



## POETS PROPHETS AND KINGS

### Small Group Questions

#### Part 1: A Tender Heart

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#### Read

Ephesians 4:31–32; Deuteronomy 28:20; 2 Kings 22 and 23; and 2 Corinthians 10:3–5

#### Reflect

In 2 Kings 22 and 23, when King Josiah first hears the Word of God, he immediately tears his clothes and repents. Josiah recognizes that Israel has sinned greatly during the reigns of his father (Amon) and grandfather (Manasseh). He asks a prophet if he and the nation will be destroyed because of it. The prophet tells him that because Josiah has been tenderhearted and has humbled himself before God, he has saved not only himself, but Israel as well. Josiah discovers that repentance releases the favor of God.

Why are we so often embarrassed to be tenderhearted? What has hardened our hearts?

Pastor Greg Surratt describes some of the characteristics of tenderhearted people:

1. They are quick to repent when they're wrong.
  - a. You can either be quick to repent or quick to make excuses—can't be both.
    - i. What is your first reaction when you realize you're wrong about something?
    - ii. Do you tend to make excuses?
    - iii. Are you willing to take an honest look at your own life and areas where sin has taken hold?
      1. Are you putting money before people? Career before people? Other?
  - b. You've got to change your mind before you can change your behavior.
    - i. Identify areas of contention that keep coming up. Should you be looking at them a different way?
    - ii. Can you identify destructive behaviors in yourself?
2. They make strong commitments to do what is right.
  - a. Truth: your commitments shape your life.
    - i. How good are you at committing to something and sticking to it?
    - ii. What have you been afraid to take a stand for, but feel God' urging?
      1. What excuses might you be using to rationalize not taking action?
    - iii. What do your commitments (or lack thereof) demonstrate about you?
3. They are willing to destroy all idols that stand between them and God.
  - a. They demolish every argument.
    - i. How good are you at using the knowledge base of God (His Word in the Bible) to recognize wrongdoing in yourself?
  - b. They demolish every pretension.
    - i. In what areas do you tend to be prideful?
  - c. They take captive every thought.
    - i. Consciously listen to your self-talk. Identify thoughts that go against God's Word.
    - ii. What lies are you buying into and how have they created strongholds in your life?
    - iii. What are you putting ahead of God? What idols have displaced him? Making money? Keeping or feeding your pride?

#### Respond

What is your next step? Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you and hold you accountable in this?