

IF YOU WALK BEFORE ME WITH A HEART OF INTEGRITY
UNIT 12 • SESSION 3

SOLOMON

THE FAILED KING

MAIN POINT

Sin begins in the heart but affects our whole lives.

1 KINGS 11:4-8 • A DIVIDED HEART LEADS TO SIN

4 When Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away to follow other gods. He was not wholeheartedly devoted to the LORD his God, as his father David had been. **5** Solomon followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom, the abhorrent idol of the Ammonites. **6** Solomon did what was evil in the LORD's sight, and unlike his father David, he did not remain loyal to the LORD. **7** At that time, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abhorrent idol of Moab, and for Milcom, the abhorrent idol of the Ammonites, on the hill across from Jerusalem. **8** He did the same for all his foreign wives, who were burning incense and offering sacrifices to their gods.

1 KINGS 11:9-13 • A REBELLIOUS HEART RECEIVES JUDGMENT

9 The LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. **10** He had commanded him about this, so that he would not follow other gods, but Solomon did not do what the LORD had commanded. **11** Then the LORD said to Solomon, "Since you have done this and did not keep my covenant and my statutes, which I commanded you, I will tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. **12** However, I will not do it during your lifetime for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of your son's hand. **13** Yet I will not tear the entire kingdom away from him. I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem that I chose."

1 KINGS 12:3-5,8-17 • AN ARROGANT HEART RESULTS IN DIVISION

3 But they summoned him, and Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam: **4** "Your father made our yoke harsh. You, therefore, lighten your father's harsh service and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you." **5** Rehoboam replied, "Go away for three days and then return to me." So the people left. . . . **8** But he rejected the advice of the elders who had advised him and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and attended him. . . . **13** Then the king answered the people harshly. He rejected the advice the elders had given him **14** and spoke to them according to the young men's advice . . . **15** The king did not listen to the people, because this turn of events came from the LORD to carry out his word, which the LORD had spoken through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat. **16** When all Israel saw that the king had not listened to them, the people answered him: What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Israel, return to your tents; David, now look after your own house! So Israel went to their tents, **17** but Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites living in the cities of Judah.

INTRO OPTION 1

I WANT IT!

SUPPLIES LIST

NO SUPPLIES NEEDED.

Have students share about a time they really wanted something. Examples could include a new phone, clothes, shoes, etc. Then have them tell you what “line” they used on their parents to try and convince them they needed this new thing. Did it work? Did their parents read right through what they were really asking? In today’s session, we will learn that sin begins in the heart, but its consequences affect others.

INTRO OPTION 2

BASKETBALL

SUPPLIES LIST

BASKETBALL GOAL.

Bring in a Fisher Price-style basketball goal and a small ball. Split students up into two teams. Have each team of students come up with a plan on how they can score as many points as they can in one minute while involving each team member. Challenge students to think about if they will shoot just three or if they will shoot just layups, etc. This must be a team decision and every student must speak into what they will do. See what the students come up with and how many points they can score in a minute. In today’s session, we will learn that because we have been forgiven of all our sin through Christ, we proclaim the foolishness of relying on our own wisdom for salvation and lift up Jesus as the only hope.



SCRIPTURE READING

MAIN POINT

Sin begins in the heart but
affects our whole lives.

1. A DIVIDED HEART LEADS TO SIN

READ 1 KINGS 11:4-8

King Solomon married many foreign wives who did not worship the God of Abraham. They worshiped a multitude of idols and foreign gods that were strictly forbidden in the Law of Moses. Solomon even eventually built altars and high places for these idols.

HOW DID SOLOMON FALL INTO IDOLATRY?

Solomon failed to guard his heart as he had warned his son to do in the book of Proverbs (see Prov. 4:23). His divided heart eventually caused him to break the first commandment—to have no other gods except Yahweh. Your heart is the center of your spiritual life. The battle for your love, allegiance, and life begins and ends in the heart.

