



“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

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1 Kings 4:1 "Now King Solomon was king over all Israel."

King Solomon—what a title. What an honor. What a responsibility. What a privilege. What a blessing. When We think of Solomon, most often one of three thoughts quickly come to our minds. He was the temple builder. He was the writer of Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and Song of Solomon. His heart was led away by the many foreign wives he married and he introduced idolatry into the nation.

Have you given much thought as to how Solomon started as a king? So much was done by David, his father. The capitol was settled in Jerusalem. The king’s palace was built. The kingdom was wealthy. The nation was at peace. All of this was through the leadership and work of David. When David handed the keys over to Solomon, the nation was hitting on all cylinders. It was good times. So many leaders must start from the bottom. David did. He had to unify the nation that was torn between allegiance to Saul’s family and those who supported him. The Philistines were a constant harassment to the nation. David took care of that. There really wasn’t a seat of government or a capitol. David established that.

But, more than that, Solomon grew up with a father being the king. And, not just any king, but the one who set the bar and the standard very high. Kings after him would always be compared to “David.” Being a child of the king, Solomon would have had opportunity to see things, learn things and ask questions.

But, more than that, Solomon grew up with a father who had a heart that was devoted to God. Yes, there were mistakes in David’s life, as there are in mine and yours, but his heart was forever pointed to the Lord. It’s one thing to learn from others, but if the “others,” do not have a noble and compassionate character, you will likely turn out like they are. David was the best. He showed grace to Saul’s grandson. He showed mercy to Shimei, who had rebuked David and threw dust on him. And with that, David was showing Solomon how you treat your enemies and those who may not like you. Ruling with an iron fist or a heart of compassion makes all the difference.

Would it had been better if Solomon didn’t have all those things handed to him? Was he a spoiled, rich kid who never had to deal with troubles in his life?

(OVER)

Here are a few things to consider:

First, within our congregations, we want to make things easier, smoother and better for the next generation. Some of us have stood with David in having to unify people, fight enemies, and bring peace. Some of our congregations have been small and struggling. Some could not financially support their own preacher. Some have been torn with internal fighting. These have been our wars and our struggles. We want to leave the congregation better than we found it. We want the congregation to be stronger, more unified and more active than it ever has been. That's how I think. I fear far too many don't give those things much thought. It's just week to week, day after day. Little is changed. Little is improved upon. And, when it's time for the next generation, the same battles, the same divided spirits will continue on.

It's through the teaching of God's word that a congregation gets stronger. It's focusing upon what we have in common in the Lord that pulls our hearts together. Unity comes from hearts that are all seeking the Lord first.

Second, handing a golden egg to the next generation, without responsibility nor teaching them to use things wisely can be a great curse rather than a blessing. This is so true in our homes. As parents become wealthy, their children can easily become spoiled, selfish and indifferent to others. We want our kids to do well and we want them not to have to struggle, however, without good guidance, many a young person has ruined his life because of the generous blessings given to him by his parents.

We see this down side spiritually as the book of Judges opens. Joshua's generation was faithful to the Lord. The next generation did not know the Lord. The following generation brought in idols and departed from the Lord. Joshua's generation were the children in the wilderness. They crossed the Jordan River into the promise land. The next generation only knew those things as stories. They didn't know the Lord. They didn't walk with the Lord.

This lesson is repeated in restoration history. Those first generations were so eager to get back to the Bible and just do what the Bible taught. The following generation took things for granted. They went the other way and soon came more problems and more innovations that are not Bible based.

Third, we must impress upon everyone that each generation has battles and each generation must be true to the Lord. King Saul was killed by the Philistines. David subdued the Philistines. Solomon didn't have to worry much about Philistines. However, Solomon had other battles that he didn't realize. There is never a time to take our foot off the accelerator of the Lord. There is never a time to coast. There is never a time to take our eyes off the Lord.

Now Solomon was king...Now you may preach. Now you may lead God's people. Now you may serve God's people. Work hard. Do your best. Stand upon the blessings and opportunities given to you. Try to make things easier for those who follow. Teach them what you have learned. The battles change, but they continue on until the Lord calls us home.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)