

0 (2s):

Welcome to the Bible teaching ministry of Dr. Ron Jones. Our prayer is that God will use his word to change your life and fill your heart with hope. And now here's Ryan

1 (15s):

United. We stand divided. We fall. How many times have you heard a phrase like that? It's a popular motto, used to inspire unity and collaboration, and it's true. United. We stand divided. We fall. That's true of any organization. It's even true of a nation. The ancient Greek storyteller Aesop is perhaps the originator of this phrase. You find references to it in two of his fables, the four oxen and the lion and the bundle of sticks. But back in 1858, there was somebody else who had unity on his mind, Abraham Lincoln. He delivered the house divided speech at the Illinois state Capitol.

1 (59s):

After he accepted the Republican nomination for United States Senator. And at that time he quoted these famous words from Jesus. A house divided against itself cannot stand said the future president of the United States. And then I think of another place where unity is the theme. It's actually on the great seal of the United States of America. That Latin phrase, *e pluribus Unum* out of many one. And it's a reminder that we are a unified coalition of people and states, why all this talk about unity?

1 (1m 39s):

Because ancient Israel might have benefited from a motto like United. We stand we're in the book of first Kings. This is our stopping off place on the ultimate road trip through the Bible. And first Kings records a time when Israel fell into civil war and divided into two kingdoms. Now the divide did not happen until after the reign of king Solomon, but his slide into immorality and idolatry near the end of his life contributed to the divide. In fact, in first Kings chapter 11 and verse 11, and in response to Solomon's disobedience, the Lord says, since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and we'll give it to your servant sobering words and a tragic time in Israel's history where the United Kingdom, under which David ruled or over which David ruled and over which Solomon ruled two consecutive 40 year reigns now becomes a divided kingdom.

1 (2m 53s):

Let's rewind history a little bit. And I want to take a closer look at king Solomon's glorious reign over this United monarchy. That's a major portion of first Kings. The first half of it. You a chart in your notes that gives us a bird's-eye view of the book of Kings. And I think it's important to get that of the books. 22 chapters really falls into two categories, chapters, one to 11 detailed the 40 year reign of king Solomon over a United monarchy, which he inherited from his father king David. Now following the death of Solomon that we read about in chapter 11, chapters 12 through 22 record the rain of many Kings over a nation that has divided into the Northern kingdom and the Southern kingdom.

1 (3m 41s):

This can get a little bit confusing as you read through scripture, but the Northern kingdom, a Confederation of, of 10 tribes of Israel is referred to from this point forward as Israel, the Southern kingdom made up of Judah and Benjamin is referred to as, as, as, as Judah and Solomon from chapter 12 forward was the last king to reign over a United Hebrew kingdom. Now the 10 tribes of the Northern kingdom from chapters 12 forward existed as an independent state until the Assyrians took Israel captive in 731 BC, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin also existed then as an independent state, until they were taken captive by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

1 (4m 29s):

But in both cases, the Lord sent the captors to punish and discipline Israel for turning from the one true God to serve other idols. It's the tragic story of the history of the nation of Israel here. As they move from a United Kingdom now to a divided kingdom. Now, first Kings begins near the end of David's 40 year reign as Israel's king, and just as he is reaching his, his end at a Nijah tries to seize the throne. And he does so unsuccessfully David heard about this, and he quickly anointed his son, Solomon as his successor.

1 (5m 9s):

And he rejoices at the end of chapter one by saying blessed, be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has granted someone to sit on my throne this day in my own eyes, seeing it, he got to see the transfer of the king from himself to his son, Solomon quickly, Solomon eliminates any threats to his throne. That's just what they did back then. But during that time, the Lord spoke to Solomon in a dream and invited him to ask for anything he desired. Can you imagine such a request? Can you imagine if the Lord came to you and said, ask me

2 (5m 45s):

For anything, what

1 (5m 47s):

Would you put before the Lord? Well, Solomon's response is famous. Young king. According to chapter three in verse nine says, give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people that I may discern between good and evil for who is able to govern this year. People what a response. I mean, Solomon could have asked for anything he could have asked for long life. He could have asked for riches. He could have asked for the lives of his enemies. Instead he requested wisdom from above to govern the people and trusted to his leadership. And this pleased the Lord immensely in response, God gave Solomon a discerning heart plus riches and honor, and the long life he did not request.

