

When a Man of God Loses His Faith

by David Wilkerson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God in our lives and staying diligent in our walk with Him to maintain God's favor and presence.

Duration: 59:20

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 14:2-15, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Faith And Doubt", "Spiritual Decline"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of King Asa from the book of 2 Chronicles. King Asa was initially a godly and righteous man who sought the Lord and experienced God's favor. However, in his later years, he lost his faith and turned away from God. The preacher emphasizes three important lessons from this story: firstly, even good and holy men can be overcome by lust and end up ruined; secondly, those who do not prioritize prayer and seeking God will experience turmoil and lack of peace in their lives; and thirdly, the secret to having God's favor is to diligently seek Him and rely on Him in all things. The preacher urges the listeners to be diligent in their faith and not to become too busy or distracted by worldly projects.

Transcript

Please open your Bible to 2 Chronicles 14 and leave it open on your lap. Please don't race ahead trying to find my message. You won't find it.

I have to show it to you. 2 Chronicles 14 chapter, just leave it open on your lap. My message today, when a man of God loses his faith.

When a man of God loses his faith. Now there's a story in this chapter that chills me to the bone. Chills me to the bone.

It's shaking me to the core of my soul. It's a story of a very godly, righteous man, who lost his faith after many faithful years of ministry to the Lord. A man mighty in God who lost his faith in his final days.

Now Paul the Apostle is right that these stories were recorded in the Bible for our learning. And they are examples for us who live at the end of time. The scripture says, then we had better take heed to what we hear.

And I have taken heed to what I've heard from the Holy Spirit. And I speak having trembled at the word God has given to me this morning. His name is King Asa and he started out right, the scripture says.

Look at verse 2, chapter 14, verse 2. And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. In the eyes of the Lord his God. Now here's the mark of a truly godly, holy man.

He understands that he lives, he walks, he moves under the very eyes of an all-seeing God. That there can be absolutely nothing hidden in his life. There can be no flirtation with sin.

There can be nothing that is unlike the honor of Jesus Christ. The honor of the Lord God to whom he serves. There can be nothing because he understands as David did the Lord in heaven.

His eyelids try or test the children of men. Asa said, I will walk righteous. I'll live a clean and holy life because I know his eyes are on me every hour of the day.

That there's no place to hide. There's nothing in me that I do in the matter of iniquity that can be hidden from the almighty eyes of the Lord. For his eyes are upon the ways of man.

He sees all his goings. There's no darkness, no shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. There is no place that a man of God or a woman of God who wants to be used of God can hide sin.

There can be no dark place. There can be nothing that book. The life has to be an open book.

And this is what Isaiah says of him. He did right in the eyes of God. This sense, this constant knowledge that God is looking at me.

God sees everything I do. Asa knew that God brings to light the hidden things of darkness and exposes the counsels of the heart. He knows that there's nothing hidden from the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Now, this man knew he was called by God to a special ministry, to a backslidden church, a backslidden people. He's a young man. When he comes to power, the scripture says, he made a decision somewhere in his young life.

He made a decision that he would be a seeker after God. Now, I believe that this young man studied the life of his great grandfather, Solomon. Because they had the chronicles at the time.

And I believe this young man because it's apparent he set his heart to seek God. And a seeking heart will always go. I was called to preach when I was eight years old.

And my father was preaching to my grandfather. And I was always intrigued by the work I heard of God in the life of my grandfather. I picked up everything I could.

And I know in my heart that Asa studied from the chronicles the stories of his great grandfather, Solomon. He heard of his wisdom. He read his proverbs.

And he heard and read of the majestic way that he approached the holy of holies, and the majesty, the awe, and the respect, and the honor. He read of the blessings of God of this man, how the whole world came to hear his wisdom. I'm sure he was deeply moved by the stories of his great grandfather.

And he read what his great grandfather had written. Lest not after a strange woman, you'll be taking fire in your bosom. Whosoever commits adultery destroys his own soul.

An adult will bring on himself dishonor, shame, reproach, and poverty. His reproach will never be taken away. Her steps, the adulterous steps, lead straight to hell.

He read this, and then he learned that his great grandfather's own lust for strange and different women cost him everything. And that his reproach was still there, written on the pages of the chronicles. He's the man who said, your reproach will never be removed if you give yourself to fornication, and you give your body over to lust and to adultery, and you flirt and play with these things.

