**KING ASA: The Failure Of Compromise!**   
**2 Chronicles 14-16**

1. “Compromise” has been viewed by some as an admirable quality. This is defined as “the settlement of differences by parties agreeing to mutual concessions so that agreement is reached by blending qualities of both sides.” It seeks “middle ground” upon which all sides can find harmony.

a. This is a biblical practice (cf Mt 5:25; Ro 12:18; 14:19; etc.).

b. However, the Devil has taken this peace-making practice and distorted it so that it becomes evil.

1) How can compromise be evil?   
(2 Ki 17:33; Mt 5:10-12; Lk 6:46; Hb 6:4-6; Rv 2:14-16; 2:20-25; etc.). A case study of the allure of compromise is found in Nehemiah’s confrontation with those opposed to God’s plans (cf. Neh 6:1-3 – God’s enemies sought to hinder the re-building of Jerusalem’s walls by compromise.).

2) Why is compromise so tempting to God’s people?

a) A difficult situation faces us that requires unpleasant confrontation. If we want to avoid confrontation we will find a way to either concede or keep silent.

b) Personal benefits are promised. We are told (subtly or directly) that unless we “soften up” we will lost benefits and profits will diminish.

c) General acceptance from others. If we continue to maintain an uncompromised position we will lose popularity and/or face persecution of some sort. This puts pressure upon us because we do not like these adverse consequences.

3) What are the elements of “compromise” that makes it sinful?

a) Lie to others so they think you are changing your position.

b) Refuse to follow rules.

c) Give the appearance to be something you are not.

d) Lack of trust in God. We feel it is better to take matters into our own hands rather than trust God’s care and provisions.

2. King Asa highlights the danger of compromising in areas where no “middle ground” is possible. A study of his life will urge all of us to resist evil compromise.

a. The history of this King (1 Ki 15:9-24; 2 Chron 14-16) reveals the following facts:

1) He was the third King of Judah and reigned for 41 years. When he succeeded to the sovereign rule all seemed against him. He had a wicked father. “Asa must have been very young at the time of his accession in 911 B.C., for his grandfather had died at the age of 58, just three years before. This may help to explain his better character, since during his youth he would govern under the influence of the high priest, and would be spared the example and influence of a godless father” (W. T. Purkiser, Ed., Exploring The Old Testament. Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO, 1955, 307).

2) For 36 years Asa served God in a devoted manner. He did all the right things and made all the right moves. He faced the enemies of God with a strong resolve to remain faithful – nothing would deter him from righteousness.

a) A thorough religious reformation.   
He removed his grand-mother (Maacah) from the office of Gevirah (queen mother) and destroyed the idol she had set up for worship. All shrines to idols were destroyed. The people were urged to serve the Lord. A wonderful commentary on this King is found in 1 Ki 15:14b.

b) A public trust in God.   
The invasion of Zerah’s overwhelming army presents us with one of the most inspiring stories of the Bible. Asa’s army was out-numbered by more than 2 to 1. Prior to battle Asa prayed for God’s help (2 Chron 14:11). Following the victory the prophet Azariah, son of Oded, exhorted Asa to continue his obedience to God (2 Chron 15:7,8). Returning to Jerusalem Asa gathered to citizens & renewed the covenant with God and decreed death to all who practiced idolatry. Asa’s faithfulness brought rewards (2 Chron 15:9-15)

3) Asa’s faithfulness was corrupted because of compromise.

a) It seems that prosperity and peace softened Asa’s resolve. Even though he called for a complete restoration to God there is the troubling phrase “but the high places were not removed” (2 Chron 15:17a).

b) The Northern Kingdom (Israel) became the means by which good King Asa would compromise his loyalty and betray God (2 Chron 16). Israel strengthened her borders. Danger threatened. Invasion seemed probable. Asa panicked. He forgot his faith in God and sought relief from Ben-Hadad, King of Syria.

