

Wisdom for a Lifetime? Lessons from the Life of Solomon

At one time Solomon was the wisest man in the world. He had every advantage that a person in his day could have and yet he didn't finish well. In fact he died a foolish man. His life serves as a sober warning to every single one of us. We are not seeking wisdom just for a time; we are seeking wisdom for a lifetime. We want to finish well. And so let's see what lessons there are for us from the life of Solomon.

1. What do we learn about Solomon and his wisdom?

- 1 Kings 3:3-15
- 1 Kings 4:29-34
- 1 Kings 10:1-13

2. How would you summarize what all these passages say about Solomon and his wisdom?

Steve said:

Just because you are wise today does not guarantee that you will be wise for the rest of your life. . . Solomon's example warns us against pursuing and gaining wisdom for a season, and then becoming care-less or complacent. . . When we surveyed the book of Proverbs we saw that nobody ever "arrives" when it comes to wisdom; wisdom is not a box we ever check off our list . . . Rather, we read this in Proverbs 1:5 (⁵ *Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance*), "Let the wise hear." In other words, if you are wise, stay humble and teachable and "hear" what the book of Proverbs is saying. As with Solomon, your current wisdom, your giftedness, your influence, your spiritual resume won't sustain you. You need to **stay hungry for wisdom** until your final breath.

3. How do we "stay hungry for wisdom"?

4. Even though Solomon had unsurpassed wisdom, there were red flags that he was on a dangerous path. What red flags do we see in the following passages?

- 1 Kings 3:1 (Deut. 7:3-4)

- 1 Kings 10:26-27 (Deut. 17:14-17)

Steve said:

The question for you and me is not **if** there be pockets of foolishness in our lives. There will be. The question is whether or not we are prepared spiritually and relationally **when** they surface. Spiritually we need to be humble enough to admit when foolishness surfaces in our lives. . . When it comes to being prepared relationally, we need people in our lives who will speak the truth in love, people who will compassionately point out our blind spots. We get the impression that Solomon didn't have such people. Proverbs 27:6 says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." Consider giving the green light to a trusted friend, "If you ever see something in my life that concerns you, you have my permission to talk with me about it." Do you have anybody like that in your life? Do you have anybody who has the freedom to say things like, "You talk too much," or "You talk about yourself too much"? If not, you're not relationally prepared when red flags of foolishness pop up in your life.

5. Is there someone whom you've given the green light to confront foolishness that they see in your life?

6. Read 1 Kings 11:1-10. What does this say about where Solomon ended up?

7. Proverbs 4:23 explains how we can keep from becoming like Solomon. How can we do what it says?

8. What is your main takeaway from this study?