His own great grandfather said that a man, the wisest man who ever lived on the earth other than Jesus Christ, preached this powerful message, and yet he himself, in his last days, lost his faith, lost his touch of God, and lost his anointing. It cost him everything. His reproach was still with him.

A total loss of confidence in God turned to idolatry. Asa must have wondered, how could a man who starts so right and has such an anointing in his life, how is it possible that such a spiritual heritage, a clear revelation, such gifts in a man, how could he blow it at the end? What happened to my great grandfather, who ends up his life saying it was all vanity, vexation? It all had no meaning. And I know that grip to me says, I don't want to be that man.

I'm not going the way my great grandfather went. But he also knew what happened to his own grandfather, Rehoboam. The Chronicle said of him, he did evil because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.

And he saw the results of not seeking God. The Scripture said, Rehoboam had war continually all the days of his life. There was no divine order.

His whole family, everything in the kingdom, everything he touched, everything he did was wrong. There was no divine order. There was nothing but turmoil because he would not become a seeker of God.

He was not a man of prayer. At the same time, this young man had the good example of Abijah, his father. He had to have been there with his father when 800,000 Israelites declared war and came against Judah.

And this small army of Abijah, his father, his father was a praying man, a man who sought God. His mother, Mahat, was Absalom's daughter. She was born and raised in an adulterous, rebellious home.

And she was an idol worshiper, but his father was a righteous man. And he was there on the mountaintop when the Israelites came around and ambushed him from behind. And he heard his own father say, In God we trust.

The battle is the Lord's. We have sought the Lord, and He alone is our captain. Those were the very words that he heard.

And something happened in this young man's life. He said, I give my life to God. I'm going to be a prayer warrior.

I'm going to be a man of prayer. I'm going to seek God the rest of my life. And he set his heart to seek God.

Because they relied on the Lord God of their fathers, God delivered them. So Asa comes to the throne having three great lessons set before his heart. First of all, that good and holy men who are overcome by their lust, good and holy men who give themselves to fornication and adultery end up ruined.

Loss of God's presence and anointing. They end up miserable, failures. They lose their faith.

Secondly, men who do not set their hearts to pray and seek God in everything end up with no peace. They end up with war on all sides, turmoil in every walk of life. No divine order in their lives or their homes.

Thirdly, he learned that the secret to having God's favor, the secret to victory over all the powers of hell is simple and available to anyone who desires it. And that is simply to seek God with everything that is in you. He said, I will seek God with all that is in my heart.

He commands Judah to seek the Lord God of your fathers. And then his own testimony was this. Because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought Him, He has given us rest on every side so they built and prospered.

Because we have sought God, He himself has put everything in order. When he prayed, God spoke to him about his own mother who was queen, that she had an idol on a hillside. He went and destroyed and stamped out that idol and took her away from the queenship and set her aside.

He loved her because he said, you're no longer queen, you have idolatry in your heart. Because when you pray, God straightens out your home. God straightens out your business.

He straightens out everything. There's a divine order that comes to the church, that comes to the home when you're seeking the face of almighty God. Divine order.

Because we have sought the Lord, He's given us rest on every side and they built and prospered. But praying men, godly men, those who seek God with all their heart are not immune to attacks from the enemy. And an enemy attacks, rises against this godly man.

The largest invading army recorded in history. The largest in history. A million man army of Ethiopians come against him.

300 iron chariots. The battle was set in the great valley. And the Bible says in verse 10, Asia went out against him.

He went out against this army. But I want to tell you something. He had no other, Asia had no other war plan but to pray and seek God.

None whatsoever. Look at chapter 14, verse 11. Beginning to read at verse 11.

And Asia cried, verse 10. Then Asia went out against him. And they set the battle in a way in the valley of Zephathah and Mereshep.

And Asia cried unto the Lord his God and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help. Whether with many or with them who have no power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee.

And in thy name we go against this multitude, O Lord. Thou art our God. Let not man prevail against thee.

So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asia and before Judah. And the Ethiopians fled. No other plan.

No other strategy but then to seek the face of God. Now, where did this man get this spirit of rest that was upon him? He went into this battle without turmoil. He faced this, the Bible said he rested in the Lord.

There was a calm, there was a peace. Where did he get it? He set his heart to seek the Lord. He was a man of prayer.

And, folks, he did it in the time when God said there's no war. There was peace in the land. There was prosperity.

They were building. Everything was peaceful. There was no emergency.

There was no crisis. Oh, many, many of God's people pray in crises. Every time trouble comes, they run to the secret place and cry out to God, that's fine.

