

# No One Cried at the Funeral

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala's sermon explores the tragic life of King Jehoram, emphasizing the critical importance of choosing godly influences and the consequences of poor choices.*

**Duration:** 28:35

**Scripture:** Genesis 5:24, 2 Chronicles 16:12, Psalm 1:1, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 13:20, Acts 2:38, 1 Corinthians 15:33

**Topics:** "Influence"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of surrounding oneself with good influences to fight against evil. He encourages the audience to spend time in prayer and in God's presence, as it can have a transformative effect on their day. The preacher also highlights the significance of choosing positive role models and examples to shape one's thoughts and actions. Lastly, he emphasizes the power of the Word of God in driving out evil and encourages the audience to cherish and read the Bible regularly.

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## Transcript

How in the world could nobody cry at a funeral? And that's in the Bible? Let's look. Let's look at 2 Chronicles and look at this one verse. Jehoram had become king at the age of 32 and had ruled in Jerusalem for eight years.

Nobody was sorry when he died. Wow, that's in the Bible. Nobody was sorry when he died.

How in the world did that happen? The Bible tells it like it is. And what's strange about this is Jehoram had a phenomenal father named Jehoshaphat and his grandfather was a spiritual heavyweight by the name of King Asa. How did that happen? Let's look.

Jehoram, son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, had six brothers, Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azarihu, Michael, and Shephathatiah, whatever. Why can't they name people Bob and Harry and Bill? Their father gave them large amounts of gold, silver, and other valuable possessions and placed each one in charge of one of the fortified cities of Judah. But because Jehoram was the oldest, all right, I get that, Jehoshaphat made him his successor.

When Jehoram was in the control of the kingdom, he had all his brothers killed and also some Israelite officials. Jehoram became king at the age of 32 and he ruled in Jerusalem for eight years. He followed the wicked example of King Ahab.

That's the king of the northern kingdom, Israel, who was a real idolater and wicked man. How many know the name of King Ahab's wife, Jezebel, and the other kings of Israel? He followed the example of Ahab and the other kings of Israel because he had married one of Ahab's daughters. Bad move.

He sinned against the Lord. Let's pick up the story now in verse 11. He even built pagan places of worship in the Judean highlands and led the people, this is the king, he led the people of Judah and Jerusalem to sin against the Lord.

The prophet Elijah sent Jehoram a letter which read as follows. The Lord, the God of your ancestor David, condemns you because you did not follow the example of your father, King Jehoshaphat, or that of your grandfather, King Asa. Instead, you have followed the example of the kings of Israel and have led the people of Judah and Jerusalem into being unfaithful to God, just as Ahab and his successors led Israel into unfaithfulness.

You even murdered your brothers who were better men than you are. Then after all this, the Lord brought on the king a painful disease of the intestines. For almost two years, it grew steadily worse until finally the king died in agony.

His subjects did not light a bonfire in mourning for him as had been done for his ancestors. Jehoram had become king at the age of 32 and had ruled in Jerusalem for eight years. Nobody was sorry when he died.

Now I get that. What a wasted life. What a tragedy.

Just real quick, one of the odd coincidences of this passage as I read it was I remember a ceremony that I was at in another church. There's a verse here that says as part of Elijah's letter to him, you yourself will suffer a painful intestinal disease that will grow worse day by day. I was at this thing when I was about 19 years old, and they were honoring a minister who had served a long time.

They had a cake, and they had telegrams from people, and they had all kinds of stuff. Someone sent a telegram and said, congratulations on 40 years of service or whatever, and then left the reference, the verse reference, but someone had made a typo. It was 2 Chronicles, but somehow the numbers had got mixed up.

In front of everybody, they said, Reverend and Mrs. Wilson and their entire church want to congratulate you for all the years of service, and then without checking and just right off the cliff, let me open my Bible. Okay, and let me read this. You yourself will suffer a painful intestinal disease that will grow worse day by day.

