

Q&A with Jaclyn Rowe
Author of “King Hezekiah: Examining a Life of Bold Faith”



1) What made you choose Hezekiah for a bible study?

Years ago, I was invited to be a speaker for Stonecroft Ministries, an international women’s ministry organization. As I was preparing my first presentation for them, I was reading through the book of Isaiah in my personal bible study time. When I got to chapter 36, the Lord stopped me in my tracks. After reading through it a couple of times, I began writing the outline for my speech in the margins of my bible. The story was about Hezekiah. I spent a couple of years sharing the chapter 36 account at Christian women’s clubs and eventually expanded the 20 minute speech into a 10 week study for the Sunday school class I teach, simply out of passion for Hezekiah’s story and what I was learning. One day, a woman at an event asked me, “Do you have a Bible study about this?” The Holy Spirit used that conversation to convict my heart to write it. I fought the Lord for quite some time before surrendering to the idea. I wasn’t convinced *another* bible study was necessary.

2) What specific things about Hezekiah's life surprised you the most?

He was very young when he became king, and yet God used him to turn an entire nation around. GOD USED ONE PERSON TO TURN AN ENTIRE NATION AROUND!! I was impressed with his leadership ability and surprised by the wickedness he had lived through. I was also surprised by his compassionate heart, specifically when he reached out to Israel, the northern kingdom, inviting them to Passover and then accepting them although they were far from God. I was most surprised — and disappointed — when Hezekiah became prideful after God healed him of his illness and promised him fifteen more years of life. After doing so much good, he was still a struggling, sinful human being.

3) Talk about your testimony; how you came to the faith; and how your faith walk has matured over time.

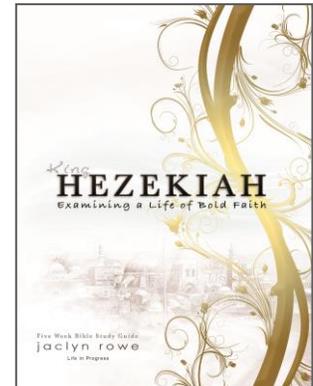
I came to the faith at a young age because I was blessed to be born into a Christian home with authentic believers as parents. I am thankful I was taken to church every time the doors were open. Often, I didn’t want to go, but unless I was vomiting or bleeding, we were there. God has been ridiculously gracious to me. He has pursued me for as long as I can remember and I have slowly learned what it means to live for him and to surrender to him. Like many, my faith began to really mature through college as I was challenged to leave an ungodly relationship behind, examine my beliefs and search the scriptures for truth.

4) You say it took 5 years to complete the bible study. Why so long?

Well, two main reasons named Peyton and Chloe! Also, I’m ashamed to say I argued with the Lord about it. I didn’t think it was necessary. I wanted to focus my time on my speaking career, and building a business. Writing and researching takes so much time. I would work on it for a few days and then leave it alone for a few months. Finally, in early 2013, the Lord broke me. I couldn’t go to church without finding myself in the altar, crying, asking for forgiveness for my disobedience. I knew, God desired...required...this study from me and the work and effort it would take. So, if for no one else, I surrendered to doing it for Him. I needed Him off my back! I spent that summer by the pool, watching my kiddos swim out of one eye and editing out of the other. I had a difficult time thinking about anything else. He provided my every need during that time.

5) What makes this bible study different from others you have come across?

The day we sent the finished manuscript to the printer, I googled “King Hezekiah Bible Studies or books.” Nothing came up; nothing on Amazon, CBD or Lifeway’s website. I was astounded. I intentionally had never looked because I wanted my study to be authentic, written by just me and the Holy Spirit. There are a few studies and books available with a short portion on Hezekiah amongst other kings, but nothing specifically devoted to him — until now. Practically, the study is doable. It was written for the bible study beginner and for those who have been studying for years. It is only five weeks long because I have found through years of leading Bible studies, it is hard to keep the attention of a group for much longer than that. I tried to keep those things in mind as I wrote it and did the DVD sessions. Each teaching session on the DVD is only 20 min, allowing time for discussion if you only have a one hour meeting.



6) Is this a bible study that will appeal to certain genders or ages?

As a Christian women’s speaker, I wrote with a female audience in mind. (There is a mention of chocolate cake, for example!) However, several co-ed groups have done the study and feedback from the men has been encouraging. Hezekiah was a man’s man and an amazing leader, so there is a lot men can relate to and learn from. I have also found the lessons learned about family and family roots trigger something in younger people. Older teens and college age people who are trying to figure out life are intrigued by Hezekiah’s background. His upbringing was far from easy and his father was very wicked, yet God had amazing plans for him. I would think any mature teenager through senior adults would benefit from the study.

7) What do you hope people will learn from Hezekiah's life?

My greatest hope is that people will learn and see the power, provision and merciful heart of God. Ultimately, the hero of the story is the God of the Bible, not Hezekiah. I hope people will learn what it looks like to live a life of BOLD faith from Hezekiah. Through Hezekiah’s life, God has taught me what it looks like to take a stand, to obey Him, to trust Him, to reach out for Him and to pray believing Him.

8) Talk about your background as a speaker and writer.

I started speaking with no intention of being an author. I started speaking because I like to talk, seemed to be good at it, and people were willing to pay me! God orchestrated and used my experiences and training through Monster.com and the Littauer family at CLASServices to sculpt me into the type of speaker He could use. At age 22, I was standing up and speaking in front of some of the best speakers and speaker trainers in the country and then given a platform to practice. I started out speaking to large groups of teenagers. If you can speak to teens, you can speak to anyone! Only God could have taken this country girl and placed me in those circumstances. I am grateful for the journey. I know I have much further to go, but my heart is to use my voice to ignite passion in others for His truth and His word. Without that, we have nothing. I did earn a writing certificate in English in college and those skills have helped me in my writing. I enjoy blogging now and believe, eventually, another bible study will be born.

For information on the Hezekiah Bible Study, visit www.JaclynRowe.com.