the Word of God has been pushed aside to make way for entertainment, education, sharing, programs, social networking, and religious tom-foolery! Men justify every gimmick and trick they can come up with to



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get people to come to the church. But they ignore and hold in utter contempt the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the preaching of it.

Oh, they talk about preaching it raise money (scads of money) to preach it, and brag about preaching the Gospel. But preach it? — Never! There's no room for the worship of God or the preaching of the Gospel on the program! — We've got...

- People to Recognize!
- Prizes to Give Away!
- Awards to Give!
- Records to Break!
- Activities to Promote!
- Programs to Implement!
- Money to Raise!
- Bills to Pay!
- Money to Raise!
- Entertainers to Hire!
- Money to Raise!
- Games to Play!

**FALSE GOSPEL**

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When they do get around to talking about God, the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of God, or salvation, or grace, or righteousness, everything they teach is contrary to this Book, the Book of God. Paul warns us in **2 Corinthians 11** and **Galatians 1** that “Men will come preaching another Jesus. They will come preaching another spirit and another gospel.” The preachers of this day preach another god, another Jesus, another spirit, and another gospel.

**My message may be offensive to many, but I am going to speak to you as plainly as I possibly can.** I am convinced that most of what is going on today in the name of God is another gospel. It is another spirit and it is another Jesus. It is not the Gospel of God’s grace and mercy at all. It is not glorifying to God and it is not exalting to our Lord Jesus Christ. **As a result everybody you know has got religion and virtually no one knows Christ!**

**Proposition:** That which passes for worship is not the worship of God; and that which passes for the gospel is not the Gospel of God.

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May God give us the wisdom, boldness, and grace in our day that He gave to King Josiah to repair the house of God and restore the worship of God.

### ELEVEN CHARGES

Here are eleven charges that must be laid against the religion of this age, against all Arminian, freewill, works religion. When the charges have been declared, I defy anyone to gainsay them! These are facts that simply cannot be denied.

1. Today's gospel, what they call the gospel, all but **ignores the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.** — The Gospel of God is all about the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Colossians 3:11).
2. Today's gospel is **more concerned with your will than God's will.** — The Gospel of God is all about his will. — "*Thy will be done*" (Romans 8:28-30; 9:16; John 1:12-13).
3. Today's gospel **calls on men to stand up and be counted.** — The Gospel of God revealed in this

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Book demands and compels sinners to bow and worship (Isaiah 6:1-8).

4. Today's gospel **tells you how to be born again.** — The Gospel of Christ declares, "*Ye must be born again!*" (John 3:3-8) — Before you can do anything for God God has to do something for you!
5. Today's gospel **makes salvation is an offer.** — The Gospel of Christ reveals that salvation is the operation of God (Ephesians 2:1-10; Colossians 2:12).
6. Today's gospel **substitutes human reason for Divine Revelation.** — The Gospel of the grace of God comes by Divine Revelation (Galatians 1:15).
7. Today's gospel **substitutes a decision for regeneration.**
8. Today's gospel **identifies the Christian by what he does not do rather than by what he is and who he knows** (John 17:3; 2 Timothy 1:12).
9. Today's gospel utterly **ignores the holy law of God.** — The Gospel of God declares that Christ has magnified the law and made it honorable by his obedience and death as our Substitute!
10. Today's gospel **makes the triune God a helpless beggar,** pleading with sinners to let him

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have his way. — The Gospel of the grace of God declares that the sovereign, omnipotent Lord God has his way at all times, with all men, in all places, and in all things (Psalm 135:6; Romans 11:33-36).

— The Gospel of God declares that “*Salvation is of the LORD!*”

11. Today’s gospel is based on what men and women think rather than what God says.

## RUBBISH REMOVED

If we would restore the worship of God, repair the breaches of God’s house, and build again the walls of Zion, we will have to take a trip, maybe many trips, to the garbage dump. There is much rubbish that must be hauled away, tons of garbage that must be taken away and dumped in the garbage dump where the religion of this age belongs.

(Nehemiah 4:10) “And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and [there is] much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.”

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- Programs
- Specialized Ministries
- Robes, Collars, and Crosses
- Creeds and Confessions
- Musical Presentations
- Plays (Christmas – Easter)
- Traditions and Customs
- Ball Teams and Bake Sales
- Sunday School Pins
- Recognitions of Men
- Feel Good Religion — Emotional Prayer Meetings — Testimony Time — Pentecostal Nonsense

**There is nothing about the religion of this age that even remotely resembles the worship of God! Is there?**

**The Pharisee** in the temple stood there and lauded himself and praised himself. He added up all the things he had done for God, and said, “I tithe; I fast twice a week; I give alms to the poor; I’m not an

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extortioner; I'm not an adulterer; I'm not unjust and I'm not like other folks."

There, in the back of the building was **a Publican**, a notorious sinner, "*Who would not so much lift his eyes, (let alone his hands to heaven), but he smote on his breast and cried; God, be merciful to me a sinner.*" That is the sinner pleading with God to show mercy.

