

you are a guilty sinner deserving God's judgment, and trust Christ's death and resurrection as payment for your sin, God will forgive your sin and give you eternal life. By this, He will make you right with God.

- c) We then keep our heart right with God by fleeing sin. (2 Timothy 2:22) "**Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**"
- d) When we fail, we must confess our sins to God. (1 John 1:9) "**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**"

- 4) We can never become sinlessly perfect, but with these provisions, we can be completely right with God.

b. When our heart is right, we can trust God

- 1) Asa had a perfect heart when it came to idols, but at this junction in his life, he failed to trust God. He stopped trusting God and relied on human help to fight his battle.
- 2) God is looking to show Himself strong for those whose hearts are right with Him. If we will trust Him, He is able to help us. We must seek His help in prayer. We must depend on Him to do as He sees best.

Conclusion: Keeping our hearts perfect before God is not impossible, but it takes commitment. God has shown himself strong for us many times, but we so soon to forget. We must remember that God is continually looking for opportunities to come to our aid. Our dependence on him is not a bother to Him, but a blessing. Our part is to stay completely right with God and to call on Him in every time of need.

If you have tried to work out a problem on your own without seeking God's help, you need to ask God's forgiveness and then keep your heart perfect toward Him.

If you have not yet trusted Christ to forgive your sin and save your soul from hell, I urge you to do so today. Then you too can have a perfect heart toward God and you can trust Him to meet your needs.

Song: Cast Your Burden on the Lord (bulletin)

Looking for Opportunities

26 March 2023 AM – 2 Chronicles 16:9 – Trials – Scott Childs

Introduction: Asa, the king of Judah, was the great-grandson of Solomon "**Asa did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, as did David his father.**" [See Chart] He removed the idols his fathers had made, 1Ki 15:11. He removed Maachah, his mother, from being queen because she worshipped idols. When millions of Ethiopian troops invaded the land, he cried to the Lord for help. The Lord fought for him, and smote the enemy. The Prophet Azariah counselled him not to forsake the Lord, and the king and his people entering into a covenant to seek the Lord. Later, Baasha, king of Israel began to build Ramah, a fortified city only a few kilometres from Jerusalem. Instead of depending on the Lord as he had done when the Ethiopians invaded, Asa hired the help of Benhadad king of Syria. This lack of trust in the Lord cost him dearly. Read 2 Chronicles 16:7-9.

Many times in life, we face troubles, obstacles, and decisions that greatly trouble us. We may feel fearful or overwhelmed. If we are not walking close to the Lord, we may make foolish choices, as Asa did.

Transition: In verse 9, we find three reasons that we too ought to rely on the Lord in times of trouble.

We ought to rely on the Lord in times of trouble because...

1. God has Shown Himself Strong in the Past

a. The Bible often records God's help.

- 1) God protected Noah during the flood.
- 2) God delivered Israel by plaguing Egypt.
- 3) He took Israel across the Red Sea on dry ground.
- 4) God answered Elijah's prayer with fire from heaven.
- 5) Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Many more.

b. God had displayed His strength for Asa.

- 1) In 2 Chronicles 14:9-12, we read that God had shown himself strong for Asa.
- 2) God miraculously delivered his armies from the enemies.

c. God has shown himself strong in our past.

- 1) Make a list of great things God has done for you. This is important because we are so quick to forget!

- 2) Has He protected you during travel?
- 3) Have you experienced His peace amid the storms of life?
- 4) Has God given you wisdom when requested?
- 5) What specific prayers has He answered for you?

We ought to rely on the Lord in times of trouble because...

2. God still Desires to Show Himself Strong

a. His eyes are looking over the whole earth

- 1) God is continuously searching back and forth. God's eyes miss nothing.
 - a) (Proverbs 5:21) **"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings."**
 - b) (Proverbs 15:3) **"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."**
- 2) God is searching the whole earth. Think of that. The Creator of the universe, the Sovereign of all, is looking right now for opportunities to show Himself strong. He is looking into the hearts of people on earth. He is watching you and me. Though we have sinned, God still loves us.
- 3) At the same time, God is not a genie who gives us all our wishes. He sometimes allows trials and hardships to increase our dependence on Him. Yet, our text indicates that sometimes we limit God's help because our heart is not right with Him.

b. He is able and wants to show His greatness.

- 1) God is all-powerful. Why do we forget that? He created the universe! We sing, **"God can do anything ..."**, but we live as if he can't. Nothing is impossible for God.
 - a) Note God's words to 90-year-old Sarah. (Genesis 18:14) **"Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."**
 - b) God assured Jeremiah that Israel would return from Babylon. (Jeremiah 32:27) **"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?"**
 - c) The angel assured Mary of this when he said she would bear a son without knowing a man. (Luke 1:37)

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

- 2) God is watching us with a longing to display His strength to help us. It isn't His duty; it is His earnest desire.

A little boy and his father were driving down a country road on a beautiful spring afternoon. Suddenly out of nowhere a honeybee flew in the car window. Since the little boy was deathly allergic to bee stings, he became petrified. His father quickly reached out, grabbed the bee, squeezed it in his hand, and then released it. But as soon as he let it go, the young son became frantic as it buzzed by the little boy.

The father sensed his son's terror. Once again, he reached out his hand, but this time he pointed to this hand. There, stuck in his skin, was the stinger of the bee. "You see this?" he asked. "You don't need to be afraid anymore. I've taken the sting for you." Source: Illustrations Unlimited, James s. Hewett

- 3) That is how God longs to treat us. He wants to help us, but we must let Him.

We ought to rely on the Lord in times of trouble because...

3. God's Requirement is Reasonable.

a. God is looking for a perfect heart.

- 1) How can we have a perfect heart?
- 2) The word **"perfect"** means complete or entire. God wants our hearts to be completely right with Him.
- 3) Initially, this poses a problem. We were born with sinful hearts. (Jeremiah 17:9) **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** Only God can make a sinful heart righteous. When Christ died for our sins, He fully paid our punishment for us. God is now able to forgive all who place their trust in Him. When a sinner repents and trusts Christ, He then declares him righteous.
 - a) (John 3:16) **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."** That is trusting Christ to save.
 - b) (2 Corinthians 5:21) **"For [God] hath made [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."** Christ paid for your sin. If you will humbly repent, admitting that