1 (6m 33s):

In fact, the Lord says in chapter three and verse 13, no other king shall compare with you all your days. And no other king did the Davidic dynasty, which started undertaking David and David ruled for 40 years, continued under Solomon for another 40 years. And Solomon really became the envy of the world. At that time, he was the king of Kings, as it were other Kings bow down to him says, Solomon, you, you were the

greatest. He ruled over everything. And every one from the Mediterranean sea to that, you're afraid to use river from the red sea to the Lebanon.

1 (7m 16s):

What a glorious dynasty. It was the Davidic dynasty now reaching its Zenith under the rule of king Solomon. Now very quickly, Solomon put his wisdom on display. And one of the more well-known stories that emerges out of first Kings is found in chapter three, when he adjudicates a dispute between two prostitutes, who both claim to be the mother of the same. You remember that story and it and founded everybody else, but not Solomon. And the way he resolved the dispute and the way he, he made the real mother of that child emerge made everybody just go, wow, the wisdom of Solomon.

1 (8m 3s):

And he was off and running. It is no exaggeration to say that Solomon was the wisest guy in the room. No matter the subject you turn to this subject or that subject or another subject. Solomon was the wisest man in the room. In fact, first Kings chapter four verses 29 and 30 says, and God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure and breadth of mind like the sand of the sea seashore. So that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. He was a man of extraordinary intellect and ability. Solomon's wisdom range from theology to zoology, from architecture to horticulture, poetry, philosophy, you name it.

1 (8m 52s):

Solomon was the wisest guy in the room. And in this way, Solomon is a type of Christ. I love that Christ's connections that we've been able to make on the ultimate road trip through the Bible. Every book of the Bible points us in some way to the Christ, who is to come from an old Testament perspective. And the book of first Kings doesn't disappoint here, Solomon is a type of Christ. In what way, what Colossians chapter two in verse three, says of Jesus in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And I think of that understanding of Jesus, who is the Christ. And I think of the time when the boy, Jesus just 12 years old was left behind by his parents in Jerusalem.

1 (9m 36s):

Remember that story? A parent's nightmare, right? You go to Walmart, you get, get home. And you're like, I forgot my kids, right? Well, that happened to Mary and Joseph and here's Jesus. Back in Jerusalem, they find him in the temple this 12 year old boy, and he is confirmed pounding the teachers, I say hit his understanding and his wisdom. I mean, it just raised everybody's eyebrows back then Bible says of Jesus that he grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and with man. And of course later in the epistles in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This is Jesus Christ. I don't care how many degrees you have.

1 (10m 19s):

You can have alphabet soup, pasture name with all the degrees. It pales in comparison of the wisdom and knowledge image of Jesus Christ. And the Bible well says that as believers in Christ, we have the mind of Christ. Isn't that incredible. And this is all pictured and portrayed in Solomon as a foreshadowing of this one in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, not surprisingly of the five wisdom books in the old Testament. And this is a future road trip that we will take through the five wisdom books of the old Testament. Three of them are penned by Solomon. I'm talking about Proverbs Ecclesiastes, these, and of course the song of Solomon Solomon also turned his father's dream into reality by building and furnishing God's house.

1 (11m 11s):

You remember how David wanted to build God a house? And the Lord said, no, David, and you're a man of warfare. You won't build the house. You can raise the funds for it, but you won't build it. But David, I will build a house for you. And that was the rise of the Davidic dynasty of the Davidic covenant that we learned about in second Samuel. And, but it was Solomon who would actually put that dream into reality. He would take the funds that David raised and then some, and build the first temple up until this time, the Lord met with the people in a traveling worship facility called the tabernacle. Now the temple would be built under Solomon and he spared no expense built the glorious temple with Cedars from Lebanon.

1 (11m 57s):

If you were a wealthy person back then the best building materials came from the Cedars of Lebanon and then Solomon overlaid. It was so much gold. I mean, it just dazzled the eyes. Chapter seven tells us that the labor force required to build the worship facility, the temple near 200,000 people. There were 3,200 chief officers who just managed the skilled labor and it took seven years to complete the temple.

2 (12m 31s):

And it became,

1 (12m 34s):

You know, one of the wonders of the world at that time, chapter eight, right? Cords, the celebration and the dedication of the temple on opening day, it's worth just reading chapter eight, just to read Solomon's prayer of dedication and the, the wise words that he used to remind the people on that day of what God was doing in their midst, the Zenith of the Davidic dynasty was, was, was on its way. And it was a glorious day when the temple was built and the temple was open and the people had this place of worship.

