

Our Solution Prefigured: Wisdom and Folly

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 March 2015

Preacher: Tobin Miller

[0 : 00] How you guys doing? That's good. That's, that's, that's, hmm, so-so. How you guys doing? Okay? Okay. Hey, so we are, I just need to lay it out there. I'm going to talk about it from the very beginning. We're going to be talking about wisdom, and we're going to be talking about folly today, or stupidity. And often when I do sermons, people come up to me afterwards. I mean, it's amazing how often this happens, and they go, you know my story. You were talking about me, weren't you?

And I'm like, no, I don't know your story. I know some of your stories, but I would never talk about your story up here. I was talking about my story and the things that I struggle with. And so I just want to lay it out here at the beginning so everybody knows who we're talking about. So I want to begin by asking, is there anybody in here who's ever done anything stupid?

I mean, is there anybody in here who's done something really, really dumb? I mean, have you ever done this dumb thing over and over and over? And you wonder why you keep doing it, but you just keep doing it because you just can never learn. Is anybody in here like that? Now, wives, stop elbowing your husbands. But I'm going to take it on a chin right here.

Guys, I got to admit, I think guys, guys are the dumbest of the sexes. And I'm just going to say it right here. I mean, I just, you just watch like American stupid videos or something like that. There's never a girl tied to a car on a skateboard going 60 miles an hour doing a stunt, right? There's never a girl who's riding her bicycle off the house and trying to do a flip before they land on the wheels. It's always the guys that do it. So I think the guys, we just struggle with being stupid. So, okay, so now what I want you to do, I want you to turn to the person next to you. And I want you to say, you're not alone. I do dumb things also. Come on. You're not alone. I do dumb things also. Pat's not here. So I'll just, you say it to Pat. Okay. Okay. Do you feel better? Do you feel better? I mean, I feel better. I mean, I'm not alone, honey. You're not alone, right? I feel a lot better on that and we should feel better. So I want to talk about this today. Just put it out there because

I think we're talking about all of ours. I don't want to get so heavy and intense though. This passage is a pretty intense passage. So if you're joining us just today, you are going, what the heck's going on here? And we've been deep in this story of God's story, our story.

[2 : 37] And we've been about eight weeks into this and we're walking through the Bible and we're picking out certain themes of the Bible and what God is saying in these passages. And last week we saw God's people basically, they basically reject God. I mean, last week they came to the prophet Samuel and they said, we don't want God anymore. We want a king because all the other nations have a king. We want a king. And Samuel, God's prophet, he was not happy about this whatsoever. I mean, it's almost like he wanted to call fire down on the people.

But God said to them, just give them what they want. Okay. They want that. Give it to them what they want. And what you're going to see today in the passage, and I put this huge book together because you're going to have to trust me, but you can go through it, but you can go through it later. In Deuteronomy 17, which is on page three, 500 years before this even happens, God knew that this was going to happen. And so God wrote Deuteronomy 17 because he knew that the people would one day want a king instead of him. And so we picked up last week where they pick Saul as their king. Remember why they pick Saul? Saul is this tall guy. He's handsome. He's head and shoulders above the rest. He's charismatic and he's strong. But what we saw last week is that quickly Saul just kind of fails. He's actually a coward.

He kind of hides and he lacks just integrity. And so God sends Samuel back and Samuel comes to this 12-year-old boy named David and he anoints David as God's next king. And we're told that David has a heart after God, that he loves God. It's not that he's perfect, but we're told that he has this heart that is sensitive to God and he wants to follow the Lord. And so last week we got to the story where David is now 17 years old and he comes and he kills this giant. He kills this giant

named Goliath. And we learned a lot about David last week.