And we all were like, what? But someone had made a typo. Always look at a verse before you read it out loud. How many say amen? Amen.

So how'd this all happen? Had a grandfather, King Asa, who was godly, had a father, King Jehoshaphat, who was even more godly. How do you end up such a loser? Ruin your country, ruin your family, ruin your name, have enemies attack you because God disciplined him. I left that part out.

And then end up dying of a disease God brought on you for your disobedience. It's all told in one sentence. He married the daughter of Ahab and followed the example of her family.

That's it. His influence, the influences that shaped his life were from the wrong side of the tracks. And that's the story of a lot of people.

See, everybody in the choir, everybody in the congregation, including me and the pastors, we're all going to be influenced by someone. We all follow someone's example. It's subtle.

Parents are strong in setting influence. And if the parental influence is good, you're on a good track. If the parental influence is nasty, you're on a bad track.

Because nobody is born into this world and grows up knowing what to do. We're all influenced. Our value systems, what's important, what's okay to do, what really matters.

It's all shaped by influences, by culture, by the people not only grow up around, but the people that you set as your paradigms and as your models. You can make it a man of God, a woman of God. You can make it Jay-Z.

You can make it Madonna. You can make it a politician. The way you dress, the way you act, the way you talk is greatly influenced by the people that you hang with, your posse.

You have a posse, right? And by the people who you set up as like, I want to be like that. And somehow, this guy, Jehoram, instead of saying, I want to be like my dad, I want to be like my grandfather, he goes and says, I want to be like Ahab. He's cool.

He's got more money than my parents did, maybe. And he goes and marries, oh, who you marry? Oh, yeah. Who you marry? She might have been a real looker, but boy, did he pay the price.

Because by marrying her, he ate all his meals up in Samaria, it seemed, hanging out with Ahab and his crew. And the conversation went in his ear, and what was going on went in his eye gate. And the next thing you know, Jehoram becomes a monster.

And when he becomes king, he doesn't honor his brothers like his father did. He kills them. Patricide, very rare, where you kill your own family.

But it sounds just like something Ahab would have concocted. So that tells me that who we run with, who we talk to, who we look up to, how we set our goals is going to influence not only how we act, but your future. Tell me who you run with.

Tell me who you talk to. Tell me who your friends are, and I'll know a lot about you. Oh, yes, I will.

Birds of a... It's not in the Bible, but it's pretty good, isn't it? And this is what people who become Christians don't realize many times, or pretend Christians, or even sincere Christians, that everything that we take in, eye gate, ear gate, and who we hang out with, and who our posse is, that will influence you. Well, the Bible's full of those warnings. Back in Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people, now, God says this, when you go into the land, you are not to marry the women of the Canaanite tribes, because they're idolaters.

No, we're going to win them to the Lord. No, they're going to win you to Baal. And that's what happened.

That's why someone needs to hear this today, then God sent me just for you. If that guy, I don't care if he's looking good and all of that, he fine and all of that. If he doesn't love Jesus, you're looking for a problem.

If that girl, I don't care if she's a stunner, if she's gorgeous, that wears off. And now you have to live with that character. And that woman will influence you.

That man will influence you. That's why the Bible says, don't be unequally yoked in the New Testament. You don't date or marry people who aren't Christians.

Pastor Semble, you really believe that? No. Yeah, it's in the Bible. Can we say amen to that? It's in the Bible.

And this has been said for 2000 years. No, but they said that I could take the children that we have to church. You're looking for a heartache.

If I could tell you all the heartaches and headaches that I've watched and I've pleaded and I begged. One young lady that I still, I fought myself, Pastor Brian Petrie was with me. I should have laid in front of the door and not let her out of my office because she told me who she's going to marry.

And we knew this guy, he was just a total nut job and deceiving and conniving and deceptive. But he had sweet talk to her. And I said, when he's done with you physically, he will throw you on the heap.

