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SERMON TITLE

When You Don't Know What To Do

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

2 Chronicles 20

SYNOPSIS

What can you do when you don't know what to do?

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ When You Don't Know What To Do

2 Chronicles 20:12

We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.

How many can relate? You get thrown a curve ball in life and you just don't know what to do. A turning point comes and a decision must be made, but you don't know which way to go. You know what bugs me? People that always know exactly what to do in every situation. Well... they think they know exactly what to do. My experience is that those people are often wrong. As some say, often wrong, but never in doubt. This seems to be especially true when it's their opinion regarding what *someone else* should be doing.

Well, here we have King Jehoshaphat, who was a wise king that continued in his father's footsteps, delighting in the Lord's ways. He loved justice, removed idolatry, and consistently relied on the Lord. Yet, with all these qualifications, he faced a situation in which he didn't know what to do.

The Moabites, Ammonites and some Meunites had joined forces to attack Judah. It was a vast army, an overwhelming force coming against Jehoshaphat and his people. These were people the Lord had spared when the nation first entered the Promised Land, and now, they were returning the favor by attacking God's people. Isn't that the way life often goes? You're just doing the best you can and then life turns sour, even though you did nothing to deserve it.

Jehoshaphat initially had a very typical reaction and was alarmed at the news. I'm actually encouraged by this brief note. This good, wise King had a typical human reaction, to which I can relate. And, furthermore, we know the end of the story brings a great victory from God... Jehoshaphat's initial reaction of fear did not disqualify him from receiving God's provision. God shows us a lot of grace.

So, he had some fear, but then, quickly switched gears and resolved to inquire of the Lord. I don't know about you, but sometimes, when I'm overwhelmed, I don't get focused on the Lord right away. I ☞ should, but I don't always. Naomi has a piece of home décor that asks, "**Have you prayed about it?**" It's a great reminder. If you're facing trouble, have you prayed about it?

The king quickly turned his attention to the Lord. He didn't stay focused on the overwhelming problem. He acknowledged it, even expressing some fear, but he purposely turned his attention. He *resolved* to inquire of the Lord. That suggests he made a conscious effort to redirect his thoughts.

2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ

I don't know about you, but sometimes I overthink a problem. I let worry or fear have too much sway. ☞ I need to cast down my wild, sometimes paranoid imagination, and **bring my thoughts under control, getting focused on the Lord.**

And, it's important to note also that Jehoshaphat didn't make any rash decisions. He chose to see what God had to say about the situation. Sometimes in a crisis, people just react and try anything, hoping



for a good outcome. But the king didn't rush into a decision. He called for a fast. The text here doesn't give a timeline, but fasting strongly implies that this was no hasty decision.

Fasting is not common in the church today, but it is still a biblical concept, which promises a powerful response from God. Set aside a time to especially focus on God, and abstain from food. In our current culture, fasting may mean abstaining from online or electronic activities to focus on the Lord in prayer.

After the fast, the people came together to seek help from the Lord. This speaks of the importance of godly friends. We need each other. Here, they were all in a pickle together, but there are times when you're doing fine, but a brother or sister in Christ needs help. That's a prime opportunity for you to join together, seeking the Lord.

And, when they were all gathered, Jehoshaphat didn't talk about a strategic plan. Instead, he led out in prayer. And, his prayer tells us something too...

- He acknowledged God's power and authority. **"No one can withstand you."** Our God is omnipotent. **Jeremiah 32:7 says nothing is too hard for the Lord.**
- He remembered God's previous work on the nation's behalf. **"You gave us this land."** We don't want to be stuck in the past, but there is value in remembering what God has done in the past. It encourages our faith in the present and future.
- He even pointed out that the nation had made a sanctuary for the Lord in the temple. It's kind of like saying, "this is your place, God; don't let it be destroyed." (This is the same for your heart – it is the Lord's sanctuary; he lives within you.)
- In his prayer, Jehoshaphat committed to always seeking the Lord in any situation. "Whatever the calamity, **we will cry out to you.**" And, he prayed in faith. **"You will hear us and save us."** He wasn't confident in himself or his army, but he was confident in the Lord. We can be confident as well.

Psalms 34:15 says, "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry." We recently celebrated Independence Day here in America. But biblically, we are not independent. Dr. David Jeremiah says, "Prayer is our declaration of dependence."