I was incredibly challenged and I hope you went back and you looked at it. We talked about David's passion for God and we asked the questions, do we have passion for God? And do we have a passion for God's name and his honor and his character? And does that bother us when his character is thrown in the mud? We saw that David, he had a different focus than the rest of us. David saw things that no one else saw in the past. David didn't see a giant. He just saw somebody who was outside of the covenant and who was making fun of God. And he was really bothered by that. And we learned that God wants us to see what's going on in our lives and call it for what it is too, that we all face giants. And sometimes we hide these giants in our lives, but they're there. And we learned that you can't have victory over the giant until you name it for what it is and you confess it. We saw last week that David trusted the Lord. And we realized that trust doesn't just happen. That it's over this long period of time in his life when lions and bears came in and attacked him. David just put it all on the line and he said, God, if you're not here, I'm going to perish. And he just did it. And we saw over and over again that God came through for him and saved him. And so he had this trust built up in his character and this foundation of who God is and his goodness. And that we struggle with that sometimes because we don't trust God. We don't put him on the line. We don't put ourselves on the line. We don't think that he will radically come through for us. And so we encourage each one of us to go on a step of faith on this journey. And some of us, the journey faith is tithing. Some of the journey faith is getting in community groups. Some of the journey faith is serving. Some of the journey faith is just picking up our Bible and starting reading it at five minutes a day. We're all, we're encouraged to take this step of faith to see if God would come through and strengthen us. And then we learned about this idea of a champion. It was only used one time in all of the Old Testament. It was this idea of someone who stands between. And Goliath was the person who stood between the armies. And David came out and he stood between the armies.

[6:17] But we all have a greater champion. His name is Jesus. And he stands between us and our ultimate opponent, death. And he's victorious. And we asked each other what our champions were.

And who do we have our trust in? Who do we have our faith in? And so we're going to continue this this week and we're going to talk about kings. I just, we were going to go to another chapter, but I felt like I wanted to come back here because something just kept gnawing on me as I was reading and going through scripture. And so I want to keep looking at this idea of kings. And I want to, us, when we start off, to remember that kings are really important. And as kings go, nations go. And as kings go, people go. I mean, in ancient times, you look to the king and he was the one who's going to give you words of wisdom, kind of like today. We're hoping that our leaders do that same thing. And whatever the king values, the people value. And whatever the king worships, the people will worship. And whatever the king sacrifices to, whatever he hopes in, so will the people. We're asked these questions, are the people better off after they have this king? The king blessed them. You know, you can learn a lot about a king from their people. You can watch how the people act and you can watch how the people interact and how they talk and what they do with their lives and what they sacrifice to. I've often wondered what people think about our God when they see us in the workplace and at the restaurant. What are they thinking about the God we serve?

Is he a great, massive God or is he just this kind of joke like Santa Claus who comes through for us all the time? So kings are incredibly important. And by the end of David's life, last week, his life was a mess. I mean, his life is out of control. His family is suicidal, right? One of his sons rapes his half-sister Tamar because she's good-looking to him. And David hears about it, but David doesn't do anything about it because he's in his palace. And David basically did the same thing to Bathsheba, right? He took Bathsheba away and raped her and took her from Uriah and killed her husband. And so the father doesn't say anything because the son just basically did the same thing that the father did. So he doesn't do that. And so another son gets so angry that his father doesn't come out and say something that the son puts his trick together and he kills that brother who raped his sister from his mom. And then he starts his civil war and he goes after David. He goes after the king. He goes after his father. And he wants to kill his father. And in the last act of David's life, almost,

God asked David and David puts Solomon over the kingdom. And so that's where we're at today. You know, remember, it's important because in all this craziness in David's life and in our life, the

story keeps coming out that God is faithful. God is faithful. God is faithful. Will you trust him? [9:16] Will you trust him? Will you trust him? And he's the God of the covenant and he keeps coming towards us. And we're going to see this blessings that he's throwing out. He's going to pour it out on Solomon's life. And Solomon's life is kind of like at this apex of Jewish culture. It's like the golden age of the Hebrew culture. I mean, it doesn't ever get this better than this for the Jews. Never.

And what we're going to see is that in about 20 years, it just kind of falls apart. And the amazing thing to me as we read God's word is that God just keeps coming and he keeps blessing and he keeps pursuing his people. And he doesn't say like we say sometimes when we're really frustrated, I'm just going to give up on you. I'm not going to talk to you anymore. But he just keeps pursuing us. And so I put all of this in your bulletin. So it's craziness, but it's so rich. And I put the high points and the low points of Solomon's story in here. And so if you trust me, I want to walk through it with us because I think there's some things that we need to learn as God's people. And I think that there's some things that we can learn so that we don't do stupid things, right? Because we don't want to do stupid things.

