

Good morning, Church. Daily Reading, Acts 3.

2 Chronicles 15:7 "But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded." (ESV)

The other night, my grandson Liam wanted a bag of pretzels. When I noticed he was having a tough time opening the bag, I told him to give it to Papa, and I would open it for him. Well, guess what? Even Papa had a hard time pulling the bag apart at the top. It didn't help when Liam said, "Papa, you need to work out with my daddy's weights."

With that, I decided to work smarter and not harder and pulled out the scissors from the drawer. Kids, who needs them. Haha!

While I appreciate the saying, "It is better to work smarter, not harder." I don't think God wants us to take shortcuts that could end up harming and not helping us. It is great having a GPS to help us through traffic, but sometimes, we are just to persevere through our trials.

The prophet Azariah warned King Asa to keep seeking after God, and he would find Him. And not to forsake God, or God will forsake the king.

Asa was a good king who followed after the Lord. But the king also ruled people who were prone to leave God and follow after idols. Asa was warned to be strong in the face of opposition. To not lose courage, but to keep his hands and face toward God.

Seeking shortcuts can be harmful to our relationship with God and others. When finances are tough, some play the lottery, hoping for a big payday. When work is stressful, instead of trusting God to help us, it is easier to just walk away. Relationships can be hard, but again, looking for a shortcut to "love" leads to other problems.

The above challenge to King Asa is a great example for believers to follow in not allowing the actions of others to influence how we live for Christ. As we face challenges and struggles, trusting in the power of Christ and not self leads to rewards. The Lord was with King Asa as he ruled over God's people, and God will be with us as we live our lives.