That's all in good order. But, folks, the man who really wins the battle, the man who's ready to face anything that the devil throws out of hell, is the man or woman that's been shouting, God, when there's no crisis, when everything is well, when there seems to be blessing and prosperity, that man is diligent before God and seeks His face. And that's what Asa did.

He sought the Lord with all of his heart. And then he's on the hilltop and he sees a million-man army. He is not coward.

A praying man is as bold as a lion. There's no demon, there's no devil in hell that will scare him. If he's praying in faith, so the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa.

And they returned to Jerusalem with great spoil. And as he's marching toward Jerusalem, God sends a prophet out to intercept him. Now, why would God send a prophet with a warning to a man who's just won the greatest victory in his career, in his life? Everybody's shouting, they're praising the Lord, they're giving God glory.

Even Asa's praising God because he trusted the Lord and because he trusted God gave him the victory. But here comes a prophet and stands before him face to face with a loving warning. You know what the Bible said of Jerusalem, of Israel? Jerusalem waxed fat, grew prosperous and forgot God.

And God understands the danger of those who love Him, those who are holy, those who are godly. The danger of becoming weary and relaxing and becoming spiritually lazy after the greatest victories. My dad taught me that when I was a teenager.

He said, when you go out and you preach and God blesses you and you see souls saved, watch out. You're in the most dangerous place you can be after your greatest victories. Azariah, the prophet, comes to him and says, look at chapter 15, verse 1, The Spirit of God came upon Azariah, the son of Odeb.

See, they're now coming into Jerusalem with this great spoil and bounty after victory. The Spirit of God comes on Azariah, the son of Odeb. And he went out to meet Asa and said unto me, hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin, the Lord is with you, while you be with him.

If you seek him, he will be found of you. But if you forsake him, he will forsake you. Now listen, why would God send a man with that message to a godly praying man? Because God foresaw what was going to happen in this man's heart.

He foresaw that this man, in his blessings, in his prosperity, would wane in his love. That somehow pride would arise in him, confidence in his own flesh. He would leave the secret closet.

He would try to ride the crest of his reputation as a praying godly man. And he would lose the anointing, and eventually lose his faith. And the Lord knew that potential.

The Lord foresaw the danger laid ahead. And he comes to him lovingly and says, now look, Asa, you've come this far by faith. You've come this far by staying on your faith before God.

You bring everything to God. You brought everything to prayer. And you trusted the Lord.

And because of that, you're blessed. And he is saying, you know, if you'll continue in this path, if you'll continue being a seeker after God, if you'll stay on your knees, God will continue to bless you. You'll have his favor.

You'll have divine order in your home and in your kingdom and in your life. But if you neglect it, if you go the way Jerusalem has gone over its past history, if you go like your great-grandfather and your grandfather, if you turn your back and stop seeking my face, I'm going to lift my hand, I'll lift my favor. And that word, forsake, means to relinquish, to let go.

He said, if you let go of me, if you no longer cleave to me, if you no longer trust me with everything that is in you, then he said, I'll have to let go, in the way of favor and blessing and anointing upon your life. He goes on. For a long season Israel has been without the true God, without a teaching priest and without law.

But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel and sought them, he was found of them. He said, Asa, check your chronicles. Check from the very beginning.

Every time people had their homes messed up, every time there were problems, every time the enemy tried to come and destroy the plan of God, if they would fall on their face and return to the secret causes, if they would learn to call on me once again, I was found of them every time. Not one time did I fail to respond to those who set their hearts to seek me. Look at history.

In those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexation were upon the inhabitants of the countries. Nation was destroyed of nation, city of city, for God did vex them with all adversity. So be strong.

Therefore, let not your hands be weak, for your works will be rewarded. What do you think? Asa, I bring a word from God's throne to you. Be diligent now.

Be diligent more than you've ever... You're going to need God more than you've ever needed him now. You've had a great victory. God has blessed you.

God has blessed you so, but now you're going to need him. You're going to be tested like you've never been tested in your life. Now, God wants to reward you.

God has plans for you. But be careful unless you get so busy, unless you get to building and into projects, unless your family, unless your ministry, unless other things come in and track you and take your time, the anointing will lift. The favor will lift.

The divine order will be gone. And you'll just be like every other generation that has failed, lost their faith. But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord, God eventually sought him.

