

1 **How to Fight For the Hearts of Your Family (2)**

2 Chronicles 15

2 **Review**

- The kingdoms of Israel and Judah are divided after Solomon's death because of Solomon's sin.
- Three Negative Examples:
 - Rehobam – Masculinity out of Control
 - Jeroboam – Our Worship vs. God's Worship, Why Lions Don't Eat Donkeys, Three Ways You Can (Try) To Fool God
 - Abijah – Four Things That Will Get Your Kids Into Hell

3 **Asa (905-874 B.C.)**

4 **Meet Asa**

- Asa is the son of Abijah (who reigned as king for 3 years) and the grandson of Maachah, the favorite wife of Rehoboam and granddaughter of Absalom.
- Asa is the first truly good king of Judah since David, and he institutes substantial religious and social reforms.
- He is also the last Judean king to get major treatment in the book of 1 Kings.

5 **Asa's Fight**

- In Asa's beginning we see the example of a king who realized Judah's precarious teetering on the brink of national idolatry and fought for the hearts of the people of Judah.
- The same things that threatened Asa's nation threaten our families today, and we can learn from Asa's example how to fight the battle for the hearts of our family.

6 **Asa's Enemy**

- The enemy of the nations of Israel and Judah throughout the divided kingdom period is idolatry.
 - Idolatry is when we look to people, possessions, or positions to fulfill a need that only God can meet.
 - Idolatry is when we substitute creaturely things for our creator.

7 **Idolatry**

- *Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (Rom 1:24-25)*

8 **HOW TO PREPARE FOR BATTLE**

2 Chronicles 14:1-8

9 **How to Prepare for Battle**

1. Get Rid of External Distractions
 - Removing the outward sins that are keeping you from being able to focus on inner idols
2. Arm Yourself
 - Take advantage of the tools available to us (Scripture, the Church, curriculum, etc.) to fight for the hearts of our families.

10 **How to Prepare for Battle**

3. Acknowledge the Threat
 - Realize the overwhelming number of idols that are vying for yours and your family's attention.
4. Meet the Enemy
 - Taking the battle to the enemy – the world, the flesh, and the devil – rather than simply waiting for problems to arise in your family.
5. Adjust Your Priorities
 - Be more concerned about God's reputation than your own.

11 **HOW TO FIGHT THE BATTLE**


2 Chronicles 15

12  **2 Chronicles 15:1-4**

- *The Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded, 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. For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest and without law, but when in their distress they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them."*

13  **2 Chronicles 15:5-7**

- *In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for great disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. They were broken in pieces. Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God troubled them with every sort of distress. But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded."*

14  **1. Choose Life & Liberty**


- The prophet Azariah comes to Asa to remind him of Israel's heritage – specifically the time of the Judges.
- This was a very difficult time in Israel's history, full of civil wars, social unrest, foreign invaders, and moral debauchery.
- Israel was without "a teaching priest and without law."

15  **The Judges Cycle**

- 1) The 12 tribes got comfortable and forsook God and followed after idols.
- 2) God brought in judgment in the form of foreign invaders (or sometimes internal conquerors).
- 3) Israel repented and were delivered by a Judge – a military and religious leader raised up by God – who restored Israel's freedom. With their freedom restored, Israel returned to step 1 – and this cycle repeats itself 6 times over 410 years.

16  **Azariah's Point**

- Azariah is using the historical events of the Book of Judges to illustrate a point:
 - Idolatry = Bondage
 - Worship = Liberty (not freedom)
- Azariah is encouraging Asa to continue on the path of liberty, not the path that leads to bondage that the previous three generations have been following.

17  **Deuteronomy 30:17-20**

- *But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse.*

18  **Deuteronomy 30:17-20**

- *Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."*










19  **1. Choose Life & Liberty**

- How does this (activity, relationship, entertainment) free me to do what is right and get away from that which is sinful?
- How does it help to make us more alive in Christ?
- These two questions will filter out 90% of the things in your life that are coming between you and the Lord.

