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Uzziah is a man that can be characterized as a successful man. People in our society are intoxicated with success. The media constantly bombards us with information and advertising that calls us to a "more successful lifestyle" than we currently enjoy. Therefore, everybody wants to be ahead.

Success is at the forefront of our personal goals. Everybody wants to be "A SUCCESS." Everybody wants his kids to be successful. But the world defines success in a different way than God's word defines success. I think we need to make a clear distinction here, if we want to be men/women who finish strong. When people are successful in the world's standards, they experience elevation in at least of three areas: Power, Privilege, and Prosperity.

People like power. We want our commands to be obeyed and wishes granted. People also like to have privileges. We want to enjoy special rights or favors. This is the reason why we join exclusive clubs or subdivisions. Of course, people like prosperity. We want to accumulate financial reserves and securities. When the world system talks about "SUCCESS," it's talking about an elevation of status. Our culture is constantly giving us this information. As Christians, we need to be careful that we're filtering this stuff through the grid of the Bible.

King Uzziah would fit perfectly into our success-obsessed culture. If you were ever to meet this man, you couldn't help but be impressed by his success. He enjoyed incredible power, privilege and prosperity. Let us check out *2 Chronicles 26:1-3*, "Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah. He was the one who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah after Amaziah rested with his ancestors. Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother's name was Jekoliah; she was from Jerusalem." (NIV)

## THREE REASONS TO UZZIAH'S FALL:

*First, Uzziah began to spend more time and attention on the EXTERNAL rather than the ETERNAL.*

He shifted his focus from the Lord to the world. Some call this "Barrenness of a Busy Life." It's like we're trying to succeed, we're pouring our energies and our focus and our thoughts into getting ahead. And somehow we forget that true success has a lot more to do with who we are than with what we accomplished.

Many Christians now are verbally telling their children to put God first, but their actions are contrary to their statements. If you seldom attend church, don't expect your children to attend church regularly. If you will put business appointment above your appointment with God in LIFE group or worship service, then, don't expect your children to focus on eternal.

*Second, Uzziah's ATTITUDE did not keep pace with his ACCOMPLISHMENTS.*

Uzziah was not allowed to enter the temple to burn incense but he did. One of the things about raising children is that you cannot impart that which you do not possess. I can't expect something out of my children that does not exist in my own heart. Character isn't something you mandate, it's something you model. If children are disrespectful to authority at work or in church, I'm sure that parents are also like that. If children look down on other people, I'm sure that parents are also like that.

*Third, Uzziah was tripped by his own success.*

Power can convert to Pride if we're not careful. This is what happened to Uzziah. He thought that his worldly success can give him the privilege to do what he wanted to do. Sometimes we get upset with the Lord because we are not as "successful" as we would like to be. We would like to be making a little more money or moving up the ladder at work a little bit faster. We'd like a little elevation in status. But it seems terribly slow in coming.

Many times I believe this is nothing less than the grace of God. God is gracious when He does not answer our prayers for external success. He knows very well how dangerous success can be. Success is like ice. It's beautiful, it's smooth, it looks clean and cool but there aren't many men who can walk on ice without falling flat on their faces or flat on their butt. Too many accomplishments and too much recognition can lead to disaster when we're not cautious. Not many of us can handle that kind of dangerous footing. Uzziah couldn't handle success.

God knows when we can handle success and He knows when we can't. As loving Father, He makes sure that He orders events in such a way that we can walk steadily along the road to heaven without slipping.

## SYMPTOMS OF PRIDE

### Arrogance.

Uzziah first had attitude of arrogance. Arrogances means haughty. The old French Word means "HIGH." We get haughty when we think too highly of ourselves. We become arrogant when we convince ourselves we "deserve" certain perks and privileges. You begin to expect certain privileges in your life and feel angry or bitter when they don't fall your way.

### Aversion to Accountability

If you find yourself getting angry if someone corrects or rebukes you, BEWARE! You're going down the wrong road.

## THE FALLOUT FROM UZZIAH'S PRIDE:

1. He was struck with the detestable disease of leprosy for the rest of his life. Folks, who among you know that God can use sickness to remove your pride? Uzziah became yucky in the eyes of other people.

2. He lived in quarantine for the rest of his life. Uzziah had always enjoyed being part of everything..but now he was cut off. Most likely, he had no servants. No one waiting for him. No special privileges. Imagine, he was isolated.

3. He was cut off from the temple. He treated God with contempt so he was prohibited to go to the temple. God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves.

4. He was buried near the kings, but not with them (v. 23). Even in death, his memory was dishonored.

## Discussion Questions LIFE GROUPS

1. What does success mean to you?
2. How's your heart condition when it comes to forgiveness or letting go of the day to day issues of life?
3. Are you having hard time forgiving, why?
4. How's your response to corrections?