NOTE: Asa had made a shrewd political move. He had gained peace, avoided war, made strategic allies, and established himself as a great leader. The news’ analysts would crown him as a “smart and brilliant politician. It appeared that Asa had made EVERYONE happy with this maneuver. BUT the King had forgotten God! Jehovah God had been robbed so that “middle ground” could be formed. The satisfaction of God had been sacrificed for the satisfaction of man. For 36 years Asa had moved only as God directed (2 Chron 14:11b).But now he was moving away from God because he sought “common ground” with those opposed to God!

c) Asa’s compromise brought a condemnation from God’s spokesman, Hannani the prophet (2 Chron 16:7-9). The “blameless” life of Asa was now polluted – “You have acted foolishly” (16:9).

d) Even though the prophet had spoken from God, Asa punished the messenger instead of receiving the message (16:10).

e) God still loved Asa. God sought to encourage Asa to return. God sent a prophet with a clear message (2 Chron 16:7-9) but stubbornness controlled the King’s heart. Asa’s pride prevented his repentance. The King had invested heavily in the compromise – money, reputation, position. This stubbornness led Asa to react harshly to others who would try to bring him back to God.

f) God tried one final maneuver to bring the compromised King back to faithfulness – physical distress (2 Chron 16:12). The King’s stubbornness resisted God’s help and trusted upon self‘s help! Once again, as is evidenced throughout Scripture, the trouble of selfishness ruins a soul!

b. What a shocking contrast in found in 2 Chron 14:11 and 16:9-12.

3. What are some specific lessons we can learn from this tragic story? What do we need to remember about evil compromise?

a. It is a great deceiver!   
Compromising God’s commands always appears to work. Asa received what he wanted and everything seemed fine. However God’s will cannot be ignored without troubling consequences (16:9b). This is the great irony of compromise – it is profitable in the short-run but over the long-haul it only strengthens Satan! Those who compromise God’s Truth in order to gain immediate benefits will sadly learn that God always has the final judgment – “YOU have acted foolishly!”

b. It is a popular practice!   
Today’s culture invites compromise. Failure to do so immediately labels you as “intolerant.” Today’s culture calls us to take from the Bible only what we “like” and ignore the rest, or explain it away as non-relevant. So like a chameleon many are willing to change colors to blend with the latest fad and doctrine. Such causes us to lose our distinctiveness as God’s elect and become aligned with those in the world (Tit 2:12, 14). When Asa joined with the Syrians, he ceased to be God’s special nation!

c. It hardens our hearts!   
Even when rebuked by God, Asa refused to admit wrong. He was too proud. He became angry and stubborn. Asa had practiced the right way for years, but when he compromised God’s will he refused to go back to the right!

NOTE: Here is a situation worse than committing the initial sin – refusing to admit one is wrong; refusing to admit one’s failing; allowing pride/selfishness to control our choices! (Cf Hb 6:4-6)

NOTE: We gain insight into Satan’s strategy of warfare – He seeks to get us to make a heavy investment in our decision to compromise and then pumps us full of pride so we do not repent. However, God tells us there is always time to back out of a wrong choice (Rv 18:4; 2 Co 6:17, 18). It may not be easy. It may not be comfortable. It may not be what we want to do. BUT we can do it!

d. It brings one to a tragic end!   
Asa died bound to his compromise. Every day that he postponed compromise it was harder for him to admit wrong. Every day he allowed pride/selfishness to control him, he became more bitter. Eventually he was so embittered and so proud that he would not return to God. It was “impossible” (cf Hb 6:4-6).

4. What does King Asa tell us?

* He tells us that the true test of Christian devotion is commitment to God when situations arise that tempt us to compromise. When you are faced with uncomfortable choices in religious issues, do you seek the Lord’s way or do you seek “common ground”?
* He tells us that those who allow the temptation of compromise to be chosen are acting “foolishly” and will not receive God’s support (2 Chron 16:9). If those who compromise do not receive God’s support, whose support do they receive? (2 Ths 2:9-11).

5. God needs all to commit to an uncompromising faithfulness!

Today the world is looking for men –   
Men who are not for sale, honest, sound from center to circumference, true to the heart’s core.   
Men whose consciences are steady as a needle to the pole.   
Men who will stand for right even if heaven totters and the earth reels.   
Men who can tell the truth and look the world right in the eye.   
Men who neither brag nor run, who neither flag nor flinch.   
Men who can have courage without shouting it.   
Men in whom the courage of everlasting life still runs deep and strong.   
Men who know their message and tell it; men who know their place and fill it; men who know their business and attend to it.   
Men who will not lie; will not shirk; will not dodge.   
Men who are not too lazy to work; too proud to be poor.