



October 4, 2015  
2 Chronicles 17–20  
*“Dangerous Alliances”*  
Pastor Gary Hamrick

Every Christian has a responsibility to rub shoulders with lost people living in a lost world. We must have contact in a real world with real people to share the real love of Jesus. But how much contact is too much? When does “contact” become compromise? Where is the line between influencing a lost world and being influenced by it? Christians must be distinct and different in our world, so we can offer something the world needs. If we look like them, act like them, talk like them, and live like them, why would a lost world think we have anything to offer them? Jehoshaphat <sup>1</sup> crossed the line between contact and compromise, and he set an example for us about what not to do, which is the focus of Pastor Gary’s message today.

### Jehoshaphat’s Major Reforms

1. He brought judicial reform.
  - a. **2 Chronicles 19:4-7** – *“Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem, and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and turned them back to the Lord, the God of their fathers. He appointed judges in the land, in each of the fortified cities of Judah. He told them, ‘Consider carefully what you do, because you are not judging for man but for the Lord, who is with you whenever you give a verdict. Now let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.’ ”*

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<sup>1</sup> Jehoshaphat is included in the list of the “relatively good” kings of Judah, however, he did not do everything right. In Hebrew, his name means, “the Lord is judge.” He reigned 25 years as king of Judah in Jerusalem.

2. He brought spiritual renewal to Judah by:
  - a. Removing pagan influences.
    - i. **2 Chronicles 17:6**- *"[Jehoshaphat's] heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord; furthermore, he removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah."*
  - b. Teaching God's Word.
    - i. He sent 16 Levites, priests and leaders throughout the land to teach people the Word of God.
      1. **2 Chronicles 17:7-9** - *"In the third year of his reign he sent his officials Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah to teach in the towns of Judah. With them were certain Levites - Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tob-Adonijah - and the priests Elishama and Jehoram. They taught throughout Judah, taking with them the Book of the Law of the Lord; they went around to all the towns of Judah and taught the people."*
  - c. Calling for prayer and fasting.
    - i. **2 Chronicles 20:3-4** - *"... Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him."*
  - d. Emphasizing praise and worship.
    - i. **2 Chronicles 20:21** - *"After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: 'Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever.' "*

#### Jehoshaphat's Major Weakness

3. **2 Chronicles 18:1** - *"Now Jehoshaphat had great wealth and honor, and he allied himself with Ahab [King of Israel] by marriage."*
4. Jehoshaphat made an alliance with Ahab in order to strategize and bring about the desired outcome of peace, instead of trusting and relying on the Lord to be the defender of the nation of Judah.
  - a. Solomon did the same thing when he married the daughter of the pharaoh of Egypt.

5. Another major problem with this alliance is the simple fact that it was made with King Ahab, who was one of the most evil and wicked kings mentioned in the Bible!
  - a. Ahab's wife, Jezebel, was one of the most evil and wicked women mentioned in the Bible!

### Jehu And Eliezer Confronted Jehoshaphat

6. God was angry with Jehoshaphat because of the alliance he made with Ahab.
  - a. **2 Chronicles 19:1-3** - *"When Jehoshaphat king of Judah returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem, Jehu the seer [prophet], the son of Hanani, went out to meet him and said to the king, 'Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Because of this, the wrath of the Lord is upon you. There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have set your heart on seeking God.' "*
    - i. Many Bible translations replace the word "love" with "and make alliances with."
    - ii. We don't know how Jehoshaphat experienced the "wrath of the Lord."
7. Jehoshaphat angered the Lord once more when made an alliance with Ahaziah, Ahab's wicked son!
  - a. **2 Chronicles 20:35-37** - *"Later, Jehoshaphat king of Judah made an alliance with Ahaziah king of Israel, who was guilty of wickedness. He agreed with him to construct a fleet of trading ships. After these were built at Ezion Geber, Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, 'Because you have made an alliance with Ahaziah, the Lord will destroy what you have made.' The ships were wrecked and were not able to set sail to trade."*
    - i. We don't know how the Lord "wrecked" the entire "fleet of trading ships."
8. It's clear from these accounts that Jehoshaphat had no sense of where the line was when it came to the difference between contact with those who are wicked and evil, and being compromised by those who are wicked and evil.
9. The partnership and union Jehoshaphat had with Ahab and Ahaziah were major sins in his life.
10. Pastor Gary made it very clear that Christians have a responsibility to "rub shoulders" with lost people in a lost world, because they need to know Christ

through an interaction with real people in a real world who express the real love of Jesus Christ with the gospel.

11. It's vital to remember that there is a fine line between contact and interaction and compromise; between influencing and being influenced.
12. Pastor Gary emphasized the point that the Bible does not teach isolation.
13. We cannot be isolated, because we are called to integrate our lives with the real world around us.
14. Pastor Gary's said he was concerned that Christians today aren't guilty of isolation, but more likely to be guilty of infiltration.
15. [Philippians 2:15-16](#) - "... [so you will be] blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life..."

#### Seven Important Questions

16. Is my life noticeably different from the culture around me (my values, speech, social behavior) such that others might be prompted to ask me about my life?
  - a. [1 Peter 3:15-16](#) - "... in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."
17. Do I sometimes feel out of place or uncomfortable in this world?
  - a. [Hebrews 11:13](#) - "All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth."
  - b. [John 15:19](#) - "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you."
18. Am I intentional about how I can integrate my faith in conversations and social settings?
  - a. [Colossians 4:6](#) - "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

19. Am I consciously aware of my witness at all times and do I do my best to keep from compromising our causing others to compromise?
- 1 Timothy 1:16** - *“But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.”*
  - 1 Corinthians 10:23-24** - *“ ‘Everything is permissible’ - but not everything is beneficial. ‘Everything is permissible’ - but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.”*
20. Do I believe overall that I am more of an influence in the lives of people who need Christ than they are with me?
- 1 Corinthians 15:33** - *“Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’ ”*
21. Am I more concerned about pleasing God than what my unsaved friends think of me?
- Galatians 1:10** - *“Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”*
22. Do I limit dating relationships, business partnerships, and other binding alliances or unions to those who are Believers and who share my biblical worldview?
- 2 Corinthians 6:14-15** - *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”*
  - Amos 3:3** - *“Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?”*

### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read **2 Chronicles 17:1-6** and **2 Chronicles 18:1** to provide the foundation for this study.
3. Read and discuss the seven important questions and associated Scriptures.
4. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).