

Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – June 6, 2010

What Are You Looking For?

“Now the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Obed. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him ‘Hear me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.’” II Chronicles 15:1-2

A college buddy of mine once told me, “May peace, prosperity, and happiness follow you all the days of your life.....and never catch up with you!” I took it in the jovial spirit with which it was given. I was certain that he wasn’t wishing anything harmful upon me...or upon the many others he foisted his benediction. People are searching all the time for something better. Peace, prosperity, and happiness are often treasures they seek. When these goals are not realized they are disappointed and often despair with no real hope of achieving their desires. Is it a lack of faith? Is it false expectations? We have been taught that we are due the good things in life...and if we are smart and work hard we can achieve them. The churches of prosperity preachers are full to the brim precisely because people are looking for the key to possessing these temporal satisfactions.

Asa, the King of Judah had been zealous to remove the idolatry that plagued the land he ruled. He removed the altars of foreign gods, destroyed the places of pagan worship, and cut down the wooden images. He sought God’s will and direction before building up the cities of the land and he acknowledged that the good things which the land enjoyed came from God alone.

Was all peaceful and prosperous? Was everyone happy all the time? Certainly not! Sin still infected the lives of God’s people and they had the daily struggles and burdens that are common to men. However, as long as they sought the LORD, He was with them in all they faced and granted them His blessing in all they undertook. Asa’s army numbered five hundred thousand men. They were severely outnumbered by the million man army and chariots of Zerah the Ethiopian. Yet, Asa commended the

battle into the LORD's hand and He struck down the enemies of His people before them. So great was the defeat that the people of Judah plundered the enemy cities and God delivered over to them an abundance of spoils from the battle. Thus Azariah's reminder....this is God's work—not man's!

What are you looking for? What overwhelming burdens are facing you? Earthly solutions will never do. If you think that temporal satisfactions will give you peace, prosperity, and happiness....you will only be left disappointed. Maybe you are looking in the wrong place! God's word for Asa through Azariah is still God's word for us. As long as we seek the LORD, He will be found....and He will be with us. When we forsake the LORD, He will forsake us. Isn't it time for God's people to remove all the foreign gods from their lives? Isn't it time for us to strike down the altars of foreign worship in our own lives that prevent us from worshiping the only true God? Isn't it time for us to start searching in the right place for godly solutions? We won't be disappointed for God truly desires to bless us and give us contentment in Him...even in the times of hardship and trial.

- “Remember: God has promised to come to us through His Word and Sacraments. That is where we will find Him. That is where we receive His blessings—both eternal and temporal.
- Remember: Others are also searching. We know that they can be possessors of great blessings through Christ Jesus also. What are we waiting for? Let's share the good news of Jesus with others!

How blessed we are to be the people of God. He has chosen us to be in this place. He has prepared us for this time. He has equipped us for service to Him. **Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you wait on someone else to do it...it will never get done!** God bless you in the growth of your faith and in service to Him and His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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