

“POWER IN REPENTANCE”

Text: II Chronicles 15:1-19

Subject: There Is Power In Cooperating With God!

Illustration

1. II Chronicles chapter 15 introduces something that every dedicated Christian loves – revival!
2. It's a picture of how God speaks and how we can respond.
3. It's a revelation of how we can align ourselves with the purposes of God.
4. It's a record of how every person here can experience personal spiritual renewal.

Question: How does it all begin?

Answer: It begins in II Chronicles 14, during the reign of King Asa:

- Asa is one of five kings whom God used to bring revival to Judah.
- Judah would have 20 kings:
 - Five were bad
 - Ten were okay and
 - Five were outstanding
- The five outstanding kings were...
 1. Asa
 2. Jehoshaphat
 3. Joash
 4. Hezekiah
 5. Josiah
- During the reign of each of these five, there was a period of spiritual reformation.
- Five great awakenings in which Asa was the 1st to be saved.

Question: Why did God use Asa?

Answer: Not because he was **perfect**, but because he was **praying**:

II Chronicles 14:11

“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.”

Question: Did God respond to Asa's praying?

Answer: Yes – He did!

- In chapter 14:9-15 God gave Asa victory in battle over the Egyptians and Zerah.
- Chapter 14:13, 14 & 15 (read)
- God enabled Asa to recapture and rebuild the border cities.
- And even though God's people were greatly outnumbered, God answered prayer and intervened. (Like Dr. Dobbins says, “If you're on God's side and He's on your side, it doesn't matter who's on the other side.”)
- And on the heels of this mighty victory in II Chronicles 14,
- God comes along in chapter 15 and in essence says, “**There's still more**”.

In other words,

- Don't rest on your laurels Judah!
- Don't settle on your past Judah!
- Don't get caught unawares Judah!
- Don't forget your personal life Judah!
- Don't neglect tomorrow because you feel good today!

- There's still more ground to gain in this spiritual awakening (and journey).

Question: How many of you know that there is still more for God to do?

Question: How many of you still want God to do more in you?

Question: How many of you aren't ready to quit and give in to satan's opposition in your own life?

- If you're like me, and you want to see the Lord gain more ground,
- If you're not satisfied to just live and let die,
- If you're in pursuit of God, then document the process of revival under Asa.
- It's a blueprint for your own spiritual reformation. (It's a blueprint for personal change.)

Four Dynamics Of Spiritual Change

I. Faith (To Reach Out To God In Prayer) (Vs. 1-7)

Question: Who takes the initiative in a personal reformation?

Answer: The Lord does (v. 1) *"And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Obed"*.

Question: Who was it that initiated this personal transformation?

Answer: It was the Lord's doing!

- The Spirit of God came upon Azariah. (Why?)
- Because God had a message for Azariah to give to Asa.
- And Asa received this message from God (through Azariah) in v.2:

What's the message?

"If you seek the Lord, He will be found of you."

Notice the words:

"The Lord is with you while you are with Him and if you seek Him, he will be found of you."

- ◆ It speaks of desire
- ◆ It's a message based on three texts:
 1. Deuteronomy 4:29: *"If you seek the Lord you will find Him, if you seek Him with all your heart and all your soul."*
 2. Isaiah 55:6: *"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near."*
 3. Jeremiah 29:13: *"And ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart."*

In other words,

- God gives a prophetic Word through Azariah. (**What is it?**)
- Seeking the Lord is not an end in itself.
- But a God given means to be renewed in our relationship to Him.

In other words,

- We don't trust in our praying,
- But we pray to put our trust in the One to whom we are praying to.

We have a reminder to keep seeking, and in v. 7 – *"For your work shall be rewarded."*

II. Repentance To Remove Every Idol (v. 8)

Question: What happens when a person genuinely seeks the Lord?

Answer: That person will remove every questionable idol in their life.

(v. 8) *“And when Asa heard these words, he took courage and put away the abominable idols out of all the land...and renewed the altar of the Lord.”*

Question: What did Asa do to cooperate with God?

Answer: ♦ Three things that prepare the runway so that God can land His airplane.
♦ Three things that position us so God can work.

1. There was courage

(v. 8) *“When Asa heard these words he took courage.”*

In other words,

- Asa believed that God rewards the seeker.
- Asa believed that God would respond to him.
- Asa “took courage” or “perked up” with faith that God would honor true seekers.

Question: Do you have the courage to take God at His Word? Do you believe that God will honor you if you truly seek Him?

#1 – There Was Courage

2. There was repentance

(v. 8) Asa took courage and did what? “He put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin.”

Question: What is the essence of true spirituality?

Answer: Change!

Question: What is the fruit of true seeking after God?

Answer: Repentance.

Question: What did Asa do?

Answer: He prepared his heart to be God’s home!

- He didn’t say, “God, I’m sorry” and then go on his merry way without changing.
- He was just flat out honest about removing what needed removing.

In other words,

- Asa addressed everything that needed addressing.
- He practiced Philippians 2:12 which says, *“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”*
(The words “work out” are a farming term)
It means: “To clear away the ground and remove the rocks – to produce the best harvest.”

3. There was devotion (Courage – repentance - now devotion)

(v. 8) #1 – Courage

#2 – Remove every idol of the heart

#3 – “And renewed the altar of the Lord, that was before the porch.”

- After 60 years of service, the altar needed repair.
- It needed physical repair (and spiritual re-consecration).
- There was outward work (and inward work)
- It was a reflection of true “heart-felt” devotion.

III. Renewal Of Our Personal Altars (Vs. 9-14)

(v. 9) “Asa gathers everyone together.”

(v. 10) “They all gather at Jerusalem.”

(v. 11) “The people offer their offerings.”

But in verse 12:

“They entered into a covenant to seek the Lord with all their heart and soul.”

In other words

- Asa gathered multitudes from the tribes of Simeon, Ephraim and Manasseh.
- There was a corporate rally of the church.
- There was a covenant made which is a binding oath to serve the Lord alone.
- There was a pure resolve to leave where they were, and go where they could enjoy the worship of God unhindered.
- In v. 11, there was the rendering of true sacrifice.
- In v. 12, there was a resolve to leave no stone unturned.

IV. Reward In Receiving From God (v. 15)

“And all Judah **rejoiced** at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with their whole desire, and he was **found** of them, and the Lord gave them **rest** round about.”

Question: How did God honor those who prayed and obeyed?

Answer:

1. There was **rejoicing**

- The reward of a clear conscience is the Joy of the Lord.

2. There was **revelation**

- God revealed Himself to those who sought Him.
- Joyce Meyer said, “If we honor God with our time, God will honor us with His voice.” (Or, we’ll get to know Him better)

3. There was **rest**

- The Lord took care of all their worries when the people put the Lord in 1st place!!!

Conclusion: What’s the Blueprint?

1. A prophetic word of invitation (**Asa was receptive to Azariah’s message.**)
2. A removal of everything questionable (**Asa got radical with sin.**)
3. A renewal of our personal altar (**Asa committed himself to absolute obedience.**)
4. A rest beyond description (**Asa enjoyed the consequence and reward of a clear conscience before God.**)

Amen
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