He was found of them. If you'd have gone to Asa after this and said, Asa, what's the secret of your blessing and favor of God? God's favor's on you. Folks, you couldn't tell when God's got his hand on somebody.

You see the favor of God. You see, yes, many of the afflictions of the righteous, but you see God stopped every war. There's a war, but God brings a war to a conclusion.

God, by his grace, brings mercy and blessing. He brings strength to take, to lay hold of the promises of God, to see them through their toughest and roughest times, and those wars cease. He makes it all wars to cease.

Many of the afflictions of the righteous, but God delivers them out of them all. There's a difference, and you can see the divine order. And if you'd ask him where did this divine order come from, he wouldn't point to his half-million-man army.

He wouldn't point to all the buildings he'd built and all the walls he'd built and all of the inventions that he had invented. He wouldn't point to any of that or of his own ability. He would say, the secret is, I go to my closet and I pray.

I seek God, and in prayer, he tells me what to do, where to go, and he gives me promises. That's all there is, no other secret than that. I hear talk nowadays of church growth.

We've got armies of young experts running all over the world with their charts on how to bring people into the house of God. And some say, you've got to have flags, and march down with flags and wave the flags, and all kinds of charts and skills on how to be people-friendly and bring in the people without offending them. Most of that is nauseating to the heart of God.

But let me tell you something. You show me a pastor or pastors. You show me Sunday school teachers, workers, Christian workers, car members, whoever it may be.

You show me those who have a call of God in their heart, shut in with God daily, diligent and fervent in prayer, and I'll show you a place of attraction. I'll show you a place, I'll show you true biblical growth. Verse 9, chapter 15.

And he gathered all Jude and Benjamin, the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasset, and came out and out of Simeon. And they fell to him out of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with them. So they gathered themselves together, Jerusalem in the third month.

Listen to what it says. They fell out to him. This man of prayer.

This man who spoke because he came from the throne. They fell out of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with them. It was not great preaching.

There was no threats. There was no army trying to gather them. But there was a fire burning in Jerusalem at the throne.

There was a man of prayer. And people came from all over Baxton, Israel to be a part of what God was doing in Jerusalem because God was moving by His Spirit because there was a man on His face. And because it set the example, all of Israel had called for a covenant and they covenanted to seek God with all of their heart.

The Bible says they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul. And they sought Him with their whole desire. And He was found of them and the Lord gave them rest round about.

And everybody came and said, when you walk into Jerusalem now, you feel the Spirit of God. There is rest and there is peace in the land. Nobody is fighting.

There is unity. There is joy in the land. Why? Because they had set their hearts, their whole soul and their mind to seek God.

Folks, it's one thing to seek God when we have somebody trying to build 50 stories over us. Yes, that's a crisis and we need to lay hold of God. It's one thing to pray when there is sickness or disease that strikes your family or an accident and trouble.

Yes, that's fine. But what God desires more than anything and I think what blesses the heart of God in heaven is that those in their good times, when all is well, they are not parked in front of a television set watching some filth. They are not foolishly laughing at some program.

They are taking special loving time alone with God. They are praying for their families, building up faith for the hour of tribulation. They are seeking the face of God and God is bringing divine order on all sides.

And they know the secret of it. And they say, I'm not going to let go of it. I know why God is blessing me.

I know why there is peace in my home. I know why God is blessing my marriage. I know what's happening.

I talked to a pastor not too many months ago whose family was in great turmoil. And he was told, and I heard it told to him, if you'll seek God with all your heart, you'll get a hold of God by faith now and pray this thing, God will put your family in order. God will heal your marriage.

And that pastor began to pray and seek God. God began to melt all of his family. He started a healing process.

But it blew up in his face. And in a conversation with me not too long ago, I said, I can tell you what happened. And I said, you know it.

He said, let me tell you what happened. You got too busy. You saw God moving.

You were praying, you were seeking God. And God was healing. God was doing a miracle in your family, in your home.

And you got too busy. You don't pray. You don't read your Bible.

You don't seek God anymore. He said, that's right. And he said, because I haven't been seeking God, I end up blaming God for my problems.

And because I'm not seeking God and blaming God, and now I've opened my heart to temptations that I've never experienced in years. And it goes down and down and down because I'm no longer seeking the face of God. Every time I go out to preach for a conference, I am asked to preach about marriage.

Because many ministers' marriages, their families, they're in great trouble. There's divorce, there's turmoil in so many ministerial homes now. And I'm asked to preach on it.