WHAT COMPETES FOR OUR HEARTS? WHAT ALTARS MIGHT WE BE BUILDING TO OUR IDOLS?

So many people, causes, and things are competing for your heart's attention and devotion. Popularity, sports, relationships, and social media accounts are in a fierce battle to be #1 in your life. If we aren't careful, our social media accounts can become little shrines dedicated to the advancement of our image or brand. They can become high places where we sacrifice for likes and follows and put our time on the altar as an offering. We shake our heads at Solomon, but we, too, can fall into the trap of worshiping all kinds of idols.

2. A REBELLIOUS HEART RECEIVES JUDGMENT

READ 1 KINGS 11:9-13

WHY WAS SOLOMON WITHOUT EXCUSE?

How could this wisest man in the world be so unwise? Did God come through on His promise? God did make Solomon the wisest man (see 1 Kings 4:29-31). God later warned Solomon on two occasions, but Solomon refused to listen (see 1 Kings 11:9-10). Solomon had been instructed by David to be careful to follow the Law (see 1 Kings 2:1-4). The Law was clear that Israel should not worship idols and should not marry other people who did (see 1 Kings 11:1-2).



1 KINGS 11:4-8

11:4-8. “His heart was no longer wholly God’s. The Lord had ceased to be the major factor in his life. Once this shift occurred, the next steps into idolatry became more natural and easier to accept.”¹⁷

11:4-8. “Ironically, Solomon worships the gods of people he has conquered and already controls. What could he possibly gain from such activity? The whole episode makes no sense, just as idolatry itself makes no sense.”¹⁸

11:4-8. “The covenant contained specific warnings about intermarriage with the nations (Deut. 7:1-5). This review of Solomon’s reign has a particular focus on that failure. Solomon builds altars instead of tearing them down in order to appease the women who are part of his harem . . . Though these relationships may have begun as a matter of political expediency, the end result is the catastrophe Deuteronomy warned would happen.”¹⁹

1 KINGS 11:9-13

11:9-13. “Of all the sins recorded in Scripture, God takes idolatry the most seriously, for no other sin has the capability of wrecking the entire covenant by itself.”²⁰



BIG QUESTION

HOW CAN I GUARD MY HEART?

Your heart isn’t in a static, fixed position. It can be hardened, softened, darkened, and illuminated. One thing is for sure—it will not stay the same. Solomon began wholeheartedly serving the Lord, but later his heart was divided. He failed to listen to his own wisdom: “Pay attention to my words; listen closely to my sayings. Don’t lose sight of them; keep them within your heart . . . Guard your heart above all else” (Prov. 4:20-21,23). Your eyes and ears are the doors to your heart. Your heart will be affected by what you are seeing and hearing. One of the keys to guarding your heart is guarding your eyes and ears.



SCRIPTURE READING

MAIN POINT

Sin begins in the heart but affects our whole lives.

If anything, Solomon's wisdom makes him all the more culpable. Here's a great example of the difference between possessing wisdom and possessing the moral strength to apply it. It is possible to know better and still not do better if your heart is divided. This was not a matter of ignorance but a matter of affection, and so it is with our sin.

WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES OF SOLOMON'S SIN?

God promised that David would always have a son on the throne under one condition: "If your sons take care to walk faithfully before me with all their heart and all their soul" (1 Kings 2:4). Only one generation after David, his son was not wholeheartedly devoted to the Lord. As a result, God promised to tear the kingdom away from Solomon's sons.

3. AN ARROGANT HEART RESULTS IN DIVISION

READ 1 KINGS 12:3-5,8-17

WHERE DID REHOBAM GO WRONG? WHY MUST YOU BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE VOICES YOU LISTEN TO?

Rehoboam listened to the poor counsel of his friends rather than the wisdom of the elders. We, too, need to be discerning about the voices we listen to. Peers and friends may not always have the wisest advice. It may be hard to let them down or not listen to what they tell you, but it is far better to get wise counsel than to just please your peers. Bad counsel can have consequences far greater than temporarily displeasing a friend. If you seek the wisdom of elders, be willing to put it into practice—even if it isn't what you want to hear.

