

Project Runway

Designer Clothes For Disciples

Solomon: Part 5

Written By

©Pastor Marty Baker

June 28, 2015



I have a granite stone in my backyard which has two holes drilled into it by the force of water. Looking at those holes makes you wonder. How long did that take? Was the stone at the bottom of a waterfall, or what?

By way of illustration, there are several ways we could take this unusual rock. We could talk about the importance of persistence to get a particular job done. We could also talk about how this stone represents the power of, let's say, compromise. Like water, if given enough time to run over the stone surface of your life, compromise will slowly and surely drill holes in your life, leaving you in a less than inferior spiritual state.

King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived according to God, was known for his vast wealth, mind-numbing building projects, skilled military machine, and the finest of clothing. People traveled from all over the known world just to hear him dispense his articulate wisdom, and even in the time of Jesus, the people still spoke of the king's greatness (Matthew 6:29). Look up fame in a dictionary and it would be fitting to see Solomon's face next to the entry.



He truly had everything a man could ever want in this life, even a special relationship with God

himself. You'll remember, I'm sure, God loved and favored him so much he gave him a special name at birth: *Jedidiah*, which in Hebrew means "Beloved of the LORD" (2 Samuel 12:24-25).

If you were Satan, the archenemy of God and His saints, how would you go about bringing this gifted, godly king down to the dust of the earth? How best to destroy his walk and connection with God? What strategy would eventually leave vast canyons carved out in his once politically and spiritually stellar life?

"Ah, compromise, that should do the trick," Satan must have reasoned with a raspy whisper. "This Solomon is too smart, too wise for a frontal assault like I did with Jacob in Potiphar's home, and he's too close with God to fall for a sly attack I used when I got his father to pridefully number his military forces (2 Samuel 24). Yes, indeed, a small, seemingly insignificant trickle from the stream called sexual compromise should surely outwit the wise man," reasoned the horn-stroking Dragon.

King Solomon, unfortunately, never knew what hit him until it was too late. To switch metaphors, he willingly slipped on the robe of compromise and it cost him more than he was ever wanting to pay. In his youth, the robe looked quite good, even stylish; however, later in his life it was a tattered, destructive, and hideous garment.

What about you? How are you dressed? Like King Solomon, you might have much going for you in many areas of your life, or you may not. Regardless, if you claim the name of Jesus Christ, one thing is for sure, he will attempt to get you to wear this unrighteous robe. Look at what you're wearing right now. Perhaps it is the robe called compromise. If so, know that Jesus wants to help you get it off so you can move on to maturity in how you dress. Motivating you to move in this divine direction starts with asking a crucial fashion question:

Are You Wearing A Coat Called Compromise? (1 Kings 3, 11)

Our answers come from Solomon's story as detailed in the narrative of First Kings, chapters three and eleven. From a study of these instructive chapters we can isolate three reasons this robe is always out of step with fashionable spiritual dress. The first of these we shall consider in this study. Please: watch how these reasons are developed for you just might see yourself.

Compromise Starts Small And Goes Large

Here's a truth which should be plastered on every marquee in our land: *Moral, spiritual erosion usually doesn't start on a grand scale. On the contrary, it begins in an insignificant place, even quite unnoticeable, and within time it expands, widens, and deepens, leaving destruction in its wake.* Such is the nature of sexual compromise. Satan will not typically call you to walk away from God and God's truths as revealed in the Scriptures in a massive, point in time fashion, for he knows most of us are too discerning for that ploy. So, as with King Solomon, he lets the flood-gate open ever-so-slightly, so as not to arouse our interest and cause us undo alarm. The opening record of Solomon's rise to power tells us this much:

"Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around

Jerusalem. ² The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. ³ Now Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places” (1 Kings 3).

Immediately after the King consolidated his power by eradicating those who posed a threat to his empire (1 Kings 2:19-46), we read he forged an alliance with his former enemy on his southern flank, Egypt, by marrying the Pharaoh’s daughter. “Sound move,” he must have thought and rationalized. Why? “When would a father ever attack a beloved daughter and his son-in-law? Most likely never,” went the reasoning, I’m sure. According the 1 Kings 9:16, Pharaoh sweetened the deal by attacking and overpowering the city of Gezer located on Israel’s southern border with Egypt. Once he controlled it, he gave it to King Solomon as a handsome and strategically important dowry. “Not bad,” the King must have concluded.

