

## S1:E6 When My Purpose Becomes My Poison ft. Wade Joye & Generation Worship

### Today's Topic: "When My Purpose Becomes My Poison"

-I was inspired to have this discussion when I actually saw one of Wade Joye's posts

-The following account of King Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18 has been one of the most sobering passages of Scripture to me since reading it with fresh eyes several years ago.

He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.

He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the Lord God of Israel ...

2 Kings 18: 3-5

In case you missed this detail like I did when I read this passage many times before, the bronze snake referred to is the one the Lord instructs Moses to make in Numbers 21:8-9. This bronze snake was God's instrument of healing for the Israelite people who had been bitten by poisonous serpents due to their complaining and grumbling. Those who had faith to look at the serpent, however, ended up surviving. It was ultimately a foreshadowing of how Christ would be lifted up on a cross so that all who look to Him in faith are saved.

What struck me when I read about Hezekiah smashing this bronze serpent was that the instrument of healing that once was meant to turn eyes and hearts to God was now itself the object of worship.

Which means if we aren't careful, the very thing that was created for the purpose of ministry can become an idol that poisons the ministry.

The gift that was meant to bless us can also drive our hearts further from the Lord when not kept in its proper place.

I don't think this happened suddenly, that one day the Israelites randomly decided that they should bow before the bronze serpent. It is something that happened little by little in the hearts of the people as they no longer bowed their affections and actions before the Lord.

The application for this is not just for the ministry practices or systems that we have created that once served the mission of pointing people to Jesus (like excellence) before they ended up becoming idols that many of us at times found ourselves serving instead. It's even more personal, because within our own lives, anything that has been given as a gift can become dangerous when it isn't held the way it was meant to be.

It's a challenging call to look inward and examine our hearts.

Is there something beautiful and God-given in your life that is causing you pain because it's not in its proper place?

What good things have become harmful because you are no longer handling them appropriately?

Your phone is a great tool when stranded on the side of the road. It's dangerous for your most cherished relationships when you escape to it rather than being present with those you love at the dinner table. It's an obvious example but it makes the point that context determines whether something is helpful or harmful.

Let's be more aware of the things we are gripping too tightly, for the posture of fear is a clenched fist, holding on because we do not trust that we are safe. Instead, let us, like Hezekiah, open our hands in surrender and worship as trust in the Lord God of Israel.

"If we aren't careful, the very thing that was created for the PURPOSE of Ministry can become the idol that POISONS the ministry."

### **#1. When GOOD things become GOD things**

- Let's talk about worship, specifically.
- Unpack some things that maybe you allowed to become poisonous in your own life/ministry.
- Talk about how incredible worship ministries have now become a breeding ground for envy, stardom, and need for affirmation. What is good and godly can become our "god". It becomes the END instead of the MEANS to the end: a relationship with Jesus.
- Worship is your response to the revelation of who God is. Idolatry is our response when revelation of who WE are and what we can DO becomes greater than who HE is.

### **#2. Creating Space for Personal Transformation**

- Many people are so caught up in creating spaces for other people (in ministry) that they neglect their own soul.
- We find our spirituality in leading worship, preaching, etc. instead of our spirituality PRODUCING our leading of worship, preaching, etc. (Preach what I practice, not practice what I preach)
- Talk about spiritual disciplines, creating space for our own worship and growth
- Talk about story of counselor speaking to congregant who exited worship experience for anxiety attack over grief....the waves take us somewhere. Church is not the place to dam it up, but the place to let it out.
- Talk about conversation with Kara...why do we think worship has to look neat or pretty?
- Our crying out, shouting is not always joyful. Sometimes it's out of pain or grief...but it's STILL worship!

CLOSE:

-Let's talk about 3 keys to victory:

- #1. When GOOD things become GOD things
- #2. Creating Space for Personal Transformation
- #3.