We want to receive God's blessings also. Solomon's name means peace. And in 1 Kings 3, it's page 3 of your bulletin, we are told that he loves the Lord and he walks with David just like he walks with the Lord just like his dad David did. And then one night, we're told that God comes to Solomon in a dream. Can you imagine this? God comes to Solomon in a dream and he says, Solomon, ask whatever you want and I'm going to give it to you. Now I've got to stop here.

I mean, you have to stop, right? Because I ask questions all the time and I'm usually asking about myself, but what would you ask for? If Solomon, you're like Solomon and God comes to you tonight in your dream and you know it's him, there's no shadow of a doubt. It's not the bad pizza you ate the night, you know, two hours before you went to bed. But God says, hey, ask whatever you want and I'm going to give it to you. What would you ask?

[11:15] Well, verse 7 says that Solomon, it's probably the only time in his life that he's humble. It's probably the only time that he's contrite. And he just says, I'm just like this little child. Basically means I don't know what to do. I don't know how to do it. This thing's too amazing. I don't know what to do with all these people you've given me. They're so great in number and they're so massive and they're out of control. And so Solomon asked God, will you give me understanding? Will you give me a heart to judge your people, your people rightly? Because these people need a judge to help them in their way. They need someone who can help them see what's good and what's evil.

Can you give me that heart? Can you give me these things? He asked for wisdom. And in verse 10, we're told that God is so pleased that Solomon does that. He's, that Solomon doesn't ask for himself.

He just asks for the people. He asks as a servant. He asks for wisdom. And so God gives him wisdom. And wisdom is defined in the Bible as basically living your life with God in mind.

Living your life with God in mind. It's obedience to the Lord. It actually means, the word actually means to come under the authority of something. And so whatever you come under authority of, whatever you're trained in, whatever you're disciplined in, that thing controls your life.

So you can have wisdom in the ways of the world. It means that you've come under the authority of the ways of the world and you know how to live life in a worldly way. You can have wisdoms in the way of HSBC. And so you know how to live within HSBC and how to survive within HSBC and how to move up the chain within HSBC. Or you can have wisdom in, in God's word. And so Solomon, which is astounding to me because his background as a family is a little craziness, he just asks for, for wisdom to follow God's people and help them. And we're told that he becomes the wisest person ever. He becomes the wisest king ever. He's given this massive amounts of discernment. God, because God is so pleased with him that God actually honors him. God doesn't just give him wisdom and discernment, but he gives him riches and honor. And he gives all these things. And it is amazing. And immediately after that story, you, you have this story. And we all know the story, don't we? The Solomon faces these two women, right? They both have smartphones. And they both go to sleep with their smartphone. And the lady who has a Samsung falls asleep on her smartphone and she breaks her Samsung. And so she goes to the other lady who has the iPhone because she's always wanted an iPhone. And so she grabs the iPhone and they're fighting over this iPhone. And so they come to Solomon and then one says, it's my iPhone. The other goes, no, it's my

iPhone. And Solomon goes, okay, I'll tell you what, we're going to take a sword and we're going to divide the iPhone in half. And the lady who had the Samsung, because it was a copy of an iPhone anyway, and it's cheap and she can get one any day, she just goes, oh, go ahead.

[14:13] Because she's just angry because the other person has an iPhone and she just wants the iPhone destroyed. And so the other lady who has the iPhone says, no, the iPhone is too precious. It's original technology. It's not copied. Give it to her. And what you're told in the past, he said, David knows right away, right? He knows right away who owns the baby, right? It's the mother who owns the baby. The mother who, some of you are going, iPhone, smartphone, David, what's going on here?

