

UNDIVIDED

Part 2 of The Savior King. 1 Kings 11:1-13.

Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. September 20, 2026.

Dismiss the Middle School

STUDY GUIDE

As you came in this morning, you should have received a bulletin. Inside, you'll find a simple study guide you can use in a few different ways: to follow along with today's teaching, to reflect on during your personal devotions this week, or to spark conversation in your small group.

More resources are available online. The link is in your study guide.

Let's get started on today's teaching ...

KING SOLOMON BEGAN SO WELL

Today, as we work through the Old Testament highlights, we focus on King Solomon of Israel.

- He was King David's son.
- The Bible says the Lord loved Solomon (2 Samuel 12:24), and he loved God (1 Kings 3:3).
- The Lord gave him *"... a wise and understanding heart, so that there has never been anyone like (him) before and never will be again"* (1 Kings 3:12, CSB)
- Solomon established a strong and secure kingdom that enjoyed God's covenant blessings (1 Kings 4).
- Solomon was extremely wealthy and famous worldwide.
- God commissioned Solomon to build him a temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 5), as a focal point of worship.

At first, Solomon was the right man to inherit the promised blessings of the Davidic Covenant we discussed last Sunday.

Solomon began so well.

But then we come to 1 Kings 11, which describes Solomon's divided heart that brought ruin and division to the kingdom.

THE BENEFITS OF AN UNDIVIDED HEART

We can learn from Solomon's downward spiral. We can learn how to cultivate an undivided heart that stays faithful to God for a lifetime.

There are many reasons to seek an undivided heart:

- It is God's will for his people:

Deuteronomy 10:12 (CSB) And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you except to fear the LORD your God by walking in all his ways, to love him, and to worship the LORD your God with all your heart and all your soul?

- It is essential for doing God's work. When King David commissioned Solomon to build the temple, he said:

1 Chronicles 28:9 (CSB) "As for you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father, and serve him wholeheartedly and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands the intention of every thought.

- Jesus warned against a divided heart:

Matthew 15:7-8 (CSB) Hypocrites! Isaiah (Isaiah 29:13) prophesied correctly about you when he said: 8 This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

Wholehearted dedication to the Lord testifies to the reality of God and salvation in our lives

- God protects wholehearted followers:

2 Chronicles 16:9 (CSB) The eyes of the LORD roam throughout the earth to show himself strong for those who are wholeheartedly devoted to him.

There are many days when we feel tempted to do our own thing and go our own way. Compromise our commitment just a little, just this once.

- The devil prowls like a lion looking to destroy our faith.
- Our old, sinful desires and habits demand our attention.
- Hard days produce the hardest temptations.

But we don't have to spiral down like Solomon. Instead, we can take three steps to build an undivided heart.

THREE STEPS TO AN UNDIVIDED HEART

STEP ONE: GIVE YOUR WHOLE HEART TO GOD - verses 1-3

1 Kings 11:1-3 (CSB) King Solomon loved many foreign women in addition to Pharaoh's daughter: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women 2 from the nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, and they must not intermarry with you, because they will turn your heart away to follow their gods" (Deuteronomy 7:3-4). To these women Solomon was deeply attached in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives who were princesses and three hundred who were concubines, and they turned his heart away.

To be fair, Solomon probably married all these women for diplomatic reasons, to build coalitions with neighboring nations. But the Bible also says he ***loved*** them, and that proved to be his downfall (verses 1-2).

The world is full of things we love. I love Kim, chocolate, my kids, my granddaughter, the church, mountains, beaches, walks, action movies, and on and on.

And Solomon loved women. Too many and too much. He was ***“deeply attached in love”*** (verse 2), and they each came into his palace with their pagan religions. The problem wasn't that they were foreigners; the problem was they were pagans. And they evangelized the king until he started to worship their gods.

Love is good until it isn't. Until it ***turns our hearts away from the Lord.***

The only defense against a divided heart is ...

The only defense against a divided heart is to give our whole heart to the true God: every thought, belief, attitude, decision, word, and action. Give yourself to the Lord as ***a living sacrifice*** (Romans 12:1).

When we love God with all that we are and have (Deut. 6:4-5), all other loves take their proper place as good gifts from God to enjoy, but not to worship.