The Pharisee was adding up all of his services and things that he had done for God. Here was a man asking God to have mercy. Our Lord said, "*The Publican went down to his house justified!*" The Pharisee went to hell in his religious pretense and garb.

**The rich, young ruler** talked to Christ about his morality, talked to Christ of his righteousness; he talked to Christ of his faithfulness to the commandments all of his life and went home sorrowfully.

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**The harlot fell at His feet.** She bathed His feet with the tears of repentance and received the forgiveness of her sins.

**The religious people at the Judgment** in Matthew 7 were talking about all the things they had done in the name of the Lord. They bragged about how they had preached in the name of the Lord and cast out devils in the name of the Lord and had done many wonderful works in the name of the Lord. They talked about being on the mission field and serving God at home, and doing good everywhere. Our Lord said, *“Depart from Me, ye cursed; I never knew you.”*

**While the thief,** the repentant thief who had nothing to boast of and brag about and to present to God, as an empty-handed sinner walked into glory on the arm of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Men today make decisions for Jesus. The apostle Paul said, “I obtained mercy.”** Men today are busy accepting Jesus. Paul said, *“We are accepted in the*



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*Beloved.*” That is exactly the opposite. It is not our accepting Him it is Him accepting us.

Men today are busy giving their hearts to God. The prophet said, “He will take that old stony heart out and give you a heart of flesh.” God doesn’t need my heart. I need a new heart.

**Men today win souls and make converts.** Paul said, “*By the grace of God I am what I.*” I am not what I am by the cunning craftiness of some man. I am not what I am by the powerful persuasion of some preacher. I’m not what I am by the cleverness of some soul-winner. “*I am what I am by the grace of God.*”

**“We love Him because He first loved us.”** My friends, salvation is not of man. It is not of the will of man. The Scripture says, “*It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, it is of God that showeth mercy.*”

Salvation is the work of God’s grace in us. It is not our work for Him but His work for us and in us. Paul

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said, summing up his conversion, “*It pleased God to reveal His Son in Me.*” In **1 Corinthians 1:30**, he says; “*Of Him are you in Christ. Of God are you in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.*”

God doesn't need us to do anything for Him. We are desperately in need of God doing something for us! We need new hearts and we need regeneration. We need to be born again. We need for God to show mercy to us. We need God to visit us with a refreshing from heaven. We must not turn to men and find out what they are going to do; let's turn to heaven and see what God is going to do. He is not in our hands; we are in His hands.

### **VITAL QUESTIONS**

Perhaps you are thinking, “What's the difference? Wherein do we differ with the religious world around us?”

**Illustrations:** *My Conversation with Doug Sharon — My First Visit Here*

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Let me show you exactly wherein we differ by answering five questions very briefly.

1. **What took place in eternity?** God the Holy Spirit tells us in Hebrews 4 that the works were finished from the foundation of the world. What works? What was done in eternity? What took place in eternity?

- Election (2 Thessalonians 2:13)
- Predestination (Romans 8:28-30)
- The Covenant (Ephesians 1:3-6)
- Salvation (2 Timothy 1:9)

2. **What happened in the Garden?** (Romans 5:12)

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” (Romans 5:12)

3. **What happened at Calvary?**

- Christ was made sin for us and punished for sin as our Substitute (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

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- Justice was satisfied (Romans 3:24-26).
- Righteousness was brought in for God's elect.
- All for whom the Lord Jesus died were redeemed (Galatians 3:13-14).

4. **What happens in the new birth?** (Ephesians 2:1-5; Titus 3:4-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17)

“1 ¶ And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

(Ephesians 2:1-5) “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. (By grace ye are saved.)”

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(Titus 3:4-7) “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

5. **How are sinners saved by the grace of God to worship the holy Lord God?** We are to worship God in His house today in exactly the way He has prescribed in His Word, in exactly the same way sinners saved by His grace worshipped Him in the New Testament (Philippians 3:1-3)

(Philippians 3:1-3) “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to

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me indeed [is] not grievous, but for you [it is] safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. 3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

- With Simplicity
- By Songs of Praise
- Reading the Word
- Preaching the Gospel
- Believer’s Baptism — Immersion
- The Lord’s Supper — Unleavened Bread and Wine

When Hilkiah the priest found the Book of God in the temple and Shaphan the scribe read it to King Josiah...

- Josiah led the people of God to keep the Passover. The king led the people in the worship of God through Christ the crucified Redeemer!
- Josiah made a covenant before the Lord to walk after Him and keep His Word with all his heart

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and soul, “*to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this Book,*” to order his life by the Book of God!

- And this good King Josiah, by his example and influence, caused all Israel to make the same covenant before God.

### **APPLICATION**

If we would see the worship of God restored in our day, three things are absolutely necessary; we must have these three things:

1. A Return to the Preaching of the Gospel!
  2. A Return to the Rule of God’s Word in His House!
  3. An Outpouring of God’s Spirit upon Us!
- Oh, Spirit of God, grant us these things, for Christ’s sake.

Amen.