

Finishing Well

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By Pastor Doug Echols, President, SBC of Virginia

On April 1, the world watched in amazement as Artemis 2 lifted off. Four astronauts set out to attempt something that had not been done in fifty-four years. It was an exciting launch—but the mission’s success was not defined by liftoff or even by orbiting the moon. It was confirmed when all four astronauts returned safely to Earth ten days later.

The same is true in ministry: success is not measured by how we start but by how we finish. In 2 Chronicles 14–16, King Asa began well but ended in ruin. Early in his reign, he led a season of reformation and revival, and the Lord granted years of peace. By every measure, it was a strong start.

But Asa did not finish well. His focus shifted from dependence on the Lord to trust in his own strategies. When confronted by Hanani, who reminded him that “the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward Him” (2 Chronicles 16:9), Asa responded

with anger, imprisoning the prophet. Asa’s life closed under the weight of his own rebellion.

Asa’s story offers a sober warning. First, past success does not guarantee present faithfulness. A strong start is no substitute for enduring trust. Second, we must guard our hearts, for God is actively seeking those who remain fully devoted to Him. Finally, true success in ministry lies in perseverance. Launches inspire, but finishing faithfully is what matters most.

May our churches, pastors, and ministry leaders remain steadfast, trusting the Lord, guarding our hearts, and staying faithful to the mission until He calls us home or until Christ returns. ●

Pastor Doug Echols,
Senior Pastor at Bethel
Baptist Church in
Yorktown and President
of the SBC of Virginia.

