

# Doing Right in the Eyes of the Lord

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As I have been making my way through 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles I have noticed an interesting and persistent trend. In 12 separate instances we are informed of kings who “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” as compared to 25 instances where kings “did evil in the eyes of the Lord.”

### **What were the results in these cases?**

In the latter cases God was often provoked to anger. Punishment often resulted in premature end of a reigns, personal disease, banishment or imprisonment, humiliation, loss of loved ones, or death. In many instances God’s indictment of their reign included a reference to others who had preceded them and set a bad example for them.

In the former cases the kings were honored and often prospered as a result of their obedience and commitment to the commandments of the Lord. An oft repeated refrain said, “He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David had done.” But even many of these situations were punctuated by half-hearted reforms or incomplete efforts to rid the land of idolatry.

Many of these kings started out well but did not finish well. Some started out poorly but repented and finished strong. Yet, still others started out badly and finished badly. A precious few started out well and finished well. Some men start the race in a spurt of speed and have no staying power to finish the race. Some pace themselves and finish with a burst of speed. The point is to start well and finish well. If you started poorly you do not have to finish poorly. Plan to finish well. One ingredient is absolutely indispensable—obedience.

### **What can we learn from these examples?**

1. It is better to follow the Lord in obedience than to be disobedient.
2. God honors obedience and commitment to His commands.
3. Prosperity follows obedience but never disobedience.
4. God’s ways are better than our ways.
5. Obedience requires courage in the face of opposition.
6. We prove our love by our obedience.
7. We prove our consistent love by our consistent obedience.

8. The positive results of our obedience may not come to light immediately.
9. It doesn't matter what you think is right—it's what the Lord thinks is right.
10. If we have started poorly we can still finish well.