I don't have a special message. God has people who God uses specifically for that, and they're calling. I don't have a special message for ministers, and they keep asking.

I'm sorry, I don't have one, but let me tell you something. I know one thing, sir. If your family, your pastor, your minister, your Christian worker, your family is in trouble, if you're not a praying man, no amount of preaching, no amount of teaching, no amount of counseling, nothing's going to get through to you, nothing's going to do the job until you yourself get on your face before God will lay a hold of heaven.

All my preaching, I could preach the most powerful message God could ever give a man on earth about marriage and how to get your marriage healed. But if that husband or wife is not willing to go home and turn off the television or take some godly, precious time alone with God and pray in faith and take authority over the devil in their home, no amount of preaching, no amount of screaming from the Pope is going to change anything. This godly man who started out so right ended up losing his faith in God's favor and His anointing.

He'd been warned by Azarius that the height of his blessing, having just defeated the world's largest army, having spent years seeking God, years of doing only what God had told him to do, it was then that God had warned him. Let's skip now from this great battle, this test, where he comes home when Azarius prophesied to him, if you seek Him, He'll stay with you. If you forsake Him, He'll forsake you.

And for a season, he had such hatred for sin. There was a genuine revival in the land. But somewhere along the line, something happened in this man's life.

We skip to the 36th year of his reign. He's now in his mid-60s, according to as best I can tell from those who search out these things. He's in his earlier mid-60s.

The 36th year of his reign. And another enemy arises against Judah. About 15 years have gone by since the great revival, since the warning from the prophet.

And now the king of Israel comes and just five miles from Jerusalem, he sets up, he takes the city, captures it and fortifies it to stop the trade caravans coming and going to Jerusalem, trying to cut off all trade. And it was a threat to the survival of Judah and Jerusalem. This man, who at one time would never make a move without seeking God, this man who was so godly, had such faith in the Lord, looks at this enemy at his gate.

He doesn't even counsel with the Lord this time. Doesn't even go to the Lord. Not one mention of prayer was seeking the face of God.

And we find him now setting out his own plan. He goes into the temple and he strips it all of its gold and silver. He goes to the princes and says, I want your gold and silver.

I want all the riches you have. And he gathers together a horde of silver and gold. And he sends an ambassador to the king of Syria.

This is Israel's deadliest enemy. Enemy God hated. The great enemy that God was now planning to destroy.

God had a plan to end once and for all the invasions of Israel and Syria against Judah. God had a plan in place. You'll see it revealed by a prophet, another prophet that comes to him.

And he sends his ambassador and he bribes the king of Syria. He said, I want you to go against Israel. Declare war on them.

I want my city back. And his bribery, his plan of bribery, his skillful political maneuvering succeeds. Israel abandons the city.

Stops its declaration of war against Judah and against Asia. And Asia sits back and he feels quite comfortable in what he has done. He didn't need God this time.

He had his own plan. But God was incensed. God was totally displeased because he had not trusted in the Lord his God.

Chapter 16, please. Verse 7. You see, he's just succeeded in his plan. And at that time, Hineni, the seer or the prophet, came to Asia, king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubens a huge host with very many chariots and horsemen, yet because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand? For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of those whose heart is perfect. That means cleaving toward him, the heart that cleaves to him. Herein thou hast done foolishly, therefore henceforth thou shalt have warts.

Look at me, please. God sends a prophet and said, You've played the fool. And look at the next verse.

Then Asia, verse 10, Asia was rocked with the seer and put him in a prison house and he was in a rage with him because of this thing and Asia oppressed some of the people at the same time. Now I want you to listen very, very closely. I think of George Miller, great man of faith, England.

He was not an ordained minister, but God put it on his heart to care for orphans and through this prayer alone, through nothing but prayer, this man prayed daily. He said the secret of his ministry was that he sought God daily with all his heart and he determined to have a conscience clear of offense toward God and man. A clear conscience and stay on my knees.

And he raised up orphanages that cared for more than 2,000 orphans at a time. And when he's 70 years of age, God came to George Miller and said, You've been a man of prayer, but now I want you to pray more than you've ever prayed because I've got something else. I've got something for your last days that you couldn't conceive.

I want you to go all over the world and set pastor's souls on fire. At 70 years of age, this man renewed his prayer life. This man sought God as he never sought Him.

And I want you to know, if you know the story of George Miller, even at 95 he was still preaching. He traveled for 25 years around the world and stirred and changed the lives of thousands of ministers because he stayed on his face. He didn't miss out.