And no, no. He said, you would say something like that because you're against him. I said, I'm not against him.

He's against himself. He's wrong. Trust me.

I drew my chair close. I pleaded with her. I said, I'm talking to you like I would my own children.

Do not do this, please. But I wasn't strong enough. And she did it.

And sure enough, it wasn't even a year later that she wrote me a letter. I give her a lot of credit. And she said, I owe you an apology.

I walked out of your office rebellious, but everything you said came to pass like you knew how it would happen. But the Bible warns us about that, that who we run with, who you have lunch with continually, who's your posse, who you fell. Well, I know, but we're trying to win people to the Lord.

Yes, let's love people, take them out to lunch. But when Jesus hung out with sinners, he wanted to help them. His posse were the disciples.

He hung out with disciples and he was the son of God. Show me people who have their closest friends, people who curse God and curse Christ and don't care about Jesus. I don't understand that.

What fellowship does light have with darkness? Am I wrong or right here? And everything that we have influences, every experience, everything we run with. I know I haven't preached like this in I don't know how long, but this is the verse God put on my heart. Maybe it's to save someone that's here.

Maybe it's to save someone who's getting sucked in by wrong influences. Look what Psalm 1 says. Happy are those who reject the advice of evil people, who do not follow the example of sinners or join those who have no use for God.

Happy, that means blessed are those who reject the advice of evil people. No, I'm not going to do what you tell me because you don't have a clue about God. Why would I listen to you? I don't care how much

money you make or how high your IQ is.

You don't know God. How in the world could you speak into my life? Who do not follow the example of sinners. No, I'm not dressing like you.

I'm not talking like you. I'm not doing anything like you. I'm going to follow Jesus.

And if I'm going to have any role models, they're going to be people who love God. Come on, can we say amen to that or join those or hang out and join those who have no use for God? That's so much better than the King James Version, sit in the seat of the scornful and all that. It's very hard to understand.

That speaks to me. Join those who have no use for God. And in case you think this is an Old Testament legalistic idea, try this one on for size in 1 Corinthians 15.

Let's look at it. Do not be fooled. Bad companions ruin good character.

Do not be, say it with me out loud. Do not be fooled. Bad companions ruin good character.

That's what the Bible says, not me. This is not some narrow view of how we should live our lives. This is God warning us, don't go near that cliff you might go over.

And notice it's not just a statement, it's don't be fooled. In other words, it's easy to believe otherwise. Bad company corrupts morals.

The NIV has it. This has do not be fooled, bad companions ruin good character. And that's what happened to poor Jehoram.

So then when he died, let's tell it like it is. Let's do real talk. The people said, good riddance.

Dude was bad. Good riddance. How'd he get like that? Well, you see his home environment.

No, he had a godly mother, had a godly father, had a godly grandfather. He could have made those his examples. No, see everybody in the choir, everybody out there, everybody on the webcast, who you said as your model is going to influence it.

The way you think, the way you talk, what you go for. And you got bad models, you got bad so-called idols. Bad idols just wrecked and ruined this guy, lost everything, ended up dying a nasty death.

But here's the worst part. Not only are we susceptible to influence, all of us. I'm just thinking now, all these young pastors coming out of seminary, and some of them are going to make their models, these guys that don't even preach from the Bible, but who flaunt and walk around with their \$2,000, \$3,000 suits and walk around.

Don't even preach the Bible. Don't even mention Jesus or sin or the cross. I'm so glad they sang at Calvary.

How many want, until you die, keep singing at Calvary, right? Now I know his love. Who will go? Nah, that's passe. And just think, those young ministers, this is what's all messed up about the whole thing, why it's going sideways quickly.

Listen, every minister models some other minister. You don't make it up. I was influenced.

My father-in-law, God bless him, handed me a book. I can see the day. I was still in college.

He said, read this. I read that book. That book started to influence me.