But I'm trying to modernize the story. David knows right away. And in verse 28, we're told that when the nations hear of his wisdom, they fear him. They fear him because they know that God is behind him, that God is working in his life, and that God is making something happen amazing in Israel. Verse Kings 4, we're told that under his rule, Judah and Israel explodes in size. And the passage says in Hebrew that everybody is drinking and eating, that means that things are really good. Verse 21 says that he's ruling over all this land. I mean, it's all the land of the promise, all the land of the covenant.

He's ruling over all that land. And then all the nations come to Jerusalem to be blessed by Solomon. All the nations, kings and everybody comes to be blessed by Solomon and his people. And basically what you see is that God is fulfilling his covenant. He's fulfilling the land. He's fulfilling the people. He's fulfilling the blessings. He's fulfilling all these things through this guy named Solomon who just asked for wisdom. I mean, we're told that Solomon writes about 3,000 Proverbs. And Proverbs are just these lessons for life. They're not laws. They're not rules. But they're good lessons to live by if you live by them. And he writes over 1,000 songs. And the pinnacle of Solomon's career is God allows him to build his temple. Remember, he didn't allow the father to build the temple because David was a man of blood. He was a warrior. And so he lets his son build the temple. And he builds his temple. And this temple is massive. And if you go with us next year to Israel on the Israel trip in the Hannahs, you're going to see the foundation of this temple. We're going to actually go underneath the temple. And these stones are like 40 feet long and 30 feet wide. And they're like 800 tons. I mean, they're amazing. And so Solomon builds this thing. And it's like the apex of Jewish culture. And it's never been better. I mean, everything is coming up roses. It's just perfect.

[16:36] God's promises are fulfilled. But what you see in the passage and what we didn't talk about yet is that over and over, God is saying, hey, but be careful. Be careful. Make sure you obey me. Make sure you trust me. Because if you do that, I'm going to continue to pour out my blessings and my spirit upon you.

But if you don't, I'm going to remove those blessings. I think we get that mixed up today, don't we? I mean, because a lot of us, we want God's blessings, but we don't think about obedience.

And we don't think about following him and obeying him and trusting him. We just want the good stuff. And we get angry when God doesn't give us those good things. But the Bible says that God doesn't have to give us anything.

But he chooses to, and he gives us his son. And we have that forever. But the blessings are contingent on how well we obey.

And are we faithful to him? And so we're told throughout history, and even the historians, Josephus, say that this time, all the eyes are looking at Israel because they want to see if Solomon is going to fulfill this destiny that Israel has, that God has for his people.

[17:49] So what happens? What do you think happens? Well, it's not good, right? I mean, it's not good. Solomon goes from loving the Lord fully and being the wisest man in chapter 3 to one in chapter 11, which we read, that says that his heart was turned from the Lord.

His heart was hardened and callous. I mean, things declined so quickly in less than 20 years. And what we realize is that Solomon does a lot of stupid things.

He does a lot of dumb things. He does a lot of unwise things for the wisest person in the world. And what I want to do is briefly in our time, I just want to look at a couple of these. And I want to see if we can learn from them.

Because I'm trying to learn from them. And maybe we can learn from them together so that we can stop doing foolish things as we walk with the Lord. I mean, the first thing that sticks out here in your passage is on page 3, 1 Kings 3, is that even before he came to know the Lord, he struggled.

Solomon struggled. He struggled with obeying the Lord fully. I mean, if you read the passage, it says that he left room for his passions.

[18 : 55] He hedged his bet in Texas English. He hedged his bet. He hid some chips just in case things weren't going to work out well. In 1 Kings 11, 4, which we read, it basically said his heart wasn't wholly devoted to the Lord.

He was partially devoted to the Lord. I mean, you read the words in the passage, and it says, And he followed the Lord except. So whenever you see except, you want to go there and see what he's saying.

And it says, except he was sacrificing in the high places. Now, the high places in the Bible are never, ever, ever a good thing. Ever a good thing. You don't ever want to be on a high place. I mean, the high places, when we go back to the temple at the Tower of Babel, it's a high place. It's a place where cultic worship happened. It's where human sacrifice happened. It's where massive orgies happened. It's where the gods came down, and you integrated with the gods. And so the high places were never, ever a good thing.