He didn't lose his faith. He didn't lose his anointing because he stayed on his face before God. And yet I can tell you the story after story of men of God who've been used, who had anointing, who were blessed

of God, who were men of prayer, who were prophets.

And in their older age, in their mid-60s, and in their 70s, and I've been with some of them. And all I hear are stories of old time religion or old revivals and there's no new word because the man is sitting in front of a TV set now. He's not on his face.

And yet he wants to be respected for what he was and what he had. And all I hear is something of the past. He doesn't set my soul on fire.

But when a man comes to this pulpit or any pulpit and I'm sitting in the congregation, and this should be true of every one of us. When a man's been siding with God, you'll know he's been with Jesus and there'll be something touch your heart before you walk out. But not so with this man.

He'd lost his faith. He was no longer a man of prayer. And now he's doing his own thing, his own way, trying to work out his problems by himself.

Here in verse 10, he's in a rage. A prophet came to him and said, because you've relied on the flesh, you're not a man of prayer anymore and you were warned. Now you're going to have nothing but turmoil the rest of your life.

Why is he in a rage? Why did he throw the prophet in jail? Why did he start oppressing the godly people who were shocked at this? I'll tell you why he's in a rage. They're standing before him as a man who represents everything he once was. They're standing before him as a mirror.

Here's a man who has very consciously and evidently been siding with God because he speaks the heart of God. And it so strikes him and it so angers him because he remembers what God told him. He remembered how he walked just like this man.

It's sad to hear one day an old preacher who had committed adultery. God had lifted anointing. He was in poverty.

Everything in his life messed up. His home, his life is everything in a mess. And his only thought is count the days till he dies.

A young minister came to me once. He said, Brother Dave, I don't know what to do. He had moved into the city and just overnight built a great church.

And in that city was an older man in his 60s. A man who in that same city years ago had been such a man of prayer and raised up a great church himself. This man had power and authority with God.

He was known and loved and respected all over the city because he was a man of prayer and faith with God. But over the years he got so busy in his own affairs, he got so busy in his own projects, he no longer saw God. He stood in the pulpit with borrowed messages.

We get something from a book and stand and deliver it to the people. And this young man moved, he said, Pastor Dave, I've got a problem. I love this man.

I've respected and loved him for years. But now he's angry at me. There's a bitterness toward me and I don't understand why.

And I told him, I said, I'll tell you why, because you're representing everything that this man had. It's everything he lost and you have it now because you stayed on your knees. And this young man I'm talking about is a man of prayer.

He's a man of diligent prayer and seeking the face of God. He's one of the strongest praying young men I know. I had a chance to speak to that pastor.

God gave me a few hours with him. We were walking the street and I've never heard such harshness in my life. He said, bless God, my church knows who's boss in our place.

I'm the boss. He said, anybody want to cross me, I show them the door. You see, that's what happens when you don't seek God.

There's a meanness. There's a self-pity. You see, this man, his whole time was giving me advice how to pastor Times Square Church.

Because you see, he wanted me to look at him as the man he was. He wanted me to listen to the wisdom he once had. He wants to change me and affect my life because once he had something that would work.

But now all I hear is noise. All I hear is something. I hear this meanness.

I hear this cruelty. And I told that young man, I said, just love him and pray for him. And folks, you know what the pastor, the last thing he said, he said, I can't wait till I retire.

And I thought to myself, Lord, rush the day. There's poor people. The poor people that sit under that backslidden Eisa ministry.

And Eisa in the 39th verse 12, his reign was diseased in his feet until his disease was exceeding great. Yet in his disease, he sought not the Lord but to the physicians. Now this man spent his last two years in nothing but pain and agony.

He had a disease in his feet. We don't know what it is. Now this is not an indictment against doctors.

What the real indictment is here is that in that time in the Eastern culture, the doctors primarily were nothing but mystics and charmers who used potions and enchantments from the devil. There's nothing to it. All you have to do is read as far as it says, and he sought not the Lord.

Stop right there. You don't have to go any further. You know what his heart is.

Forget the doctor. It's no indictment against doctors. God gives doctors wisdom.

We have godly doctors in this house. God bless every one of them. I know that every doctor that's in this house, you know that you can't do anything.

God does all the healing. A true doctor knows that God does the healing. He sought not the Lord in his last days.

Now I started this message by saying that this story chills me to the bone. And I'll tell you why before I close. Because I remember his call in my life.

