

Living in Light of God's Truth
The Danger of Success
2 Chronicles 26

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In **2 Chronicles 26**, we see how success played out in the life of King Uzziah and see **Four Warnings** that you won't get from the world.

I. Don't Think that a Lifetime of Success Guarantees a Happy Ending

2 Chronicles 26:23 "And Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the burial field that belonged to the kings, for they said, 'He is a leper...'"

That's the epitaph of King Uzziah's life after all he did. He accomplished some amazing things, but just four words summarized his life: "He is a leper."

Leprosy was God's judgement against him because he didn't recognize the dangers of success.

God brought all the fame, power, influence, and success to an end so that he spent the final decade of his life in obscurity, cut off, and isolated as a leper.

II. Don't Let Your Success Breed Amnesia

Behind everything you have and everything you are, is a sovereign, almighty God that enabled you to do it.

2 Chronicles 26:4-5 "And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. ⁵He set himself to seek 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."

Success comes from God. You don't just make it your own, regardless of how much success you taste.

If you skim back through the chapter you can see many layers of success:

Vv. 6-8 show he had success in foreign affairs – The chapter points out Uzziah's success over the Philistines. That's a big deal because the nation of Israel hadn't had success against the Philistines since the time of David.

Vv. 9-10 talk about how he created a building boom – Homeland defense, public works, as well as beauty and luxury were all on the rise.

Vv. 11-13 talk about his military strength – It was outstanding.

Vv. 14-15 show how he was on the cutting edge of technology – It sounds like he invented catapults so that they were way ahead of everybody else.

This chapter goes out of its way to press one thing, and to press it repeatedly, that God helped him do what he did!

V. 5 "...God made him prosper." or *NIV* "...gave him success."

V. 7 “God helped him...”

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

Why did God bless him so much? **V. 5** gives us the answer.

2 Chronicles 26:5 “He set himself to seek God...and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.”

Uzziah had his eyes fixed on God and not himself! He intentionally set himself to seek God.

You’ll never seek God until you make plans to do so because it’ll never just happen. No one just drifts into seeking God.

It happens when you decide to make it happen. You set yourself to seek God.

III. Don’t Let Success Make You Proud and Autonomous

A. Don’t Let Success Feed Your Pride

2 Chronicles 26:15-16 “...And his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. ¹⁶ But when he was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction...”

Pride is one of the most destructive sins that could get entrenched in your heart.

“The sin of pride carries with it God's swiftest and most severe judgment. It blinds you to other sins in your life and hinders you from repenting of them. Pride is the "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome" or the (AIDS) of the soul. When a person dies as a result of acquiring AIDS, he doesn't really die of AIDS. Rather, he dies of an AIDS-complicated illness like pneumonia, tuberculosis, or meningitis. Not unlike a cataract, the AIDS virus somehow blinds the eyes of its victim's bodily defense system. This prevents his auto immune system from seeing and consequently destroying those deadly viruses and bacteria that ultimately kill him. Like AIDS, pride blinds you not only to itself, but to every other sin tucked away in the recesses of your heart and life. It causes you to hate correction and reproof. It hides your sin from you, it justifies your sin, it excuses your sin, and it keeps you from repenting of your sin. It deceives you into thinking that you're spiritually well when, in fact, you have deadly cancer and are in desperate need.”

- Lou Priolo, *The Complete Husband*

B. Don’t Let Success Fuel Your Autonomy

Uzziah’s pride swelled to the point where he overstepped his bounds and thought he could get away with it. He thought he could play by a different set of rules.

To understand how out of control he is, he’s going toe to toe with 81 priests at the same time who are all telling him he’s wrong, but he still thinks he’s right. That’s what unbridled pride and success can do to you when it gets a grip on your life.

2 Chronicles 26:17-18 “But Azariah the priest went in after him, with eighty priests of the Lord who were men of valor, ¹⁸ and they withstood King Uzziah and said to him, ‘It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the sanctuary, for you have done wrong, and it will bring you no honor from the Lord God.’”

2 Chronicles 26:19 “Then Uzziah was angry...”

When you lose sight of God in the midst of success, you'll stay angry and blind to the havoc you're wreaking on yourself and everyone around you.

NKJV "... he was standing there raging at the priests..."

You'll rage against anybody who gets in your way!

There is a trap you can step in later in life after you've tasted some success, and that's what you see with Uzziah.

At **16 years** old he set himself to seek the Lord, but at **58 years** old, after four decades of incredible success, he thinks he can do whatever he wants.

- Where has your life gone off the rails? Where have you started blurring the lines, thinking you don't need to submit or listen to anybody? Where have you started crossing the lines thinking you can play by a different set of rules now?

That's what happened to Tiger Woods after he became the greatest golfer that will probably ever play the game of golf and after he became the highest money winner of any sports figure.

"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

If you ever taste any success in any area of your life, do not adopt a mentality of entitlement because you'll stay angry and you'll step into so many other sins!

IV. Don't Let Success Go to Your Head

2 Chronicles 26:8 "...and his fame spread even to the border of Egypt..."

2 Chronicles 26:15 "... And his fame spread far..."

Uzziah was a worldwide phenomenon who was known everywhere. But instead of pointing people back to God and giving God all the glory, he soaked in it and the trap was set!