

# **life groups' sermon guide**

## **king of hearts :: solomon—the half-hearted king**



*Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for spiritual growth, caring for one another, and reaching out to others.*

**In Preparation:** You'll need a Bible, post it notes, pens, scissors

### **Get Started:**

How many of you are fans of CBS' "Survivor" reality show? My husband is a huge fan, therefore, we watched every single episode again this season. We were very happy to see that Matt, a strong Christian, was included in the group of Survivors. Not only was Matt included in the group, but his story was closely followed, and his faith was clearly seen for the entire nation of viewers to see!

Q: If you are a fan of the show, could you share a bit of what you heard/witnessed about his faith? (it was real, definitely a relationship-based faith, very healthy respect of God and His guidance, leaned on God in the hard times, was committed to obedience – no matter what, he shared His faith with others, He didn't act weird or "preachy", but solid and his faith was attractive to others on the island, etc.

Some of the highlights of Matt's journey included the opportunity to share his faith with another contestant, and still another contestant was excited about going home and finding a good solid church, due to Matt's faith. He prayed with the other Survivors, and was super-respectful (to both people and God) in how he handled difficult decisions. It was definitely not something you normally see on today's reality tv shows.

Q: What made his witness credible?

Q: How would his witness have changed if he'd flown off the handle at other contestants, or cursed God for his predicament?

Matt's witness through that 39 day journey was credible b/c he was committed whole-heartedly to his faith. Today we're going to look more closely at the heart of Solomon. Was he whole-hearted? Did he obey half-heartedly? How does this apply to us?

### **Get the Scoop:**

Let's review a bit of the situation regarding Solomon's reign, relationship with God, and dedication/obedience.

Q: Briefly share what you know about Solomon?

Read 2 Chronicles 6:12-42 quickly.

Q: What does Solomon state about God?

Read I Kings 11:1 – 13

Q: What happened to Solomon's heart, and why did it occur?

Q: What types of things did Solomon do that would have been displeasing to God?

Read I Kings 11:14-25

Q: How did God respond to Solomon's half-hearted obedience in I Kings 11:14-25?

### **Dig In:**

Solomon loved God, and obeyed Him in almost ALL ways...but he refused to obey God in one huge area of his life, and it cost him his heart...

Let's examine some more of God's word to see what He tells us about coming to Him wholeheartedly.

Check out these scriptures and make a list of the other ways half-heartedness could be described. (Use post it notes or your white/black board to create a list.)

Hosea 10:2, Hebrews 4:12, Hebrews 3:18, James 5:3, Ps. 34:18, 109:22, 147:3, Ps 12:2, 95:11, Proverbs 31:6, Romans 1:24, James 3:14, Romans 1:21, John 14:1, Romans 16:18, Ezekiel 32:9

Q: Do you see a word that aptly describes your own heart?

Although most of us who are studying these texts have made decisions to be Christ-Followers, there are bound to be portions of our hearts that we have yet to totally surrender to Him. If you see yourself in the above list, take heart! Check out this passage:

Hebrews 4:12-13 – God's Word is able to pierce our hearts and lay them bare – the first step is to notice and acknowledge our areas of half-heartedness.

Continue reading in Hebrews 4:14-16 – a bit of encouragement that we can have confidence in approaching God...He knows us and has made a way for us to be in His presence! We can find the grace and mercy we need to help us in our half-hearted struggles.

### **Take It Home**

So, where do we go from here? The first step to moving forward in a relationship or a troubled situation is to be honest about the situation; to acknowledge the area of half-heartedness.

Q: Where do you find yourself not obeying fully? Finances? Gossip? Lust? Sharing your faith? Kindness? Impure thoughts, malicious behavior? Envy? Coveting?

Grab a post-it note. Cut it into a heart shape. Write your area of half-hearted obedience on the inside, and fold it in half. Tuck it into your Bible, purse, or pocket, so you'll see/feel it often.

These are all areas where our half-heartedness can stay hidden for a long time. However, as we saw in the life of Solomon, God IS displeased when we continue to choose half-hearted obedience. He WILL do what He needs to do to bring us back to a full-heart relationship.

What steps will you take this week to move toward full obedience in that one area?

Choose someone in your small group with whom to share your decision. Decide upon a time in the next 1, 2, and 3 weeks to check in on each other. That accountability will help you stay focused even when your heart doesn't want to.

**For Further Study**, check out Matthew 5-7. How do these chapters push us toward whole-hearted obedience? In what area are you most challenged? What will you change after reading Mt. 5-7?