THE EXAMPLE OF KING ASA (2 Chronicles 14-16)

2 Chronicles 14:2-4 "2 Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. 3 He removed the foreign altars and the high places, smashed the stones and cut down the Asherah poles. 4 He commanded Judah to **seek the Lord**, the God of their fathers, and to obey His laws and commands." (NIV)

WHY SHOULD I FIRST SEEK THE LORD?

1. So I can have PEACE with God and others.

2 Chronicles 14:4-6 "4 He commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to obey his laws and commands. 5 He removed the high places and incense altars in every town in Judah, and the kingdom was at **peace** under him. 6 He built up the fortified cities of Judah, since the land was at **peace**. No one was at war with him during those years, for the LORD gave him rest. " (NIV)

Philippians 4:6-7 "6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (NIV)

2. So I can PROSPER in my life and relationships.

2 Chronicles 14:7 ""Let us build up these towns, " he said to Judah, "and put walls around them, with towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours, **because we have sought the Lord our God**; we sought Him and He has given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered." (NIV)

Psalm 34:9-10 "9 Fear the Lord, you His holy people, for those who fear Him lack nothing. 10 The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing." (NIV)

3. So I can PREVAIL in overwhelming circumstances

2 Chronicles 14:8-13 "[8] Asa had an army of three hundred thousand men from Judah, equipped with large shields and with spears, and two hundred and eighty thousand from Benjamin, armed with small shields and with bows. All these were brave fighting men. [9] Zerah the Cushite marched out against them with a vast army and three hundred chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. [10] Asa went out to meet him, and they took up battle positions in the Valley of Zephathah near Mareshah. [11] Then Asa called to the Lord his God and said, "Lord, there is no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. O Lord, you are our God; **do not let man prevail against you**." [12] The Lord struck down the Cushites before Asa and Judah. The Cushites fled, [13] and Asa and his army pursued them as far as Gerar. Such a great number of Cushites fell that they could not recover; they were crushed before the Lord and his forces. The men of Judah carried off a large amount of plunder." (NIV)

Psalm 9:9-10 "[9] The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. [10] Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you." (NIV)

4. So I can experience God's continually PRESENCE in my life.

2 Chronicles 15:1-8 "[1] The Spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded. [2] He went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. **The Lord is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.** [3] For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to teach and without the law. [4] But in their distress they turned to the Lord, the God of Israel, and **sought him**, and he was found by them. [5] In those days it was not safe to travel about, for all the inhabitants of the lands were in great turmoil. [6] One nation was being crushed by another and one city by another, because God was troubling them with every kind of distress. [7] But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded." [8] When Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded the prophet, **he took courage**. He removed the detestable idols from the whole land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns he had captured in the hills of Ephraim. He repaired the altar of the Lord that was in front of the portico of the Lord's temple." (NIV)

Psalm 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?" (NIV)

5. Because I will have PROBLEMS if I don't.

2 Chronicles 17:8-10,12 "7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him: "Because you **relied on the king of Aram and not on the LORD** your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand. 8 Were not the Cushites and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen? Yet when you relied on the LORD, he delivered them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war." 10 Asa was angry with the seer because of this; he was so enraged that he put him in prison. At the same time Asa brutally oppressed some of the people…. 12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness **he did not seek help** from the LORD, but only from the physicians." (NIV)

Lamentations 3:25 "The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him…" (NIV)

BOTTOM LINE

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (NIV)

1 Timothy 2:1 "I urge you, then, **first of all**, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people …" (NIV)

Hebrews 11:6 "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must first believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him." (NIV)

2 Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him…" (NIV)