

Simple Questions for When You're Lost

When you're headed down the wrong road, going the wrong direction, fast ask these questions. Will you turn around? Do you believe you can find a way to turn around so you can head the right direction?

What if...

What if you're lost in life not just in your car or moving truck? What if you're going the wrong way in your relationship with God? What if you're so lost you don't even know you're lost? What if your life is so screwed up people say you haven't got a snowball's chance of ever turning it around? Will you turn around? Do you believe you can find a way to turn around so you can head the right direction? When everyone and everything says it's impossible, can you turn around?

An Evil King part one

2 Kings 21:1-18 NLT

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. His mother was Hephzibah. He did what was evil in the LORD's sight, following the detestable practices of the pagan nations that the LORD had driven from the land ahead of the Israelites. He rebuilt the pagan shrines his father, Hezekiah, had destroyed. He constructed altars for Baal and set up an Asherah pole, just as King Ahab of Israel had done. He also bowed before all the powers of the heavens and worshiped them. He built pagan altars in the Temple of the LORD, the place where the LORD had said, "My name will remain in Jerusalem forever." He built these altars for all the powers of the heavens in both courtyards of the LORD's Temple. Manasseh also sacrificed his own son in the fire. He practiced sorcery and divination, and he consulted with mediums and psychics. He did much that was evil in the LORD's sight, arousing his anger. Manasseh even made a carved image of Asherah and set it up in the Temple, the very place where the LORD had told David and his son Solomon: "My name will be honored forever in this Temple and in Jerusalem—the city I have chosen from among all the tribes of Israel. If the Israelites will be careful to obey my commands—all the laws my servant Moses gave them—I will not send them into exile from this land that I gave their ancestors." But the people refused to listen, and Manasseh led them to do even more evil than the pagan nations that the LORD had destroyed when the people of Israel entered the land. Then the LORD said through his servants the prophets: "King Manasseh of Judah has done many detestable things. He is even more wicked than the Amorites, who lived in this land before Israel. He has caused the people of Judah to sin with his idols. So this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I will bring such disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears of those who hear about it will tingle with horror. I will judge Jerusalem by the same standard I used for Samaria and the same measure I used for the family of Ahab. I will wipe away the people of Jerusalem as one wipes a dish and turns it upside down. Then I will reject even the remnant of my own people who are left, and I will hand them over as plunder for their enemies. For they have done great evil in my sight and have angered me ever since their ancestors came out of Egypt." Manasseh also murdered many innocent people until Jerusalem was filled from one end to the other with innocent blood. This was in addition to the sin that he caused the people of Judah to commit, leading them to do evil in the LORD's sight. The rest of the events in Manasseh's reign and everything he did, including the sins he committed, are recorded in The Book of the History of the Kings of Judah. When Manasseh died, he was buried in the palace garden, the garden of Uzza. Then his son Amon became the next king.