The book of Deuteronomy and Numbers says that the minute you come into the land and you see a high place, you tear it down. You destroy it because this is not what God's people do. This is where the pagans live. You don't want to be a part of pagan worship.

[20 : 01] You want to destroy these things. But Solomon, he had a good excuse. You see what his excuse was? He says, well, the temple's not ready yet. And so we need this place to worship.

And we see that he kind of, he kind of obeyed. He's kind of like a high school kid, right? Do you have high school teenagers? What I've realized as my kids get into teenage years is that they never disobey.

I mean, there's always an excuse for why they disobeyed. And the excuse for why they disobeyed is amazing sometimes. And so they say that, and I have two kids. I think they probably never sinned their whole life because they always have this great excuse for why they didn't obey.

And Solomon is like that too. In 1 Kings 3, it says he made alliances with Egypt. Now think about this. 800 years earlier, God did all these, imagine incredible miracles to get people out of Egypt, to help them escape bondage, to help them escape the idols, to get away from all these things.

And here you have this king, the wisest king in the world, and he's introducing idols and pagan worship. He's introducing Egypt back into God's people.

[21 : 11] And God's been saying, no, no, separate yourself, be different, be different, trust me. And he even marries Pharaoh's daughter. And of course, it's for political reasons, there's economic reasons, there's military reasons, it's going to make the country stronger.

I mean, he has all the excuses in the world, right? Because he knows how to partially obey. In 1 Kings 11, it says that he has multiple wives.

I mean, it says that he had over a thousand wives. Now, I have a lot to say on this topic. But I have my wife, and I don't want to get beat up by her tonight.

So I think that I should just be quiet. But can you imagine a thousand mother-in-laws? A thousand mother-in-laws.

Enough said, okay? But he does this thing, and he's warned that if he does it, if he moves in, he's going to have, his heart's going to be changed. But of course, he has good reasons, and so he kind of partially obeys.

[22 : 21] And what we see throughout this passage is in his life that Solomon, he struggled with being wholly devoted to the Lord. He struggled with being fully devoted to God.

And the question I want to ask you, because I've been asking myself these last couple weeks, is do we? Do we struggle with being wholly devoted to the Lord?

I mean, the Bible says to know God is to love him, and to love him is to obey him. And Solomon obeyed 80%.

And, you know, guys, and I struggle with this, and I'm being very honest. I know that a lot of us struggle with this idea of obedience. And a lot of us struggle with a God who demands 100% or nothing.

And a lot of us struggle with this idea of being wholly devoted, all or nothing. And 80% sounds really good. 80% sounds really good to me also.

[23 : 26] But think about it. I'm about to do some weddings in the next couple weeks. And what if you were at the wedding and you listened to me, and I went to the person, and I said, do you

promise to love and honor and cherish and to be devoted to your spouse in sickness and in health, in poorness and in abundance for as long as you both shall live?

And you heard the other person say, you know, I promise to be 80% faithful. Well, 80% is pretty good, isn't it? What would you think?

Well, you would think right away, man, there's going to be a problem in this relationship because there's not an understanding of what a relationship really is. Or what if you came into the ER? You know, I worked in a trauma unit for a couple years, and I was doing my internship there, and you came in, and you were all beat up, and we were about to do this surgical procedure on you, and I leaned over to you and said, you are in good luck because last night I sterilized the equipment 80%.

So there's an 80% sterilization on this, so you're going to do really well. What would you think? You'd be like, I'm out of here.

[24 : 41] Or if you want, and you had some cancer surgery, and after the surgery the doctor comes back, and he says something like, you know, 98%. I got 98% of the cancer out of you.

That's pretty good, right? That's higher than Asian F. 98%, right? Asian F is 97%. 98%, that's pretty good. But what would we say? We would say, oh, that's not good at all.

And we learn from Solomon's life that partial obedience isn't good, that it's never good, and that obedience is always for our good. And I've struggled with this in trying to understand this, and it's taken me years to understand that when God asks us to obey, it's not for his good, it's for Tobin's good.