“This is fantastic,” Satan and his key minions surely shouted. “He has started to put on the robe of sexual compromise, and he sees it fits him well. Perfect.”

Concerning actions such as this by the King, John Bright, a world class Old Testament scholar, writes:

“Few figures are more difficult to evaluate than Solomon, and that not merely because the records concerning him are neither so full as could be wished nor in chronological order. He was obviously a man of great astuteness who was able to realize to the fullest the economic potentialities of the empire created by David. At the same time, he exhibited in other areas a blindness, not to say a stupidity, that hastened that empire toward disintegration” (*A History Of Israel*: 211).

Stupid. Now there is an interesting word for scholar to use, but it best describes the King’s actions. What seemed like a no brainer to him in order to protect the country, was merely putting one arm in a robe a wise man would never want to wear. How utterly stupid to think that this was an adroit, prudent decision. It wasn’t. Makes you want to ask yourself a very uncomfortable but appropriate spiritual question: Am I doing anything stupid in my life? Put differently with a finer point: Are you currently engaged in any type of sexual activity which is contrary to God’s design, one which is drilling down into your life?

Consider what the King’s father told him before his death:

¹As David’s time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying, ²“I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. ³“Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn ...” (1 Kings 2).

King David was a man who knew firsthand the value of obeying the Law of God, and the dire consequences of rejecting it even in the slightest fashion. His adultery with Bathsheba and its attendant negative circumstances left David a wiser man regarding the sin of sexual compromise. Yes, he knew full-well the destructive nature of just a little compromise. No wonder he basically told Israel’s next king to put obedience to God’s law first above all else, for

this would become the source of blessing in his personal and public life. Did you get this? Perhaps you need to read it one more time: Obedience to God's Law, or Word is of paramount importance, especially where sexual relationships are concerned. Following your heart or basing your activity and life choices solely based on love is a sub-part and dangerous way to live. Why? Love can be tempted to emotionally validate things which run counter to God's perfect, profitable design.

Consider also what God had revealed in the Mosaic Law about a king's marital status:

"¹⁷ He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself" (Deuteronomy 17).

And just in case the King argued this text didn't prohibit him from marrying an Egyptian, Deuteronomy 7 permanently closed the door to marriages between Israelites and non-Israelites, and between believers and unbelievers:

"¹ When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, ² and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. ³ Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. ⁴ For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you. ⁵ But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their *sacred* pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. ⁶ For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

Get the picture? Marry a non-believer and they could eventually turn your heart away from following God to following their gods, whoever, or whatever they might be. Contrary to the current "moral" mantra of our day, God is highly discriminatory in some areas. He knows there are spiritual dangers to relationships which aren't based on what they should be. God is also xenophobic, to a degree, isn't He? In the Old Testament period He knew the spiritual track record of the nations just mentioned and that's why He cautioned His people from identifying with them in marriage. He knew their spiritual corrosion would corrode His people; therefore, He cautioned Israel's most powerfully.

As a sidelight, can't you just hear the raspy voice of the ol' Devil whispering words like this in Solomon's head after he heard the Word of God: "Ah, common, Solomon. Can't you see that God is so restrictive? He's always setting boundaries around you to keep you from really enjoying yourself and life as you see fit. Has He really told you that it's verboten to marry a lady from another culture? If you love her, I'm sure He'll understand your rationalization for marrying her for if He's for anything it's love." Ever had this kind of reasoning rolling around in your brain? It's not from God.

All of this Old Testament teaching we've just brushed up on sounds like the Apostle Paul's advice to the Corinthians, doesn't it?

¹⁸ Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6).

Really, what part does God's temple, your body, have with a temple which rejects Him? Nothing? Paul continues the Mosaic-type teaching in his next letter to the Corinthians:

¹⁴ Do not be yoked with those who are different, with unbelievers. For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6)

I think Paul read Deuteronomy, don't you? The divine principle is timeless: *To marry someone who doesn't know or walk with God, is to court spiritual hardship and possible disaster.* For those who know the truth of this, we feel for you and pray with you for strength. For those who don't yet personally know this truth, we caution you to be wise. Relationships founded upon Christ and His Word have the tenacity of that relationship to strengthen them as a couple, plus they have the Lord to appeal to regarding the issues of life, marriage, and child-rearing instead of their personal opinions. Peace can only ensue from such a marriage structure where the core of the relationship rests upon Christ's and His life-giving, life-transforming teachings.

