

# A HEART FOR THE LORD

## **“Doing What’s Right in the Eyes of the Lord”**

*1 Kings 15:9–24*

**Main Idea:** Doing what’s right in the eyes of the Lord comes from a heart that’s wholly true to the Lord.

### **A heart that’s wholly true to the Lord removes idols at home (9-13).**

Of all the kings in the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah (39 total), there were only a few who were counted as good in the eyes of the Lord. Every one of these good kings were from Judah, and of the 8 who were initially counted as good, Asa was the first. He was only two generations removed from Solomon, who was the last of the anointed kings who ruled over the united kingdom of Israel. In the generations of kings who were counted as doing evil in the sight of the Lord, Asa was said to be a king who did what was “right in the eyes of the Lord” (1 Kings 15:11), and this came from the one thing that drives obedience: A “heart . . . wholly true to the Lord” (1 Kings 15:14). As we consider Asa’s actions driven by a heart that’s wholly true to the Lord, it’s important to note the very first thing that’s recorded about what Asa did as king. Asa removed idols and the prostitutes connected with idol worship in Judah, and these idols weren’t someone else’s problem, but they were a problem in his own home. His father had made them, and his mother still worshiped them (1 Kings 15:12-13). What an important lesson! Your heart can’t be wholly true to the Lord unless you remove the idols at home, which stand before the Lord!

1. What are some idols that are often found in our homes?
2. What about in your home? Are there any idols that need to be destroyed?
3. Asa removed these idols publicly. What’s important about letting your family see you identify and remove idols from your home?

### **A heart that’s wholly true to the Lord puts the Lord before family (12-13).**

As Asa addressed the problem of idols in Judah, he was addressing the problem of idols at home. In removing the idols that his father had made, he was making a stand against what his father stood for. He was dismantling the tangible things that reminded him and others of his father. Perhaps these idols were the very things that were his father’s legacy, but they didn’t honor the Lord. Asa had to make a choice between his father’s memory and the Lord. Asa chose the Lord. He also had to make a choice between his mother, who was still alive, and the Lord. His mother worshiped idols, and because of this, he had her removed as the queen mother, and he also had her idols destroyed. Asa didn’t compromise on his responsibility to the Lord to accommodate the sin of his mother. He couldn’t do that and stay wholly true to the Lord. What a powerful reminder that your heart can’t be wholly true to the Lord if you put your family before the Lord. God must come first in your heart to have a heart that’s wholly true to the Lord.

1. Asa destroyed the idols his father had made and removed his mother from her position of honor. Discuss how difficult these decisions must have been from a personal standpoint between a son and his deceased father and living mother.
2. Do we ever compromise on destroying idols for the sake of keeping the peace and maintaining relationships? What's wrong with doing this?
3. Do you have any family relationships that come before the Lord in your heart?

**A heart that's wholly true to the Lord gives generously to the Lord (15).**

As kings, Asa's father and Asa himself received valuable gifts and plunder from other kingdoms and kings. Apparently, all of these precious metals and valuable items were kept as the king's own belongings, stored securely in his complex. Asa, however, recognized that this did not honor the Lord who was the true King of Israel and the giver of every gift of victory and reward. Therefore, Asa brought some of these items of great value into the storehouse of the Lord's temple. He brought them where they belonged and gave them to the one to whom they belonged. In this moment, Asa was leading all of Judah as he worshiped! He worshiped as he put the Lord first by destroying idols in his home, and he worshiped as he took what his father had kept from the Lord and generously gave it back to the Lord. A heart can't be wholly true to the Lord if that heart is holding back what belongs to the Lord. Give generously to the Lord what should be given to the Lord!

1. Asa didn't bring all of the items of precious metal to the Lord's storehouse, but he brought a portion, offering it to the Lord. What's the principle in his action that we still practice today?
2. Why is giving to the Lord important? How is this worship?
3. What does your giving reveal about your heart towards the Lord? Is your heart wholly given to him? Don't hold back from the Lord the thing of most value: Yourself!