It's the best thing for Tobin. And the question is, are we going to obey? Are we going to obey God always? Because what we see in Solomon's life is that partial obedience doesn't just hurt us, it hurts everybody around us.

The next stupid thing that Solomon does is that he does basically, after chapter 3, after God, so all these happen before chapter 3, right around chapter 3 time, so God comes and speaks to him even as he's doing these things.

[25 : 51] But after chapter 3, what you see is Solomon just acts totally different. I mean, he almost acts like the law doesn't apply to him. It's almost like he acts like he's not even 80% obedient. I mean, he's not even 80% obedient.

He just doesn't obey at all. It's like he's above the law. He's like an exception. He's like the wisest person in the world. He knows what he can do and what he can't do. Have you ever said that to yourself?

I have. Well, I can handle this. I know what to do. I know what the limits are. I can stop here, and everything's going to be okay, and it's not going to be able to do anything about that. I mean, he just seemed to be living all these things, and God said, no.

Again, Deuteronomy 17, page 3, the top of page 3. 500 years before, God knew this was going to happen, and God wrote these rules, and he said to the king, he said this, whenever you become king, do not accumulate massive amounts of wealth for yourself.

It will make you feel self-sufficient. Your heart will turn away from the Lord. Instead, bless your people. Whenever you become king, do not depend on horses and chariots for your protection and might, especially those from Egypt.

[27 : 02] Instead, trust in the Lord, because I'll take care of you. Whenever you become king, do not accumulate many whys for yourselves, because they're going to turn your hearts elsewhere.

How do you think Solomon did with those? Do you think he was wise? Do you think he's foolish? 1 Kings 10, 14 and 27, page 2 says this.

It says that silver is so common in the kingdom of Solomon that it's worthless. It says that at least 800,000 ounces of gold yearly come into him just from one source.

I don't know what gold is selling at today, but if you do \$1,000 an ounce, he gets \$50 million a year just from one source every year for 40 years as he's king. So he has a lot of wealth.

1 Kings 10, 26. He gathers many chariots and horsemen. The passage says that he has over 1,400 chariots, and he has 12,000 horses, and he places all of these things in fortress cities to protect him.

[28 : 10] And where do you think the horses are from? Where are the horses from? Verse 28, where are they from? Egypt, right?

It's exactly what God said not to do. He just basically disobeys altogether. 1 Kings 11, 1 through 4, he loved many wives from many countries.

Now, again, I could say a lot more about this, but I won't. But what we see is that he turned his heart away from God. And the amazing thing to me about Solomon's life, and you've got to think about this, guys, he started off and he wanted wisdom to judge God's people.

He wanted to be a servant. He wanted to serve God's people like a lot of us want to do, especially when we enter into ministry. And I just wonder if he had asked, instead of wisdom to judge other people's hearts, I wonder if he had asked, God, would you give me wisdom to judge my heart? Because my heart has problems. I wonder if he asked for that first, before he asked to judge other people's hearts, if things would have been different. But what we see in the passages is that Solomon just doesn't obey.

[29 : 21] He just doesn't follow the Lord. He's at the pinnacle. God has given him everything. And it's just like he's kind of above all these things. It's getting heavy, isn't it?

I mean, I've been thinking, you think about this for one hour, and then you're going to forget and go eat dim sum or grab a beer. But I've been thinking about it for a long time, and it's been hitting me in my heart. So I got asked the question, how about us?

I mean, when God's word clearly says something like Romans 12, do not be conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, do we obey it?

I mean, do we really, really obey it? I mean, are we wholly devoted to it? Not just 80%. I mean, are we, do we obey?

Or do we say like I say, yeah, God, yeah, I understand, and it's great, but your grace is just going to come to me, and right now it's just a really difficult time. You know, it's just a special time. I just can't do this. I really need this right now.

[30 : 37] I really need this thing in my life to come through for me just to give me hope and encouragement because things are difficult. You know, I know I'm allowing these things into my eyes, and they probably shouldn't be there, but, you know, it's okay because I can handle it because it's just a special period.

I know my words maybe aren't as encouraging as they need to be, but it's okay because I've had this rough day, and that's just who I am. You know, I know I have this anger issue, and I'm struggling with these anger problems in my life, but I'll get over it.

