

HAVING IT ALL CAN BE DANGEROUS

1 Kings 3-11 (selected)

January 12, 2014

INTRODUCTION

- a. Most every commercial in some way or another is saying, "You can have it all"
- b. You have heard the saying, "Money can't buy happiness." I have heard a couple of responses:
 1. No, but it can rent it for a little while
 2. No, but it can ease the misery
- c. **Do you really, "Want it all"**
 1. **Be careful what you ask for**
 - a. Abraham Lincoln said, "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."
 - b. Victor Hugo said, "Adversity makes men, and prosperity makes monsters."
- d. **Today in The Story we come to the story of Solomon, the King who had it all.**
 1. His is a story that speaks to us and our culture.
 2. There are lessons we can learn from Solomon that will help us live life as God intended, to its fullest.
- e. The encouraging thing about Solomon's lower story is that it reminds us that in God's Upper Story how He worked in the past is how He will work today

I. SOLOMON'S STORY

- a. **Solomon's story is told in 1 Kings**
 1. In 1 Kings 1 David is old and dying and passes the leadership baton to Solomon.
 - a. David does so with this moving challenge
 1. **Read 1 Kings 2:2-4 (NIV)**
"I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go, and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.'
 2. God then tells Solomon, "ask for whatever you want me to give you."
 - a. **Solomon asks for a discerning heart or wisdom**
 - b. God then tells Solomon he will give him wisdom like no one ever before or after and He will also give him the wealth and power and prestige he did not ask for
 - c. God closes with this charge: **1 Kings 3:14 (NIV)**
And if you walk in my ways and obey my statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.
3. **Solomon really does have it all and at the beginning he uses it well**
 - a. **He writes down many proverbs** and songs so the people can benefit from his wisdom. We have these in the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs (or Solomon)
 - b. **He builds a great temple and dedicates it to the Lord**
 - c. **He also builds a palace** for himself that is like no other. He has riches untold
 - d. **He is known and sought out for his wisdom.** Other kings and queens come to him because of his wisdom
4. **Solomon is experiencing all that God promised but he squandered it because of his own passions**

5. In Solomon's time having multiple wives (polygamy) was considered normal but never sanctioned or blessed by God.

a. Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Makes me wonder just how wise he was.

b. Many of these foreign wives were from nations that God had said the Israelites were not to intermarry with.

c. His foreign wives began to influence him to worship their gods as well as His God.

6. As Solomon grew old his wives turned his heart toward their gods and his heart was now divided and not singularly focused as his father David's was

7. God tells Solomon that because of his disobedience his kingdom would be removed and then divided just like his heart. That though is the Story for next week.

8. **For Solomon the story doesn't stop there.** At the end of Ecclesiastes he comes back and gives this word to the people.

a. **Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NIV)**

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man.

b. **The question is how did this happen to Solomon?**

II. THE SLOW FADE

a. Some of you are familiar with the song, "**Slow Fade**" by Casting Crowns.

1. **Here are some of the lyrics:**

It's a slow fade when you give yourself away
It's a slow fade when black and white have turned to gray
Thoughts invade, choices are made, a price will be paid
When you give yourself away
People never crumble in a day
It's a slow fade, it's a slow fade

b. **People don't start out their day with the intent of destroying themselves or their families or reputations or relationships**

1. Solomon certainly didn't set out to lose his kingdom but it came as a slow fade into fulfilling his own desires and wants

2. **You don't set out intending on ruining your life or relationships either but it comes as a slow fade**

3. **We give in to our passions or desires**

a. A friendship that goes too far

b. A desire to be loved that is attracted to any form of flattery or affection

c. The desire to provide better for the family and so we cheat or steal

d. The desire to fit in and so we compromise our behavior

c. **Sometimes we become so calloused to things that we don't see how they are affecting our relationship with God.** Let me share what I mean from my own experience.

1. As most of you know I spent many years on the college campus as a student and then as a campus pastor. I also worked for two years with football players. Let's just say that the language was not the best and most every vile four letter words was used regularly. I got to a point where I almost didn't hear them anymore. Then there was a movie the girls wanted to see and Becky asked me to preview it to see if was suitable. I saw it and gave my approval. Within the first five minutes I got "the look" and we left the theater because of the language.

2. It is so easy with all we are bombarded with in all forms of media to see as normal things God says are sinful and destructive to our relationship with Him.

d. I am asking that you take time to do a self evaluation of situations and circumstances in your life where you might be into the “slow fade”

III. THE GOOD NEWS

a. Solomon experienced God’s Upper Story of forgiveness and restoration as evidenced by how he concluded his writing.

b. If any other person knew about forgiveness and being restored to God it was the Apostle Paul

1. When we first meet him he is killing Christians and trying his best to destroy the early church.

2. Paul writes of his experience with the Lord in **1 Timothy 1:12-14 (NIV)**

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

c. Paul mentions three important truths

1. **God loves you regardless of your past or present condition.**

a. Paul acknowledges that he had a past to live down. He said... I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength...even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man... (v. 12-13) In verse 15 he goes on to say that he was the **worst of all sinners**.

b. Some of you may be thinking "Paul wouldn't say that if he knew me!" The fact is, there is nothing you can do to keep God from loving you.

2. **God will save you.**

a. Paul said... (v. 14) The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

b. He goes on to remind us of this basic Biblical truth: (v. 15) Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.**

c. When I say that God will save you, this is exactly what I mean.

1. First of all, he will forgive you completely and wipe the slate clean.

2. Secondly, he will change you into the type of person he wants you to

be.

d. When a person accepts Christ, he or she becomes a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). That is only the beginning of all that God does in your life. In Philippians 1:6 Paul said that God will finish the work he began in you; in Romans 8:29 he says that God will help you become conformed to the image of his son, Jesus Christ. **It doesn't matter who you are, God will save and he will transform you**

e. Too often we use the past as an excuse: "I've always been this way...I've always had a problem with my temper... I just don't have any self-control...I come from a long line of alcoholics..." and on and on. We tell ourselves that this is who we really are and there is nothing that can be done about it.

f. I'm telling you today: there is something that can be done about it. God can change you. He parted the Red Sea, he made the earth stand still, he held back the rain for years at a time, he healed the sick and he raised the dead. And he can change you into the person He wants you to be.

3. **God can use you**

a. Your transformed life can be a testimony to all the people around you to the grace and forgiveness of God found in Jesus

c. Paul said... (v. 12, 16) [Christ] considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.... I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

d. **As long as you have breath...as long as you have a life that you can surrender to God, he can use you. You don't have to continue in the slow fade**

IV. YOUR RESPONSE

a. It comes down to this. **God wants to forgive and put away all that has gone before this moment. He is concerned with who you are becoming, rather than who you've been.**

b. If there are mistakes you made years ago, or months ago—or even days ago—Now is the time to experience God's forgiveness and direction

c. **You may have to live with the consequences of your mistakes,**

1. **But you don't have to live with the guilt or the shame.** He will set you free from all of it, and he will give you a chance to start again.

d. **God never refuses anyone who comes to him in faith, trusting not presuming in His love seeking forgiveness and life transformation.**

BOW WITH ME IN PRAYER

8:30 #366 "I SURRENDER ALL"

11:00 "IN CHRIST ALONE"