

THE DANGER OF SELF-RELIANCE

(Lessons from the life and times of king ASA)

I KING 15:8-28

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Many a time man has tried to solve his problem by himself or by depending on fellow man instead of God and the result is usually nothing to write home about. Self-reliance is the quality of depending on oneself instead of relying on others. As believers our trust is to be on God at all times and to rely on God is to admit that self-reliance does not lead to the growth and security one desire or long to possess.

It is a terrible thing to see or hear of Children of God resolving to self-help to solve their problems especially after trusting on God for many years and thereby losing all they have labor for. They say the longer we are Christians though; we can slowly and subtly begin to feel less needy. Self-reliance can creep in, corrupting our awareness of our own corruption and awakening fresh confidence in our own energy and effort.

This is what happened to the Galatia brethren not long after embracing God's grace in the gospel, they began to build confidence in themselves and their own works again. False teacher had slipped in and were imposing old laws on these new believers, trying to destroy the seed Paul had planted by telling them that in addition to faith in the work of Christ, that the believers needed to be circumcised and add observance to old covenant- Gal 4:10; 6:12.

Also Simon relying on his money thought he could buy the gift of the Holy Spirit- Acts 8:18-20.

Self-reliance never offer us real meal, and eventually it can get us killed either physically or spiritually. See the parable of the rich man as told by Jesus in Luke 12:16-18. The scripture is clear that that striving on our own power and strength leaves our live without meaning.

After the great division of Israel during the reign of Rehoboam. Asa became the 3rd king of Judah. His father, Abijam only reign for three (3) years. Abijam was not a good king as the Lord Counts goodness-1 Kings 15:3. The notable thing about Abijam was that he managed to raise a good son as recorded in I Kings 15:4 as a result of God's promise to David.

Asa reign as king began peacefully. He removed many idols and decreed that the worship of God be followed. He strengthens the cities of Judah. He had one major battle with an army from Ethiopia during his 10th year as king of Judah.

Though he was out numbered about two-to-one, he turned to God and was saved- II Chronicles 14:1-6, 11-12. God promise Asa to be with him as long as he remained faithful- I Chronicles 15:1-7. As a result, Asa threw himself into purifying Judah. People began to flock him. Many left isreal to worshipping God in Judah. II Chronicles 15:8-9. They committed themselves to serving God- II Chronicles 15:12-15.

As a king, Asa did not allow family ties to stop him. He wasn't perfect, but he followed God with his heart- II Chronicles 15:16-17. During his reign, Judah experience peace for twenty five (25) years until Asa 35th year on the throne. The king of Israel, Baasha became frustrated with the numbers leaving his territory, so he closed the borders and began building a fortified city- II Chronicles 16:1. It is at this time that we see a change in Asa's attitude. Instead of relying on God's help, Asa took the wealth of God's house as well as his own and used it to bribe the king of Aram to attack Israel on the north. II Chronicles 16:2-5.

God sent a prophet to scold Asa. Asa didn't like the message so he threw the messenger into prison- II Chronicles 16:7-10.

A few years later, Asa feet began to give him trouble. He was still mad with God or at God and would not seek help from him. He sought doctors but not God and two years later he died.

There are a number of lessons to learn by Christians about the danger of self-reliance from the reign of Ass king of Judah.

First, God meant it when He said no other gods before him- Exodus 20:1-6. Asa removed many idols from Judah but 25years after turned to his wealth and that of the house of God to solve his problems. God is not referring to the worship of idols only, he expect his children to turn to Him in times of trouble. Worshipping God does not or cannot be in words only, it must be matched with the life lived- Jeremiah 7:4-11;

Today many of us think they can use their own wisdom and that is why you see or hear people trying to justify what laws they will or will not follow by saying we must adapt the Bible to modern society, Doesn't the society need to adapt itself to the ways of God? I Corinthians 3:18-20- **let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 19 for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; 20 and again, the Lord know the thought of the wise, that they are futile** NKJ. Even a family must not stand between a man and his God.

Secondly, Trusting God means; seeking God's solution in all things. King Asa strayed when he began solving his problems with his own solution. Christians are to trust God and not themselves- proverbs 3:5-7; ***trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct your paths. ⁷ do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the lord and depart from evil*** NJK

Christians are not called out of the world to direct their own paths or ways- Jeremiah 10:23; ***O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps*** NJK. Romans 12:16b- ***Do not be wise in your own opinion.***

Thirdly, be willing to listen to rebuke. To rebuke is an expression of sharp disapproval or criticism of someone because of their behaviours or actions. Asa was a fool for not listening to the messenger from God and for treating him with such contempt. It takes a wise man to listen to rebuke- Proverbs 13:1; ***a wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*** Learning from a rebuke will make a deeper and more lasting impression- luke 17:10. Christians must be willing to rebuke one another when we see one another going astray luke 17:3; ***take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.*** And such must be done in love, it shows true love- Proverbs 27:5; Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed.

Fourthly, be willing to repent of past mistake. Asa refused to repent and was angry with God. In luke 13:1-5, Jesus Christ received reports of evil done by Galileans by some that were present with Him. Jesus Christ used the occasion to warn them about their own needs. Most time we see the evils done by others and then congratulate ourselves for being better. Why is that, our own sin are always less than someone else's? We must realize that sin is sin. "Mr A" sin can keep him out of heaven just as much as "Mr C" can sin can keep him out of heaven. All men everywhere need to repent- Acts 17:30- ***Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now command all men everywhere to repent.***

Conclusion

The life of King Asa is an example to all of us of how easy it is to drift away from the Lord. Asa began his reign with a strong commitment to God, but as years went by his dedication faltered, bringing unnecessary trouble.

To be self-reliant is to become self-destruct. Children of God must realize that the number of years of been faithful to God does not count when he or she decide to help himself with his problem thereby going astray. Asa became unfaithful and failed to repent of his unfaithfulness that led to his stubbornness of not seeking Gods help but going about seeking helps from doctors.

Take note that without faith it is impossible to please God- Heb 11:6

As Gods own people, we must learn to rely on Him through the good and bad times- Jeremiah 17:5-6; *curse is the man who trust in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart depart from the Lord. 6 for he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited.*

Proverbs 28:26; He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

May God help us with the ability to always depend and rely on Him at all times or season in Christ name Amen!