20  **2 Chronicles 15:7-8**

- *But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded. As soon as Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Azariah the son of Oded, he took courage and put away the detestable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had taken in the hill country of Ephraim, and he repaired the altar of the LORD that was in front of the vestibule of the house of the LORD.*

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- 21  **2. Take Courage**
 - Azariah counsels Asa to not let his resolve be weakened by the tremendous scope of the task or the opposition he might meet along the way.
 - Literally this is “don’t let your hands drop, for there is payment for your work.”
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- 22  **2. Take Courage**
 - Stop feeling sorry for yourself if your relatives or friends don’t understand what it is you’re trying to do with your family.
 - Stop feeling sorry for yourself if your friends or family members don’t share your convictions.
 - IF you are living for Christ your work WILL be rewarded.
- 23  **2. Take Courage**
 - The fight against idolatry in your heart and in your family is going to require self-sacrifice and humility.
 - It won’t be easy or fun.
 - It will be worth it all.
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- 24  **2 Chronicles 15:8**
 - *As soon as Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Azariah the son of Oded, he took courage and put away the detestable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had taken in the hill country of Ephraim, and he repaired the altar of the LORD that was in front of the vestibule of the house of the LORD.*
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- 25  **2 Chronicles 15:9-13**
 - *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were residing with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. They were gathered at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. They sacrificed to the LORD on that day from the spoil that they had brought 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep. And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul, but that whoever would not seek the LORD, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether young or old, man or woman.*
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- 26  **2 Chronicles 15:14-15**
 - *They swore an oath to the LORD with a loud voice and with shouting and with trumpets and with horns. And all Judah rejoiced over the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and had sought him with their whole desire, and he was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around.*
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- 27  **3. Purge Your Home**
 - Asa does not merely purge idolatry from his own life (though he does this too) – he engages the whole nation of Judah in a national revival.
 - So great is the passion that the nation of Judah has for opposing idolatry that they impose the death penalty for any found worshipping another god.
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- 28  **3. Purge Your Home**
 - Every home will have its own household idols – the things that steal the focus of the hearts of the family away from Jesus Christ.
 - This can be a literal object, a specific kind of entertainment, or an attitude or relationship that hinders growth and leads to bondage rather than life or liberty.
- 29  **3. Purge Your Home**
 - Bondage: Anything that demands from you the same kind of attention and devotion that God demands.
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30 **2 Chronicles 15:16**

- *Even Maacah, his mother, King Asa removed from being queen mother because she had made a detestable image for Asherah. Asa cut down her image, crushed it, and burned it at the brook Kidron.*

31 **4. Purge Your Leadership**

- Asa removes his grandmother Maacah from being queen mother because of her idolatry.
- Comprehensive reforms would never have taken effect in Judah if Asa had allowed idolatry to run rampant in his nation's leadership.

32 **4. Purge Your Leadership**

- Principles enforced in the home will never stick with your children unless the parents live out those principles on a daily basis.
- This means that parents have to be consistent with their Christian walk both when their kids are around and when they aren't.
- When you do fail, you need to be honest with your children and ask their forgiveness as well, since your actions affect your whole family.

33 **2 Chronicles 15:17**

- *But the high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true all his days.*

34 **5. Beware Lingering Compromise**

- Despite all of his reforms, there are still a few high places left in the land that Asa fails to remove.
- "High places" were places where Jehovah worship was conducted away from the supervision of the priests or the law of God, and thus the likelihood of some form of compromise was high.

35 **5. Beware Lingering Compromise**

- Here there are two practical lessons:
 - The fight against idolatry is never over. There will always be "High Places" in our lives that need to be uprooted and put under the subjection of Jesus Christ.
 - God is more concerned about a sold-out heart than He is about immediate perfection.

36 **2 Chronicles 15:18-19**

- *And he brought into the house of God the sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels. And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.*

37 **6. Get Personally Committed**

- Finally, Asa demonstrated a personal commitment to God by giving of his own treasures to the house of God.
- The purpose of the tithe in Scripture is to teach us the Fear of the Lord by reminding us that everything we have really belongs to Him anyway.

38 **6. Get Personally Committed**

- Before we can fight idolatry as a family or as a church, we each must first fight it on a personal level – regardless of our position of authority.
- It doesn't matter who our parents are/were or how committed everyone else is – you have a personal responsibility to put Jesus on the throne of your life.