Solomon, heard the message of God, why, he could probably cite this Old Testament references and quote them verbatim, however, he chose to live like *he* wanted, and he rationalized it as being best for the nation. Right. And so it is with sexual compromise, your passion and emotion writes checks God's bank will never process. Yet you are convinced, by a wide array of "sound" arguments, that this is the best course of action at this time in your life. "It's just a small step away from God, what can it hurt?" goes the reasoning. Here's another argument Solomon could have used, "Say, I'm just getting married to this Egyptian woman because it's all based on love, and since love is of high value to God, I'm sure He will bless us."

Listen to me. Love is used today as a cover for a whole variety of sexual sins, sins which run directly counter to God's clear, concise teaching in both testaments. Whether it is the argument behind why a person in a bad marriage is justified to date someone else until his or her divorce is settled, or even if it is the rationalization a man might employ he should be able to marry another man, it is a tenuous, twisted argument because it runs counter to what God has commanded regarding marriage. Love doesn't validate a marriage relationship's spiritual authenticity. Validation comes, first and foremost, whether that marriage relationship squares with God's Word and revealed model. Love is just like the icing on the wedding cake. If love, therefore, is used as the basis to substantiate a relationship God openly says He doesn't approve of, then one can be sure compromise, at some level, is guiding one away from not toward God.

And it all starts with a slight, small change in one's thinking about what is morally and spiritually acceptable. Really, *the problem is a little compromise is like a little cancer. If left unchecked, it*

will spread: One godless Egyptian wife would lead to children she would want to influence with her Egyptian polytheistic belief system.

What is most interesting is this marriage by King Solomon was not his first. Chronologically, it appears this way in First Kings chapter 3, but when First Kings chapter 14 is taken into consideration, a whole different picture emerges.

“²¹ Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. And his mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonitess” (1 Kings 14).

Rehoboam, the crown prince and child of Naamah, the Ammonitess, took the throne of Israel at forty-one years of age. Since Solomon reigned for forty years (1 Kings 11:41-42), and he didn’t marry Pharaoh’s daughter until after the kingdom was solidified at the beginning of his reign (1 Kings 2:46 and 3:1), this logically means a year before he was crowned king he disobeyed God’s law and married a idol worshipper named Naamah. Why did he do that? Perhaps her name tells us. In Hebrew it means “to be beautiful, or delightful to look upon” (Brown-Driver-Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs Gesenius Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon*: 653:2). Translated, Naamah was a 10+, physically speaking, a real looker, a woman any man would say was drop dead gorgeous. So, it appears young Solomon threw God’s counsel to the wind all because of what this woman looked like. I guess he did it again all for the sake of love.

In all reality, however, there was no way could he rationalize *this* marriage. It couldn’t have been for political purposes because he probably wasn’t the king at this point, and Ammon, located due east of Jerusalem over the Jordan River, was subservient to Israel:

“Throughout the United Monarchy (ca. 961-922), Ammon remained subservient to Israel. It appears that David appointed a viceroy from the old Ammonite royal family to rule over the land, for when David fled to Mahanaim, among those who came to minister to him and his army was ‘Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites’ (II Sam. 17:27). Solomon probably continued David’s policy of keeping the governorship of Ammon within the old royal family” (George Buttrick, editor, *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 1:111).

Solomon simply married her because she could have won any beauty contest hands down, or been a top model for any Ammonite fashion/glamour magazine. Isn’t this most instructive? Compromise to marry wife number one logically led to compromise to marry wife number two, and so forth and so on. Such is the nature of compromise, especially where relationships are concerned: It always leads to greater and bolder steps of compromise. I can’t help but wonder, “Was all this compromise worth it to Solomon?”