Then, Jehoshaphat got down to the business at hand. **"This vast army is attacking us.** They were the ones that you told us to leave alone, and now they are repaying us with trouble." He reminded God of the promises to his people. **"You gave us this inheritance."** Then, he asks the Lord to intervene, and he prays one of the best prayers in all the Bible: **"We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you."** Have you ever been there? You don't know what to do? What to say? How to react or respond? Should I go left, or right? Take a step back, or move forward?

"Our eyes are upon you." We are looking to you for the answer; for the next step. We are looking to you for deliverance, because this is too much for us to handle. It's been said, "When we have nothing left but God, then we become aware that God is enough!"



Then, notice the next thing in verse 13... perhaps one of the hardest things to do when you're in a crisis. **"They stood there before the Lord."** You mean they didn't jump into action? They didn't weep and wail for days on end? Nope, they **waited**.

Psalms 27:13-14

13 I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. 14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

Finally, as they are waiting, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel, who spoke encouragement and gave instructions from the Lord. Jahaziel's name means "who looks to God." God answers when you respond like Jehoshaphat, pleading to the Lord, and when you wait like Jahaziel, **looking to God for the answer**.

God's plan doesn't involve fighting in this particular case. Elsewhere, it did, but not here. However, there were still steps for the people to take. They were to march out, take up positions, stand firm, and see God's deliverance.

"March out." Do what you know to do; do what God has already spoken; obey the Word. Even though God promises to fight this battle, he instructs them to go out and face their enemy.

"Take your positions." Know the Word and hold to the promises.

*An online article... In Proverbs 31, talking about the godly woman, it says in the Amplified Bible, "Strength and dignity are her clothing and **her position is strong and secure**; And she smiles at the future, knowing that she and her family are prepared." Her position is strong and secure! That is where we all need to find ourselves today, in a strong and secure position. How do we do that? By fully trusting in God and His word. By being fully persuaded, like Abraham, that what God said to us, He will fulfill in this season.*

"Stand firm." Let nothing move you; be strong; don't fall back. So many temptations, pressures, and fears try to get us to fall or shrink back. But God wants us to stand firm. **Isaiah 7:9** says, "If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all." **1 Corinthians 16:13** says, "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong."

David Guzik... It was a significant step of faith to position yourselves, to stand still, and to believe that you would see the salvation of the LORD in the face of a large attacking army. There were any number of ways that God could have defeated these armies assembled against Judah, but He appointed a way that demanded the participation of faith on behalf of Judah. They had to work in a faith-partnership with God. God partners with people.

"See." Keep your eyes on the Lord. That's where you started; that's where you remain. Keep on looking to God. Don't ever give up; don't ever look away. Keep your focus.

Then, immediately, the response of Jehoshaphat and the people was praise and gratitude, even in advance of the victory. And, this theme of praise and gratitude continues after the victory as well. There's power in praising the Lord. He inhabits our praises. (Psalm 22:3) He silences the enemy when



we praise. (Psalm 8:2) He fights the enemy to the music of tambourines and harps. **(Isaiah 30:32)** And, here, with singers at the front of the army, God set ambushes for the enemies as his people began to sing and praise.

There is power in praise. We don't just sing a few songs to set the stage for the sermon. While that may be part of what happens, there's so much more. There are spiritual battles being fought and won while we sing the praises of the Lord. I know some of you are studiers and would rather just get on with the sermon, but singing and praising the Lord are important in our gatherings. It's spiritual warfare and **the Lord fights for us when we praise.** Ultimately, for Jehoshaphat, the enemies destroyed themselves. They turned on each other.

When you're facing a seemingly impossible situation and don't know what to do, you can follow the example of Jehoshaphat. **Pray, focus on the Lord, wait for God, keep on looking to the Lord, and sing his praises.** Then, God will turn a disparaging situation into a sensational deliverance. **(Romans 8:28)**

The overwhelming power against them became an overwhelming plunder for them – 3 days to collect it all. God has a knack for turning the tables on those who plot evil. He can suddenly and powerfully turn an impossible situation around. That could be for you today.

"When God is going to do something wonderful, He chooses a difficulty. When He is going to do something very wonderful, He chooses an impossibility!"

God's people returned joyfully, rejoicing over their enemies. They went right back to the temple and praised the Lord even more. And, God turned this impossible situation into a landmark victory, so much so, that other enemies were afraid to do anything against the people of God. Then, the kingdom was at peace with rest on every side.

Are you in a similar situation? You don't know what to do? Are you facing overwhelming circumstances? It could be that God is about to give clear instructions, intervene on your behalf and reverse the situation in your favor. Pray, focus on the Lord, wait for him, keep on looking to him, and sing his praises.

Great Things