

ASA PRACTICED WHAT PETER PREACHED

He would be called on the carpet to explain his actions. Yes, when Peter preached to an audience of Gentiles (Cornelius' household) there were some who no doubt thought that he owed the brotherhood a pretty thorough explanation! The fact is that the Gentiles also were being welcome into the body of Christ through the gospel, right alongside brethren with a Jewish background. This principle set forth in Peter's sermon is simple: "And Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34-35 - ASV 1901). God is no respecter of persons (Deut. 10:17; Rom. 2:11; Col. 3:25). You and I had better not be either!

If it's wrong, then it's wrong regardless of who does it. Whether it is your best friend in the church, or someone you really don't know, sin is still sin and nobody gets a "pass." The same principle applies to family members as well. Jesus taught us that the gospel will sometimes bring conflict—not peace. Even a family can be divided by truth. "...A man's foes (shall be) they of his own household" (Matt. 10:36).

One of the most challenging aspects of godly living centers in on being able to look past personalities, family, and friendships and always do the right thing. Paul told Timothy,

"I charge [thee] in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (1 Tim.5:21-22).

In the Old Testament there was a king who got this right. Asa, the third King of Judah, began his forty-one reign in 911 B.C., and the early years were marked by prosperity and peace. Here was a man and leader determined to serve God. "And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, as did David his father. And he put away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made" (1 Kings 15:11-12). But there is another reason to admire this godly man. Asa was going to do right no matter who he had to reprimand. So, when his "queen mother," Maacah built an idol, Asa was no respecter of persons. He threw her out!

And also concerning Maacah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron. (2 Chron 15:16).

Asa was not going to let family or position sway him. He loved truth more than bloodline and lineage. Some would have turned a blind eye and ignored the sin. After all, Asa was King. Who was going to tell him what to do? Asa respected God more than personalities. Asa practiced what Peter (and others) preached.