An Evil King part two

2 Chronicles 33:1-20 MSG

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king. He ruled for fifty-five years in Jerusalem. In god's opinion he was a bad king—an evil king. He reintroduced all the moral rot and spiritual corruption that had been scoured from the country when god dispossessed the pagan nations in favor of the children of Israel. He rebuilt the sex-and-religion shrines that his father Hezekiah had torn down, he built altars and phallic images for the sex god Baal and the sex goddess Asherah and worshiped the cosmic powers, taking orders from the constellations. He built shrines to the cosmic powers and placed them in both courtyards of The Temple of god, the very Jerusalem Temple dedicated exclusively by god's decree to god's Name ("in Jerusalem I place my Name"). He burned his own sons in a sacrificial rite in the Valley of Ben Hinnom. He practiced witchcraft and fortunetelling. He held séances and consulted spirits from the underworld. Much evil—in god's view a career in evil. And god was angry. In God's opinion he was a bad king-an evil king. He reintroduced all the moral rot and spiritual corruption that had been scoured from the country when God dispossessed the pagan nations in favor of the children of Israel. He rebuilt the sex-and-religion shrines that his father Hezekiah had torn down, he built altars and phallic images for the sex god Baal and the sex goddess Asherah and worshiped the cosmic powers, taking orders from the constellations. He built shrines to the cosmic powers and placed them in both courtyards of The Temple of God, the very Jerusalem Temple dedicated exclusively by God's decree to God's Name ("in Jerusalem I place my Name"). He burned his own sons in a sacrificial rite in the Valley of Ben Hinnom. He practiced witchcraft and fortunetelling. He held sžances and consulted spirits from the underworld. Much evil-in God's view a career in evil. And God was angry. As a last straw he placed a carved image of the sex goddess Asherah that he had commissioned in The Temple of God, a flagrant and provocative violation of God's well-known command to both David and Solomon, "In this Temple and in this city Jerusalem, my choice out of all the tribes of Israel, I place my Name—exclusively and forever." He had promised, "Never again will I let my people Israel wander off from this land I've given to their ancestors. But on this condition, that they keep everything I've commanded in the instructions my servant Moses passed on to them." He had promised, "Never again will I let my people Israel wander off from this land I've given to their ancestors. But on this condition, that they keep everything I've commanded in the instructions my servant Moses passed on to them." But Manasseh led Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem off the beaten path into practices of evil exceeding even the evil of the pagan nations that god had earlier destroyed. When god spoke to Manasseh and his people about this, they ignored him. When God spoke to Manasseh and his people about this, they ignored him. Then god directed the leaders of the troops of the king of Assyria to come after Manasseh. They put a hook in his nose, shackles on his feet, and took him off to Babylon. Now that he was in trouble, he went to his knees in prayer asking for help—total repentance before the God of his ancestors. As he prayed, god was touched; god listened and brought him back to Jerusalem as king. That convinced Manasseh that god was in control. Now that he was in trouble, he went to his knees in prayer asking for help-total repentance before the God of his ancestors. As he prayed, God was touched; God listened and brought him back to Jerusalem as king. That convinced Manasseh that God was in control. After that Manasseh rebuilt the outside defensive wall of the City of David to the west of the Gihon spring in the valley. It went from the Fish Gate and around the hill of Ophel. He also increased its height. He tightened up the defense system by posting army captains in all the fortress cities of Judah. He also did a good spring cleaning on The Temple, carting out the pagan idols and the goddess statue. He took all the altars he had set up on The Temple hill and throughout Jerusalem and dumped them outside the city. He put the Altar of god back in working order and restored worship, sacrificing Peace-Offerings and Thank-Offerings. He issued orders to the people: "You shall serve and worship god, the God of Israel." But the people didn't take him seriously—they used the name "god" but kept on going to the old pagan neighborhood shrines and doing the same old things. He also did a

good spring cleaning on The Temple, carting out the pagan idols and the goddess statue. He took all the altars he had set up on The Temple hill and throughout Jerusalem and dumped them outside the city. He put the Altar of God back in working order and restored worship, sacrificing Peace-Offerings and Thank-Offerings. He issued orders to the people: "You shall serve and worship God, the God of Israel." But the people didn't take him seriously—they used the name "God" but kept on going to the old pagan neighborhood shrines and doing the same old things. The rest of the history of Manasseh—his prayer to his God, and the sermons the prophets personally delivered by authority of God, the God of Israel—this is all written in The Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. His prayer and how God was touched by his prayer, a list of all his sins and the things he did wrong, the actual places where he built the pagan shrines, the installation of the sex-goddess Asherah sites, and the idolatrous images that he worshiped previous to his conversion—this is all described in the records of the prophets. His prayer and how God was touched by his prayer, a list of all his sins and the things he did wrong, the actual places where he built the pagan shrines, the installation of the sex-goddess Asherah sites, and the idolatrous images that he worshiped previous to his conversion—this is all described in the records of the prophets. When Manasseh died, they buried him in the palace garden. His son Amon was the next king.

Repentance: Turning Around

- Repentance is far more than feeling sorry for the painful consequences of our sins.
- Repentance is more than feeling sorry for what we did.
- Repentance is a change of mind; a completely new way of viewing our sins. It's taking an about face in our relationship with God; from walking away from him to running toward him; from thinking we're in control to knowing God is in control.
- True repentance always creates new ways of acting. When we recognize that God is in control, we will start to act like he's in control. We will start thinking and acting in line with his principles and laws instead of doing what we believe is right for us.
- Repentance is one of God's timeless, universal principles. Whenever we turn from doing what we think is right to doing what God declares is right, the Lord will listen.

Jesus Preached It

Mark 1:15 NIV

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Peter Preached It

Acts 2:38-39 NIV

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Peter kept preaching it

Acts 4:19 NIV

But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges!"

Sermon in a Sentence:

When you think you don't stand a snowball's chance, God will give you another chance.

A New Point of View

You've been told that a leopard can't change its spots; that liars, abusers, thieves and players will never change. You don't have a snowball's chance of ever being different. But God can change a leopard's spots. God can make a liar into a truth teller; an abuser into a gentle encourager; a thief into an honest laborer and a player into a faithful spouse. God specializes in making sinners into saints. Right now the Holy Spirit is urging you to repent, to turn back to God. You can feel it. It's the desire to do better than you have been in your relationships. It's your thoughts about what you'd do differently if you had the chance.