

Ecclesiastes 2:11 “Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.”

Isaiah 55:1-2 “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.”

For Personal Reflection

- What is your attitude towards your accomplishments/success?
- Where in your life do you have an entitlement attitude?
- Whom are you not listening to?
- If you had to sit down today and write your epitaph, what would it be?
- Stop and pray, thanking God for all you have accomplished by His grace. Ask Him to reveal any wrong attitudes that may be in your heart. Seek His will about the ways you can serve Him through your success.

More People Like Us with Problems Like Ours
Uzziah ~ The Danger of Success
2 Chronicles 26

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2 Chronicles 26:23 “So Uzziah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belonged to the kings, for they said, ‘He is a leper.’”

Three Warnings From the Life of Uzziah

I. Don’t Ever Let Your Prosperity Breed Amnesia so that You Forget How You Landed Where You are Today

2 Chronicles 26:4-5 “And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.”

NIV “... God gave him success.”

v. 6-8 Successful in foreign affairs

v. 9-10 Success in building, homeland defense, public works, beauty and luxury

v. 11-13 Military strength

v. 14-15 Technology

But the Bible doesn’t give the credit to Uzziah.

v. 5 “God made him prosper” or *NIV* “gave him success”

v. 7 “God helped him...”

v. 15 “... for he was marvelously helped...”

"... after income levels reach perhaps \$75,000 per year (in North America) further increases in salary may be correlated with higher percentages of agnosticism. In his 1998 paper, "Nature," Edward Larson showed that for incomes above \$150,000 per year, belief in God falls off significantly. The same trend holds, for example, for lawyers at these income levels." *Science and Christianity: Conflict or Coherence*, Henry F. Schaefer III, p. 69

Deuteronomy 8:10-18 "When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land He has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe His commands, His laws and His decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God... You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth..."

II. Don't Let Your Press Clippings Go to Your Head

2 Chronicles 26:8 "... His fame spread as far as the entrance of Egypt..."

2 Chronicles 26:15 "... So his fame spread far and wide..."

"...I often, just sitting in my chair, think this thought, 'I'm just keeping it warm for somebody else. This has temporarily been delegated to me.'" *Pastor C.J. Mahaney*

"The acknowledgement of time, its effects—on a good day, it's a sweetener. It makes every element of the day come to life a little more than it normally would. Because you realize it's finite—everything around you, the band, the family. In a not very long period of time, someone else will be living in this house, driving

these roads. Somebody may go, 'Hey, Bruce Springsteen used to live there.' And in a little bit longer than that, they ain't gonna be saying that anymore. They're just going to be driving by." — Bruce Springsteen, [Rolling Stone, 2/5/09]

III. Don't Allow Your Position and Power to Blur the Lines about Where Your Authority Really Starts and Stops

2 Chronicles 26:15-16 "... So his fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong. But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction..."

2 Chronicles 26:17-18 "So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him with 80 priests of the LORD, who were valiant men. And they withstood king Uzziah, and said to him, 'It is not for you to burn incense to the LORD... get out... for you have trespassed!'"

2 Chronicles 26:19 "... but as he was standing there raging at the priests..."

"I felt I worked hard my entire life and deserved to enjoy all the temptations around me. I felt I was entitled. Thanks to money and fame, I didn't have to go far to find them." *Tiger Woods* [msnbc.com, 2/19/10]

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 "⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."