I remember how my father taught me to pray. I remember my teenage years when I sought God and the glory of God would come upon me. I would roll under the bed and the glory of the Lord would come upon me.

Sometimes when I was a teenager I couldn't even get up off my back. I remember before I came to New York City pastoring Little Country Church. And I remember just a handful of people the Lord said, if you'll seek me there'll be no room to seek the people.

And I saw within five years a television... Brother, at that time Oral Roberts was the only one in television. And I had a television program covering a good part of eastern United States. And I was 25 years old.

But I was a man of prayer. And I saw people line up to get in the church. Parking lots packed everywhere.

Souls being saved. And I've known the glory and the power and the favor of God and the divine order that goes with it. But I've also known what it's like to grow lazy and slip away from the secret closet and begin to make my own plans and watch everything go awry.

Watch everything go wrong. Watch everything step out of order. Just fall out of place.

And show God what's going on. Try to set up fires here. Try to put out a fire here.

Try to deal with this miscontended person here. And deal with a rebellious child here. I've known what that's like.

I've known what it's like to almost lose my minister because I didn't seek God like I once did. And I know what it was like to spend a whole year before I came to New York City. Before this church was established.

I knew what it was like for a whole year to be so in prayer with God and so in tune with Him. I'd go out in the woods and preach to the trees. I would fall on the grass.

I remember people coming to my house and the Spirit of God would come on me. Why? Because I'd been in prayer. I'd been seeking His face.

The Spirit of God would fall right in front of company and they thought I was crazy. And I remember one day the Holy Ghost coming down upon me and saying, go to New York. And I remember those times of prayer.

And I said, oh God, if you raise up a church here it's got to be a house of prayer. And God said it can't be a house of prayer unless you set an example. I'm not telling you that all the 14 years I've been here that I've been that man of prayer that I ought to be.

But I do know that God's been gracious to me. And He keeps calling me back. And I say, oh, you've been on my face.

I say, God, I am not going to let hide Your grace. I don't ever want my children to have the grief of seeing their father in his seventies. Just about six weeks, I'm going to be 70 years old.

I don't want my children, my grandchildren, who love to hear me pray, who love to hear the voice of God through my lips. I don't ever want my children to see the grief and shame of me sitting in front of a

television all day never opening my Bible, not seeking God. Saying, what happened to Dad? Let me ask you as a church.

You've heard me preach. Somebody's been here with me for years. How would you feel you picture me? No longer passing the church because I got discouraged, because I wasn't on my knees.

I just got discouraged because that's what happened. You get discouraged. And you see me walking the street here one day, and you know, he's still saved, but there's no anointing.

You see a downcast man that has not been on his face before God, and you turn to somebody that used to be our pastor. No, no, no, no. I seek God, and you need to pray for me.

You need to pray for every pastor of this church. God, keep us humble. Keep us broken before God.

Keep us on our face. God, keep me broken. God.

Keep this church broken. God, don't let us sit back on a crest of blessing and get lazy and see this order come again to this house. We take authority in Jesus' name over that spirit of laziness.

My God, my God. We don't want to stand and sermonize in this pulpit We don't just want crowds. We want Your glory in this house, oh God.

We want Your glory in Your power. Oh God. I tremble at Your Word.

Let us tremble this morning that it's possible for godly men and godly women who once prayed, who once had such an anointing to finally lose it. God, help us. God, help us.

In this day of temptation when all hell is breaking loose, God, help us determine I will seek God. I will seek God with all my heart and all my soul and all my strength and all that's in me. Will you stand? If there's something between you and the Lord, get to this altar right now.

Just get out of your seat. If there's something standing between you and your freedom in prayer, something blocking your prayer life. If you have backslidden, if you're not right with Jesus, come.

If God's speaking to you right now saying, there's disorder in my family, there's disorder in my home, I have not been seeking God. I want you to get out of your seat and come. And in the annex, we just go forward between the screens, please.

Please don't block the screen, but just go forward between the screens. I'd like to pray with you that God set your soul on fire again and renew you. If you're backslidden, if you don't know Jesus, come with these that are coming.

Up in the balcony, go up the stairs and come down any aisle. And in the annex, in the overflow rooms, will you please just step out of the crowd and just go forward. I'll pray for you.

We'll believe the Lord together now for an awakening. Don't be afraid to cry in His presence. Let those tears wash away.

All apathy. Listen very closely. I'm not trying to pump up some kind of a prayer zeal here that just suddenly spurts and then burns out.