I'll learn about it sometime. You know, these resources, they're really, you know, God, they're really kind of my resources, you know, and I just don't have the resources right now to give to what you're doing, but I'll make it up in the future if I think about it.

You know, my past life, there's all these things that I struggled with before I came to Christ, and all these things are kind of grabbing on me, and they're trying to pull me back into the closet, and, you know, stepping into the closet is okay sometimes, right, because it's just a little way, and I always keep one foot out, and I can always just pull myself back out, and I hear Solomon, and he was the wisest person who ever spoke, and I'm sure his excuses were amazing, right?

I mean, I'm sure his excuses were so much better than mine, and they're probably better than my oldest daughter. He had these great excuses, but the question is, do we obey, and do we trust God?

[31 : 55] Do we believe that God is for us, and do we trust Him? One last thought. 11, verse 1, 1 Kings 11, verses 2.

In Hebrew, we should read it in Hebrew. If I could speak better Hebrew, I would read it out loud, but what it basically says here is, Solomon held fast to these in love, but what you could have said is, nevertheless, nevertheless, Solomon held fast to these in love.

God said, don't do these things, don't do these things, they're going to turn your heart away, they're going to turn your heart away, and in Hebrew, it says, nevertheless, Solomon held fast to these in love, and that word held fast is stuck, glued.

It's like this fly that gets stuck on this flypaper. He's just stuck there because he's compromised, and the scary thing is that in chapter 3, we talked about it, he saved the baby because of his wisdom, but in chapter 11, just a couple years later, he's actually building these altars to sacrifice his kiddos to, and he's throwing the babies in the fire, and what I've seen in Solomon's life, and what I realize is that Solomon, he just never had anybody in his life that he would listen to.

Did you know that? I mean, the wisest person in the world, he never had anybody he would listen to. I mean, he never faces sins. He never repents.

[33 : 26] He never confronts his weakness for his many wives. He never looks at these things that are calling him to not wholly obey. I mean, when Nathan the prophet came to his daddy, David, and he said, you're the man.

David just basically, he repents, and he says, I'm the man. I'm sinful. I'm wrong. But when God sends the person to Solomon to do the same thing about his wives, Solomon tries to kill him. And so Solomon just had this heart that was unrepentant, and he never thought that he needed these things. So I want to end with this thought for us, and it's this thing that haunts me right now as I read and as I've been praying about these last couple weeks, and it's this, what are your neverthelesses?

What are the things that are nevertheless that God says, I want you to do this, but you say, you know, I know you said that, but nevertheless, I can't.

What are your weaknesses? Because you can be for sure that the enemy knows your weaknesses. Are you dealing with your weaknesses?

[34 : 51] Are we as a church dealing with our weaknesses? That's why we started the care ministry, because we wanted a safe place for people to come. That's why we train up all the community group leaders, because we want them to be able to help people when they face these struggles.

Are you dealing with the weaknesses in your life? Are you grabbing onto these things? Are you getting rid of them, or are you going to pass them on to your children? I mean, again, the reason Solomon never heard from his dad, because his dad didn't want to confront what he had done. And I wonder how many of us as parents aren't dealing with these whatsoever and these partial obediences.

And we're thinking in our lives, yeah, it's just me. My kids aren't going to ever know. It's never going to affect anybody. It's okay. But that's not what the message says. That's not what the Bible says. That's not what the passage says. As the king goes, all the people go. As the father goes, all the family goes. As the mother goes, all the family goes. Right?

[36 : 01] I wonder if David knew years later what was going to happen because of his choices. So in verse 9, what you see is that God comes to him in chapter 11, the first thing we read up there, and God comes and says, because you've done this, because you've done this, I'm ripping the kingdom apart.

I'm tearing it apart. You've lost the blessings. In the kingdom, what you see is that is apex, and it falls apart, and it gets divided, and what you see is 20 kings afterwards, and they all fight, and they all kill each other.

