



Unit 2: What Matters Most

Sermon Series Title: Saints Are . . .

Sermon 2: Chasing After the Master

Bible Passage: 2 Chronicles 15:1-7

Background/Context

Chapter 14 recounts the beginning of Asa's spiritual reformation and national restructuring. Chapter 15 covers approximately twenty years and focuses on two main events. First, the prophecy by Azariah (15:1–8). God used various ways to speak to His people. He used dreams, signs, prophets, angels, and on special occasions He speaks for Himself. In this text, God sent the prophet Azariah to speak to Asa words of warning and encouragement. God knew what the king needed and when he needed it.

A. Stay with the Lord Always (2 Chron. 15:1, 2b-3, 7)

The nation experienced deliverance by the hand of the Lord. Good times have a way of helping individuals remember that God is their strong tower and refuge. However, the time of prosperity experienced by Judah could also foster the belief that the king and the nation made their own way through their own power. To dismiss this type mindset, God sent the prophet Azariah to warn Asa not to stray from Him. Azariah said "...but if you abandon him, he will abandon you" (v. 2b). This instruction rings true throughout the Bible. Through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord repeatedly told the nation that He would pronounce punishment on them for all of their wickedness and worship of idols made by their own hands (Jer. 1:16). Forsaking God is described, according to this passage, as worshipping false gods. The Bible gives the ultimate consequence of forsaking the Lord. "You have left me. This is the LORD's declaration. You have turned your back, so I have stretched out my hand against you, and destroyed you. I am tired of showing compassion" (Jer. 15:6).

As believers it's important to pray that we do not stray. Jesus taught His disciples to pray that they not be led into temptation. It's also important to be honest about our situations. There's a song that says, "Everything that happened to me that was good, God did it!" It's easy to stray from God when we forget to acknowledge that God did and continues to do everything for us. Talking, walking, running, breathing, hearing, seeing, tasting, and feeling are made possible by His sustaining power. We cannot do anything without Him because in Him we move, breath, and have our being.

Application Point: My father would often say "birds of a feather hang together." The point he made from that simple statement was that if you want to be smart, hang around smart people. My father was a wise man. Who, if any, are the individuals in your life that make it easy for you to stray from God and His Word? What can you do to avoid straying from God?

B. Seek the Lord Always (2 Chron. 15:2a, 4-5)

Not only was the king warned not to stray from the Lord, but he was also advised that “the Lord is with you, when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you” (v. 2a). God is not interested in second place in a believer’s life. As long as we are connected to Him through Bible study, prayer, worship, giving, etc., God remains with us. However, when a believer decides to put his personal purpose, plan, or will above the Lord’s, then the Lord will distance Himself. Furthermore, when we seek the Lord, we will find the Lord. If we seek the Lord with all our heart and soul, we will find him (Deut. 4:29; Jer. 29:13). God is not hiding from His creation. He desires to be known by the people He made.

Even when we sin, God makes it possible for us to repent and re-connect with Him. “...and (if) my people, who bear my name, humble themselves, pray and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14). The Lord is not interested in divided affections. He wants to be number one in the lives of His children. A believer’s love for God must surpass love for all others.

Application Point: How have you allowed your circumstances to stop you from seeking God daily? How can you prevent television shows, activities, and other people from hindering your walk with Christ? Draw closer to the Lord by seeking Him always.