It was written by someone who has been dead over 100 years. But whoa, that thing created appetite in me. I thought, wow, a man can walk with God, a man can be used by God.

A man believes in the power of the Holy Spirit. I didn't make what I believe up. I found it in the word of God.

I found it from examples of people who wanted to do it right. Not be popular, not be successful, not have big churches. Nowhere in the Bible does it say Jim and Carol Simba should have a big church.

That's not in the Bible. We're supposed to be faithful and preach the Bible. Try to make converts all in favor, say, I. I just was reading one of these church growth gurus, and I'm thinking of all the pastors now who could read this nonsense and then follow that example.

He said, look, here's my goal, as he's telling pastors, follow my example because I have a big church. Here's my example. When people sit down in my church, I only have one thought on my mind.

How do I get them to come back next week? That's my only thought. Not the truth. Not do they know Jesus.

Not are they saved. Just one thing. Got to get them to come back.

Don't say anything to offend them. Put on a show there. They go, wow, this is really nice.

Keep it light, Christianity light, L-I-T-E, like Pepsi light, Coke light, Christianity light. The young men are going to be influenced by that if there's no other influence. But the kicker is this.

After being influenced for years growing up and as the king, guess what he did? He influenced others with the same nasty influence that he had gotten from Mayheb because whatever influences you, you pass it on. You pass it on. They're having this big scandal with the NFL, beating on women, beating on kids.

I don't know about that beating on kids. My father would have been in jail for a long time. How many had parents, how many had parents? They'd be serving time right now.

You know what I'm saying? Being on Rikers Island, cuffed. How many got just a beat down while you were growing up? Lift your hand high because you're proud of it. But to hurt children like that and leave welts and marks like that.

But listen, here's my point. Guy knocks out a woman, puts his hands on a woman. What do you think he made that up? He's been influenced.

He either saw his father do that or he was listening to rap lyrics that make women like a piece of garbage. And if you listen to enough of that, what are you going to respect women? If women are called every filthy name and they're sex objects, then when you're around women, you're going to go, yes, ma'am, can I open the door for you? Get out of here. You're not going to do that.

You're going to knock them out. But the guy didn't make that up. He was influenced.

We're all influenced. It's just who's going to influence you. That's the only question.

No one's making up something no one's ever done before. There's nothing new under the sun. The Bible says that.

Paul says, be imitators of me even as I imitate Jesus. So all this stuff that we see, it's because someone grew up saying that. Hey, you want to use nasty language in front of your children? Guess what? They're going to curse.

You want to disrespect your wife in front of them or your husband in front of them? They're going to grow up exactly like you. You're putting a stamp on them. You might as well brand them with a hot iron in their mind.

Monkey see? Exactly. And we forget that. We act wrong.

We set wrong examples. We set wrong influences. And then we want God and we pray, I want to undo every mess I've made.

That's not a good way to live. We want to set a godly example. Because my children and my grandchildren, whether I like it or not, are going to be influenced by me and my wife.

End of story. Now the question is, what influence? God has to come. This is why the gospel is so powerful.

God has to break the generational curse. I don't believe in generational curses for Christians. But I mean generational curse by this way, of influence.

You see some 19-year-old girl, 18-year-old girl, pushing a carriage on Fulton Street, talking filthy on her cell phone. Or worse, the girl's holding her hand and she's talking just the foulest language. And her three-year-old is walking.

I see it every day. And she looks up at his mother as her mother is throwing every bomb and language and horrible. But don't you get it? That girl who's 17, 18, who has that baby, that's the way her mother talked most likely.

She didn't make that up. And that little girl who's three or four, guess how she's going to talk? Unless Jesus comes and breaks that thing. And life comes in and now a new example is set.

And this is for somebody here watching, you're the one that God has raised up to break the generational passing down of filthy things. Because you know what happens to Jehoram's son? I don't have the time to do it. Read about him.