What God's after is something that you do alone in a secret closet. It's personal, private prayer. And when you have that personal, private time and you're daily seeking the face of God and you're seeker after God, when you come to this house, no one has to pump you up to praise God.

No one has to create anything. You bring with you the Spirit of the living God. You begin to see.

You won't have to have a counselor. You won't have to run to a pastor to try to solve your problems. You'll be solving them on your face before God.

It's a decision that you make now. Now folks, it's not going to be made through just tears. Thank God for tears.

It's not going to be made by just raising your hands and saying something. It has to be that you set your heart right now by the power of the Holy Ghost. All over in the annex, wherever you stand, all over this house, everyone who calls yourself by the name of the Lord, examine your heart right now.

Tell me, have you been on your face? Have you given God time every day now? Are you seeking Him at all? Are you crying out to Him? Are you calling Him out? Are you naming your children? Are you naming them by names saying, God, keep them from the wicked one? Are you praying for your husband, wife, or your marriage? Are you praying for the church? Are you praying and seeking God that He'll give you revelation of Himself? Are you seeking Him? You know what the truth is? The truth is that probably the great majority who are listening to me now are not praying, except in church. They're not seeking God. I'm not going to charge you, but I stand in the role of a prophet now as sure as two prophets were sent.

The King Asa, here's your prophetic word from heaven. If you seek me, you'll find me. If you continue forsaking me, I will forsake you.

That doesn't mean he forsakes his love. He'll never stop showing his face, but he'll show you his back. His face will always be towards you, but you'll see the back, and that simply means I wait for you to come receive all that I have for you, and I can't do it until you open your heart.

It's in that secret place where you open your heart to God when you begin to seek Him. He'll tell you how to get power over your sin. He'll tell you where to go and what to do.

That still small voice will come, but you have to say... It's not something you say, and there have been some of you, you've set your heart at other times, and you walked away. Asa could have repented, just like David did when the prophet came. He could have repented, I've sinned against God, and David went on to his greatest victories.

Asa could have gone out still in the glory. He missed it, because the prophet was saying, you just missed it, Asa. God was going to destroy all of Syria and Israel combined.

There was going to be a war. It had all been planned, and you aborted God's plan. Now, I'm going to tell you something.

God has a plan for your life. God has something wonderful in store for you if you'll seek Him. But you can abort that.

You can change all of that, like Asa did. God had a wonderful plan, and that's why Asa got so mad. He knew he blew the plan of God.

God was saying, this deserves. I destroyed that million man army. I was working on plans for your life.

I was working on a war plan to destroy Syria. And folks, God has a plan He's working on. You can't see it.

I'll tell you, if you knew what God had in store for you, if you seek Him, you'd be so rejoicing you couldn't contain yourself right now. There would be such joy and faith rise up in your heart, the good things God has. I know God's promised me some wonderful things from my last days.

I know that. He's going to let me play at least a part in what He's doing here, and a part in preaching to pastors around the world. I know what He told me He wants to do through my life.

But that's not going to happen if I don't seek Him. I can abort that whole plan and end up in disaster and ruin. Right now, you set your heart.

You don't need to scream at Him. But I think this whole congregation, everybody that hears me, needs to do that. Will you just lift your hands.

Just lift your hands. In front of you if you want to because you may be crying. Just in front of you even.

Pray this with me. Whole congregation, even those that came forward and in the annex, pray this with me. Jesus, forgive me for neglecting You, for not seeking You with all my heart, all my strength.

Forgive me Lord for having time for myself, for others, and not for You. Forgive me Lord for thinking that You were pleased for just the things I did for You. And yet I didn't give You my heart.

I've not given You my time. I repent. Forgive me Lord.

I am sorry. I truly repent. Now Holy Spirit come on me and woo me and call me and stir me.

Let me not forget this Word. I've received the Word, a prophetic Word. I take it to heart.

Cleanse me. Sanctify me. Set me free.

Oh God, set my house in order. Set my life in order. And I will seek Your face.

Now just worship Him now. Tell Him right now, Lord I worship You and I praise You. Lord I will seek Your face.

I will see Your glory on my life and in my home, in my house. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Hallelujah.

Now folks, in this moment, this encounter with the Holy Ghost is by your head. And right now set your heart. Set your heart.

God don't let anything this day stop me from starting this very day to spend at least a half hour somewhere I find alone today and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. I will take time. I set my heart to take time to seek You Lord with all my heart.

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