

Series: Unlikely Heroes

SO THEY BUILT AND PROSPERED

2 CHRONICLES 14

Text: 2 Chronicles 14:7

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*⁷ Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. **So they built and prospered.***

Introduction:

What a testimony! “They built and prospered.” I hope someday that not only could that be said of me personally, but also as a pastor, and for this church.

The word, prosper, means to be or become profitable. I would like to become profitable to the Lord and His work. I would like to become a Pastor profitable to the Lord and His work. I would like this church to be profitable to the Lord and His work.

I believe that we can see in this passage of scripture and through the life of Asa how this can be accomplished in the life of every Christian.

Notice:

1. HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS (VS. 1-2)

2 Chronicles 14:1-2

¹ So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years. ² And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:

- A. Desired to please the Lord.
- B. Determined to please the Lord.
- C. Did that which pleased the Lord.

Note not only “His Righteousness” but also:

2. HIS REMOVAL (VS. 14:3-5, 15:8, 16)

2 Chronicles 14:3-5

³ For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: ⁴ And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. ⁵ Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

2 Chronicles 15:8

⁸ *And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, **he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim,** and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.*

2 Chronicles 15:16

¹⁶ ***And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove:** and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.*

- A. Removal was done Rigorously
- B. Removal was done Rapidly
- C. Removal was done without Respect

Note not only “His Righteousness and Removal” but also:

3. HIS RENEWAL (VS. 15:8)

2 Chronicles 15:8

⁸ *And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and **renewed the altar of the LORD**, that was before the porch of the LORD.*

Note:

- A. Dedication to the Lord.
- B. Desire to please the Lord.
- C. Determination to serve the Lord.

Note not only “His Righteousness, Removal and Renewal” but also:

4. REMINDER (VS. 14:4)

2 Chronicles 14:4

⁴ *And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.*

Notice

A. Set the example in his Direction (vs. 2)

2 Chronicles 14:2

² *And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:*

B. Gave illustration in his Demonstration (vs. 3)

2 Chronicles 14:3

³ *For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves:*

C. Guided his people through a Declaration (vs. 4)

2 Chronicles 14:4

⁴ ***And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.***

In other words, Asa practiced what he preached.

Note not only “His Righteousness, Removal, Renewal and Reminder” but also:

5. HIS READINESS (VS. 6-8)

2 Chronicles 14:6-8

⁶ *And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest. ⁷ Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered. ⁸ And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valour.*

- A. Precautions against the enemy
- B. Prepared for the battle
- C. Persistently on guard

Note not only “His Righteousness, Removal, Renewal, Reminder and Readiness” but also:

6. HIS RELIANCE (VS. 9-11)

2 Chronicles 14:9-11

⁹ And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. ¹⁰ Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. ¹¹ And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.

- A. Confronted the enemy
- B. Cried unto the Lord
- C. Confidence in the Saviour

This all resulted in God giving the victory

2 Chronicles 14:12-14

¹² **So the LORD smote the Ethiopians** before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled. ¹³ And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and **the Ethiopians were overthrown**, that they could not recover themselves; for **they were destroyed** before the LORD, and before his host; and they carried

away very much spoil. ¹⁴ ***And they smote all the cities round about Gerar;*** for the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.

Had this been the end of the story all would have been well.

I said that to say this.

It is possible for one to begin right and not end so well. Such was the case with Asa.

Note

Chapter 15 ends on an ominous note: “There was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa’s reign.”

2 Chronicles 15:19

¹⁹ *And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.*

While the country enjoyed peace for twenty more years, things change in the thirty-sixth year.

Look at 16:1:

2 Chronicles 16:1

¹ In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

Baasha is upset that so many of his people have gone south to worship in Judah so he decided to reinforce Ramah, a border town so that no one could leave or enter Judah.

It was like a barricade or an economic embargo, preventing both travel and trade from taking place.

Notice how Asa resounded.

Instead of believing God he decided to bribe the king of Syria and hired him as a paid terrorist to cause problems in some of the cities in Israel so that Baasha would withdraw from Ramah.

And, guess what?

His plan worked. Asa relied on his own resources and his own plans but he compromised.

Note:

- He used God's money out of the treasuries of the Temple.

We need to be careful that we don't use God's money for evil purposes.

- He hired a pagan king instead of praying.

Sadly, he purchased protection that God was offering for nothing. We know from 2 Chronicles 24:23 that Syria would cause Judah huge problems many years later:

2 Chronicles 24:23

²³ *And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus.*

Remember:

Just because something "works," it doesn't mean that God is blessing it.

It's easy to think that if something we do is successful, then it must be right.

This applies to the ministries and efforts of the church as well.

We must guard against doing what seems natural because what's natural isn't always what God wants.

Proverbs 16:25

²⁵ There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

This might have made good political sense and seemed like a smart strategy but Asa has now compromised which will lead to some fatal consequences.

He started his reign by leaning on God's Spirit and now he seems to have put trust in his flesh.

Paul addressed this with those at Galatia.

Galatians 3:3

³ Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Can you think of any area in your life where you have been compromising? Are you cutting corners anywhere?

Close:

I want to close noting some lessons from Asa's life:

1. Determine to follow God's directions right now.
2. Decide today how you will respond to the tests that will come tomorrow.
3. Confess any pride that you have.
4. Take spiritual slippage seriously.
5. Focus on your family. Thankfully Asa broke the cycle and was not as wicked as his father. And he left a legacy for his son Jehoshaphat who "did what was right in the sight of God." (2 Chronicles 20:32).

2 Chronicles 20:32

³² And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD.

6. Seek God when problems come instead of self.

One final lesson from Asa's life:

God is a God of grace. Asa wasn't 100% holy but he was still honored by his people when he died. In fact, his name appears in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:8.

Matthew 1:8

*⁸ And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram;
and Joram begat Ozias;*

Aren't you glad that God uses us despite our imperfections?