He's a big loser. Well, no kidding. With a father like Jehoram, unless some prophet or somebody else gets to you, you're going to be like daddy.

That's a lot for us who are raising children, right? They're going to be like what we set the example of. Bad company does corrupt morals and ruins good character. I am always nervous around Christians who don't want to be around Christians.

So-called Christians, they do not want to fellowship with Christian. They got another separate posse. I'm just telling you that makes me very nervous.

Oh no, but they're nicer than Christians. Christians gossip and all that. Look, I'm used to that talk.

I've heard that for a long time. Find some Christians who don't talk and don't gossip, but find some Christians. You need a friend at the end of this service because you got bad influences in your life? You want some friends? You come up here.

I'll have Sylvia and some other people take your name. And you know what? I've already talked to the choir. They're willing.

We'll hand the names, depending on you're male or female, what age. We'll give it to the choir. They'll be your friend.

We'll give it to some deacons. They'll be your friend. You need a friend? I'll get you some friends, but have Christian friends.

Don't be like Jehoram and run with the wrong posse. Oh no, God knows my heart. They will tear you up.

They'll eat you up for lunch. That's the strange thing about being a Christian. Even though that life is eternal life, and it's so strong, there's so many warnings.

Don't let other people infiltrate you. So now, who should be our friends? Christians, number one. And if you need some Christian friends, choir, will you be a friend to someone? Lift your hand.

If I give you a name, will you be a friend? Lift your hand if you'll do it. There you go. They'll call you a couple of times a week because you need friends.

Pastor just preached the word. No, you need friends. No, but I come to church.

You need friends because who your posse is is going to determine a lot about your life. Number two, this God be your friend. You know what the strength of the Bible is? It influences you every time you read it.

Am I right or wrong here, congregation? So the devil will try to get us too busy, too running around, too distracted that we won't sit and read the word of God. Let the word of God be your friend. Let God speak to you through his word.

Hold the Bible close to you. Cherish it. Carry a little New Testament.

So if you have to wait at the dentist's office or on the subway, just flip that little thing open and just read just a verse and just think about it. It'll influence you. The word of God is pure.

It drives out evil stuff. Don't fight the evil. Inject the good, and it'll drive out the evil.

How many are with me? Say amen. A lot of people are fighting evil, and they don't realize the best way to fight evil is to get filled with good, truth, light, purity, salt, the bread of life. Thirdly, let Jesus be your friend.

Hang out with Jesus every day. That'll straighten us out. How many have ever just had 10 minutes of prayer in a prayer meeting or alone, and it changes your whole day? How many have ever just spent time in God's presence? That's all.

But we're all going to be influenced. See, I was influenced already by the choir singing. That influenced me.

Those three songs deeply influenced me for the day. Were you influenced? We're influenced for the good, but then there's other stuff. It's nasty.

So I stopped at the corner the other day, and a guy pulled up in his car, and his window was wide open, and his radio was booming. Thump, thump, thump. And now the words coming out that the rapper was saying on it, I mean, I'm not naive, but please.

And we were waiting to cross the street on Hoyt and Livingston, and the people next to me with the car park, we just looked at each other like, wow. And the guy says, you don't think those words are going to influence him? Come on, come on. Are those words going to influence him? No, they're not going to influence him.

Subtly, the accumulation of it, eye gate, ear gate, who you hang with. We need godly influences. So in a second, we're going to stand.

We're going to hug each other, greet each other. Serious, serious. You want the name of someone in the choir, deacon, deaconess? You want a friend? I did this before.

I got all kinds of names. Are people followed up? Call them. I trust it's going well, but don't be a lone ranger.

Don't feel isolated, and don't run with the wrong crowd. And now let the blessing of God, and the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of God's people today. We pray in Jesus' name.

Everybody stand and hug someone, and come up here if you want a friend. For free. You got a free friend today.

Anybody want to come up and see me? Right here.

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