There's a couple that are good, and they come back to the Lord, but most of them are corrupt and not good, and as the king goes, the nation goes, and you know the story. Solomon left. He got to the temple, and he got to the, he got to his people, God's people at the apex, and when he leaves because of his choices and the things he chose not to obey, he leaves the people at their worst point, and they struggle with all these things, and the king, as the king goes, the people go, and the king fails the people.

Did you know that? And I don't want us to fail our kids, and I don't want us to fail the future generations that come after us at Watermark, and I don't want us to fail the Christians in your office place, and I want you to be able to leave this mark of integrity and love and wholly obedient to the Lord so that the people that come way long after you at Samsung or Apple or wherever, that they just, they're blessed by your obedience and your faithfulness to God, and that's why I think God has us here.

That's why he has us here, Watermark. He doesn't have us here just to feel good about ourselves because we could do that in heaven for eternity, but he has us here because he wants us to be his ambassadors to everywhere we go, and yes, sometimes it's going to get rough, and sometimes it's going to get hard, but the whole story, what we've been talking about in the Kings is that we can trust him.

[37 : 52] We can trust him. We can trust him with our whatsoever and the neverthelesses. So the Kings fail, and a thousand years later, God has to send another king, and this king he sends is the true Davidic king.

It's Jesus. He's the one all these passages have been pointed to. If you take this, they all come down to this apex, and they point to Jesus, and when this king comes, we're told in Matthew 12 that

he's greater than Solomon.

And then he rules, and he gives life, and he heals, and he gives hope, and he restores, and he blesses, and he does it because he's perfectly obedient. Do you know that? Jesus is perfectly obedient, even to the point of dying on the cross for you.

And so the question we have to ask ourselves as we leave the Kings now, when we go into the Prophets next week, we have to ask ourselves, which king are we following? We need to come before the Lord and maybe just do some confessing in our life.

We need to pray and ask God to show us, are there things nevertheless that we're holding on to, and what are we giving our kids, and what are we giving our office workers, and are we giving them blessings, are we giving them curses? We need to spend some time as a family praying about those things and thinking about those things.

[39 : 10] We need to ask ourselves, are we going to obey 100%? We need to ask, are we going to accept his rule over all the areas of our life? We need to ask, are we going to follow him, the one who makes it all right because he does it all perfect?

Or are we going to live stupid, foolish lives, even as Christians? We're going to miss out on what God wants to give us.

I was talking to Rachel one time. I'm trying to spend more time with my kids, and Rachel said to me, you know, Dad, you have some really good advice. The problem is you just don't take it sometimes. So this is my 14-year-old, 15-year-old telling me that, right? 15-year-old. You know, I want you to hear my heart here. I don't try to become a great dad so that my parents will copy me.

There's nowhere in the scripture that says that. There's nowhere it says be like these people. But what the passage says is be like Christ. And if you're here struggling with your parenting, join the club.

[40 : 22] Talk to people about it. Go to the care ministries. Talk to me. I can share all these stories with you. Talk to someone you feel who's safe. But realize that your parents, your kids don't need a perfect parent.

They need a perfect Jesus. And you can be a perfect parent if you don't point them to Christ. And you can give them to all the right schools and do all these right things and all these other things that we think in Hong Kong means to be a perfect parent, and your kids are going to be lost.

They don't need those things. Ultimately, they need Christ. Christ. So don't point them to you. Point them to him. Right?

Amen? Okay. Father, thank you for this day. We thank you for our brothers and sisters that we are broken and imperfect and we fail and we try to obey and we fail and you know it and you keep pursuing us as your covenant people and you love us.

You just ask us to be obedient and to trust you. And I think it comes down in my life to trust. Do I really trust you to be good? Do I really trust you to take care of me? Do I really trust that you're out for my own interest?

[41 : 30] And if I really trust those things then obedience is easy. But sometimes in the shadows it's not. And the amazing thing about your word, the gospel, is it pursues us in the shadows.

And it frees us from our demons and our darkness. And I pray that we would be people who have that happen. We point to an amazing Savior who wants to do it for others.

Father, we love you. We're so humbled by your mercy and grace. We pray these things in your son Jesus' name. Amen.