Solomon slowly departed from God and God’s Law, and sinful sexual relationships helped him along that rocky road. Individually, this may be looking like your story. A little compromise in your marriage relationship, be what it may, can ... and will ... lead to a sub-par, even destructive relationship later. So, let’s stop and ask ourselves the obvious question: Where am I compromising God’s truth where relationships are concerned right now? Where have I watered down what He clearly prohibits so I can have life my way? If you are single, you need to

ask yourself: Am I dating someone who doesn't love God? And even if they do love God, do they hold firmly to God's lofty view of marriage being between one man and one woman for life? Or do they hold to other culturally acceptable views? If you're married, you need to ask yourself: What am I engaged in which is a threat to the strength and peace of my marriage? Am I flirting with someone I shouldn't be? Am I viewing things I shouldn't be viewing?

Turn over to First Kings 11, and you'll see further evidence of how one dating/marriage compromise led to a raging river of compromises with countless women who were not God's will for the King.

¹ Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, ² from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, 'You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.' Solomon held fast to these in love. ³ He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. ⁴ For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. ⁶ Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. ⁸ Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods."

Do you see the end result of this perpetual stream of water? Do you see what happens when you put this robe of compromise on your body? It moves you from an intimate relationship with God, to one which is so far from Him it doesn't even look like you know Him anymore. And if the compromise is based on love, watch out, because unchecked passionate love for the wrong person for all the wrong reasons will never satisfy your heart, nor will it give you lasting joy. Conversely, the more sordid, compromised relationships you have, the deeper into the bottomless well you fall. Such is the cunning approach of your Adversary.

Solomon started with beautiful girl #1. Then when the glow of that relationship wore off, when he saw someone else a little more attractive, he went for beautiful girl #2. Like an out of control addict he kept compromising his beliefs, his purity, and God's laws thinking that girl #333 or #899 would bring him satisfaction. He should have dated and married within God's will and stayed with her, then happiness and joy would have taken up residence in his heart and home. He chose, on the contrary, to listen to the deep, raspy voice of Satan, "Go ahead, Solomon, taste a little of this forbidden fruit. One bite won't hurt you. A little compromise will make you a man's man. Get with the program, Solomon. God's view of sexuality is so restrictive. Go ahead. Live and let live. Quit hanging onto the relic of God's design for relationships, and take hold of a new version which is so much more open, exciting, and progressive."

Let's not kid each other. All of this makes perfect sense to us, doesn't it? For you, sexual compromise might be the robe Satan has got you to place a willing arm into. Your parents may not know about it, but you do. Your wife or your husband may not really know what you do

with all of your time, but you do. For whatever selfish reasons you have, for whatever rationalizations you have carefully crafted, you are taking small steps down the road of compromise all for the sake of passion and love. A little flirtation here on Facebook with an old girlfriend ... even though I'm married, a little rendezvous there with a man from work who pays more attention to me than my husband sure makes a dull life interesting. Trust me, you will not like the destination of your journey. Solomon's life teaches us this much. Even though it may feel perfectly right, never gauge truth upon your feelings for they are so unpredictable and they change moment by moment. Gauge truth upon God's Word. Sexual sin is always digressive and destructive.

No matter where you are on this rough road, however, realize this: *God is rich in grace and mercy, and abounding in forgiveness.* He is just waiting to restore you, to fill in the gaps in your stone, to equip you to stand strong and sure-footed against this river which runs all over the landscape of your life. As John, the beloved disciple of Jesus reminds us:

"⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1).

Spiritual cleansing of broken, repentant people is what Jesus specializes in. You might just need to be cleansed today from the wrong thoughts you've been entertaining, from the progressive cultural viewpoints you've been espousing and defending, or from the way you've altered and modified God's teaching regarding sexual relationships. If so, rest assured that His cleansing will leave you feeling clean, holy, and ready to really enjoy life to the fullest.



For those who've never tasted the gift of eternal forgiveness, for those whose lives are riddled through and through with more sin than just compromise, Jesus, the water of eternal life, is prepared right now to wash your stone clean for all eternity. Why does He desire to do this for you? Take another look at that rock of mine. See the hole on the left? Good. It looks like heart, doesn't it? That, in and of itself, gives you the reason why God desires to wash your soul clean of sin. It's called love, divine love. It is the same love which motivated the Heavenly Father to send His only Son to earth to live a sinless life, to bear our sin on a cruel cross, and to rise from the grave the third day. Love moved Him to be placed in a position to offer you the cleansing of a lifetime.

The next move is yours. May it be a move of selfless, humble, repentant faith in Him.

