

# Characters - Solomon

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## REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will pray about what battle Jesus is calling me to fight.

## THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

This week we look at a man in the Bible named Solomon and what his life has to teach us about finishing well. In a race, marriage, education, or life, generally, what matters most is not how you start. It's how you finish. Therefore, you have to start with the end in mind.

Solomon was the wisest man in the world, and with that wisdom came great honor, great recognition, great power, great wealth, and great glory. Solomon got everything he ever wanted, but he ended up doing the very thing that would lead him away from the God who gave him wisdom.

Solomon had a choice between two paths. One path was wisdom; the other one was desire. We have the same choice.

Wisdom is a gift from God. The alternative is to just order my life around desire.

Now, it's a good thing we have desire. God thought up desire. You couldn't live a day if you didn't naturally desire to do things like eat, breathe, move, and be with other people. But desire is dangerous because, if it's not tamed, it can take over a life, which is what it did to Solomon.

As Solomon got older, he didn't get wiser. And finally, he died a foolish, old man. He started really well. He didn't finish very well.

Join us as we learn from Solomon this week.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Solomon became king and asked God for wisdom, he probably thought he would be a faithful servant of God who honors God full heartedly. When he kept marrying foreign women and was doing things to please them, he probably didn't mean to stray away from God all the way to practicing and leading the nation into idolatry. Why did he fail to recognize his failure?
2. Solomon started well but didn't finish well. He had wisdom, prosperity, power, and fame: he had everything that anyone could ever want. However, he did not regard those blessings respectfully as gifts bestowed upon him by God. From what part of his life story can you see this? Do we regard the good things we have in our lives as gifts from God?
3. Gradual, small dosage of compromises lulls us away from realizing that we are going to the wrong path. Sometimes we are aware of what we are doing but persuade ourselves that it is okay to continue. Why do we purposely look away when wisdom pleads with us to turn around?
4. Our culture tells us that, to live an authentic life, we should not be following religious or moral rules and conventions but live freely chasing our heart's desires. What are some reasons why we should tame desire with wisdom despite what the culture says?

5. Does your desire authentically define who you are? And why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Paul uses the phrase “deceitful desires” in Ephesians 4. How do you get fooled by your own desires?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How and why do we quench the Holy Spirit when we walk down the wrong path?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Even though Solomon was a gifted person with tremendous wisdom, he failed to recognize his blindness which eventually led him and his people to catastrophe. Being wise and bright alone does not seem to keep us from choosing the wrong path. What can we do to prevent ourselves from being led by desire and ego, but instead, always be led by the Holy Spirit?

## **NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)**

- “I love you God, except...” What is your except?
- I will follow wisdom rather than desire.
- I will test desire by having the end in mind.
- I will calmly look at every option, consider every consequence, and choose what is best.
- I will take a stand and devote my life to God, and learn to deal with unfulfilled desire.
- I will ask the wise questions: What is good here? What would love do? What is best?

## **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

- 1 Kings 3:5-13
- 1 Kings 4:29-34
- 1 Kings 10:22-23
- 1 Kings 4:20-23
- 1 Kings 7:1
- 1 Kings 3:3
- 1 Kings 11:1-5
- James 4:1-2

## **Prayer Request(s)**

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