A good daily prayer would be: “Lord, I give you my whole heart today. Help me to love, worship, and follow you above all.”

STEP TWO: GIVE UP YOUR FALSE GODS - verses 4-8

1 Kings 11:4-8 (CSB) 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.

Misguided tolerance and disordered love led Solomon into idolatry. He **“followed”** (verse 5) the **“*abhorrent*”** (Hebrew = abominable, filthy, detestable) gods and goddesses. He ignored God's Word:

Exodus 20:3-5 (CSB) Do not have other gods besides me. 4 Do not make an idol for yourself... 5 Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them...

Why did the wisest man in the world cave in to such obvious sin?

Love for his pagan wives blinded him to temptation. Their gods promised so much that could help Solomon lead the nation: rain, crops, protection, and power.

Solomon didn't turn from the true God so much as he added the false gods for insurance. He hedged his bets.

BUT ... false gods are deceptive, promising so much and delivering only misery.

The only way to be loyal to the one true God is to:

- Be diligent and discerning to identify the idols in our lives.
- Then, be disciplined and dedicated to reject them.

How can we identify an idol?

“If there is anything you would not give up for God, it is your idol.”

— Charles H. Spurgeon, sermon no.

It's not easy to give up our idols.

We must be ruthless. Be decisive. Make the break. Declare:

*“I am new in Christ. I'm not going back to my old life.
I reject every idol. I give myself fully to the Lord.”*

Stoke your heart with love for Jesus until every idol feels worthless.

STEP THREE: GIVE THOUGHT TO CONSEQUENCES - verses 9-13

1 Kings 11:9-13 (CSB) 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.”

One commentary on this passage explains God’s response:

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. When this sin is committed, God acts swiftly, justly, and redemptively... (New American Commentary on 1 Kings 11:9-13).

When Solomon gave his whole heart to the Lord, Israel prospered. When he turned his heart to false gods, the kingdom fell apart. The people copied Solomon’s poor choices; idolatry was rife, and the nation began a spiritual and moral decline leading to the exile in 722 BC.

God still disciplines his children (Hebrews 12). He does what it takes to get our attention and get us back on track. And his discipline can be severe; it feels really bad. He’ll let hard times, sickness, and loss shake us free from sin (1 Corinthians 11:30-32).

When tempted to give your heart to another god, give thought to the consequences.

GOOD NEWS

1 Kings 11 contains some good news.

- In verse 13, God promises to give *“one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem that I chose.”*

So that the line of succession and the tribe of Judah would continue from King David down to Jesus Christ.

- So the Savior of the world would be born.
- So we would find forgiveness and new life.
- So we would turn from our false gods and find the one true God: our good, gracious, caring, and faithful heavenly Father.

The big story of the Bible is the story of God being gracious to sinners like Solomon and us. He is ready to receive us into his family. He is waiting for us to come home. His arms are open wide.

Why not now?

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Use any or all of the following questions to guide your group's conversation about Sunday's sermon.

Observation

In 1 Kings 11:1–3, what reasons does the passage give for Solomon's heart being turned away from the Lord? What details stand out to you?

Read 1 Kings 11:4–8. What actions show that Solomon's problem had moved beyond private compromise into public leadership and influence?

In 1 Kings 11:9, God reminds Solomon that he appeared to him twice. What does that tell us about the seriousness of Solomon's choices?

Interpretation

Solomon was exceptionally wise, blessed, successful, and spiritually privileged—yet his heart became divided. What does his story suggest about why these are not enough to keep a person faithful over a lifetime?

The sermon says Solomon did not abandon God; he “added” other gods as insurance. What are some ways we may try to trust God while also looking somewhere else for ultimate security, control, approval, or comfort?

Application

What are some concrete practices that could help someone notice when a habit, relationship, or desire is beginning to become a controlling idol?

Solomon's choices affected more than Solomon; they shaped the nation he led. In what ways do our repeated choices influence the people who watch us most closely—children, spouses, friends, coworkers, or fellow believers?

Personal Reflection

The suggested prayer was, “Lord, I give you my whole heart today.” What part of your daily routine—morning, workday, evening, spending, phone use, or relationships—would most change if you prayed and acted on that prayer consistently?