HOW DOES PRIDE RUIN RELATIONSHIPS?

Pride will wreck any relationship. In this case, Rehoboam's pride ruined his relationship with all of Israel. Pride overflows in several ways—selfishness, anger, impatience, stubbornness, and more. On the other hand, relationships thrive when we humble ourselves and seek mutual submission to one another (Eph. 5:21). We try to outdo one another in love by taking "the lead in honoring one another" (Rom. 12:10).



11:9-13. “The Lord has revealed himself to Solomon, blessed him, and honored him. In return, Solomon has turned his back on the Lord . . . Only one thing keeps Solomon on the throne at all, and that is the promise the Lord made to David in 2 Samuel 7:1-17. For David’s sake the Lord allows Solomon to remain in power.”²¹

11:9-13. “Solomon’s sin will soon cause the nation to crash from the heights it has achieved. His idolatry will lead to idolatry among the people. Israel has begun the long road to exile, though they do not know yet that their actions entail such consequences.”²²

1 KINGS 12:3-5,8-17

12:3-17. “When the three days are over, Rehoboam delivers the harsh message. The author explains why ‘the king did not listen to the people.’ This lack of judgment and its results, this ‘turn of events,’ ‘was from the Lord’ so that God’s word through Ahijah could come true. Nothing occurs here because of ‘chance.’ There is no ‘chance.’ God is sovereign. Still, Rehoboam’s decision is his own. The text maintains the tension between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility that pervades all of Scripture.”²³



ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE

SINLESSNESS OF JESUS

While the Bible affirms the full humanity of Jesus, it also affirms that Jesus was completely sinless throughout His earthly life (see 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22). Nevertheless, because Jesus was fully human, He experienced real temptation of sin, as seen during His trials in the wilderness (see Matt. 4). Yet even though His trials and temptations were real and similar to the rest of humanity’s, Hebrews 4:15 confirms that Jesus did not sin.

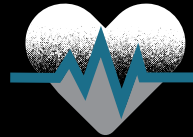


CHRIST CONNECTION

Solomon was a king whose reign was marked by prosperity and peace, but in the end, Solomon's sinful compromise led to the division of the kingdom. During His earthly ministry, Jesus spoke of Himself when He claimed "something greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31). Whereas Solomon's sinful choices divided the kingdom, Christ's righteous submission to God established a new unity for God's people.



HEAD



HEART



HANDS

HOW DO YOU DISCERN BETWEEN GOOD ADVICE AND BAD ADVICE?

Young people can give good counsel and elders can give bad counsel. The real question of whether advice is good or bad is not so much about who is giving it, but about where they got their perspective from. The key question is to ask: How does this advice match up with God's Word? God's Word is the standard for all wisdom and godliness.

HOW CAN HUMILITY LEAD TO WISDOM? WHY ARE BOTH IMPORTANT FOR US?

When you understand that you need the counsel of others and you are willing to receive it, you will grow in wisdom. But without humility, you will not be willing to listen. You won't seek help like you ought to. Perhaps the first step to more wisdom is understanding that you are in need of wisdom. That is why both Solomon and Paul warned us not to be wise in our own eyes (see Prov. 3:7; Rom. 12:16).

WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO WHOLEHEARTEDLY SERVE THE LORD? HOW CAN WE FIGHT THE TEMPTATION TO HOLD PART OF OURSELVES OR OUR LIVES FROM GOD?

When you are serving God wholeheartedly, Jesus is Lord over all. He has access to and control over every area of your life. It seems that Solomon kept this one area of his life (his marriages) for himself. That area of his life was not surrendered to God, and it cost him in other areas. The same will be true of us. Let God have it all before the parts you keep for yourself begin to spoil the rest. When He has it all, you will live in His wisdom and experience the goodness of walking with God.