1 (13m 15s):

By the way, Solomon took another 13 years to build his own palace. You know, work, work that seven years to build God's 13 years to build his own palace. And it was quite glorious as well. So Solomon's fame grows. And this was really in the first 20 years of his reign where the Davidic dynasty is reaching its Zenith even greater than his father David, in terms of wealth and honor and prestige and prosperity. And all of that news

of what the Lord had done for the king and for the nation, even reach the queen of Sheba. She was the ruler of the Sabeans in the Southern part of Arabia. And when she heard what God was doing and who Solomon was, she was inspired to make a long journey, 1200 miles on camel, back to Jerusalem to see for herself, if the stories of Solomon's wisdom and wealth and glory and honor were actually true.

1 (14m 15s):

And when the queen arrived, you can read about this in chapter 10, her eyes popped wide open. She could not believe what she actually saw with her own eyes. She said to Solomon chapter 10, verse six, the report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, she says the half of it was not told to me your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard and of respect for the king. And this was the custom of the day. The queen of Sheba brought him spices and gold.

1 (14m 58s):

It was great to be Solomon because just people brought you all kinds of stuff, gold and silver and spices. And his wealth just continued to grow that way in return though, chapter 10 in verse 13 tells us, this is what Solomon did for the queen king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba, listened to this, all that. She desired, whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of king Solomon. And so she turned and went back to her own land with her

2 (15m 29s):

Servants.

1 (15m 31s):

I want you, I want you to imagine this for a moment. Let's just slow down in verse 13 of chapter 10 here, the queen of Sheba comes travels 1200 miles. You know, she, Sandra herself, I got to see if all this talk about Solomon is true and she gets there and her eyes are popping out. It's beyond anything. She, she could imagine. She brings her gifts to the king and then the king turns around and lavishes her. The text says with everything she asked for, and not only everything she asked for, but everything she desired, the implication is there some things that she wanted, but maybe she felt, I don't know, it wasn't appropriate to ask for it.

1 (16m 13s):

But Solomon kind of peeked into her heart, gave her everything. She asked for everything she desired. And then on top of that, there was something called the King's bounty. It's like the cherry on top of the, you know, the ice cream sundae. And she walked away lavish

2 (16m 31s):

In wealth and thinking, what in the world just happened here.

1 (16m 36s):

We've been making some Christ connections along the way. This was, this was my favorite part of my study. This week was to see something in its fullness that I really hadn't seen before. But the way Solomon lavishes queen Sheba reminds me of something. The apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians Ephesians chapter three and verse 20. Have you heard this before now unto him? That is the Lord now unto him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask

2 (17m 8s):

Or think, okay.

1 (17m 11s):

According to the power at work within us to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations,

2 (17m 17s):

Forever and ever. Amen. Again,

1 (17m 23s):

I want to make a Christ connection here, and I want you to put on your, a Bible prophecy thinking cap here a little bit this morning, the Davidic dynasty is a foreshadowing of the future reign of Jesus Christ. First over his earthly or millennial kingdom. This comes toward the end of the age after the seven year tribulation period at the second coming of Jesus Christ. The talks about the millennial reign of Jesus Christ when he will come back as the son of God and the son of David and sit on David's throne in Jerusalem and reign for a thousand years, I believe that is a literal physical kingdom on this earth.

1 (18m 8s):

The Davidic kingdom, starting with king David, the 40 year reign as glorious as that was, is a foreshadowing and a picture of that aspect of Jesus's future reign, the continuation of the dynasty under Solomon's rule and the Zenith to which it climate is a picture then of the eternal reign of Jesus Christ beyond the 1000 year millennial reign into eternity. And here's the idea, you know, when Jesus taught us to pray thy kingdom come, I think in part, he wants us to imagine the peace and rest the wisdom and knowledge, the wealth and glory, the fame and honor of the Davidic dynasty, which experienced its peaked splendor under the reign of king Solomon, are you still with me and like queen Sheba or the queen of Sheba.

1 (18m 59s):

I hope that it makes your eyes pop and your imagination run wild in anticipation of the kingdom of heaven that we inherit in Christ, a kingdom that yeses now, but not yet. All right. That's that's the way we describe it as theologians. The kingdom of God is now it is in our hearts, but there is a literal physical kingdom coming to this earth at the return of Jesus Christ and the future rain in eternity pictured in these two 40 year rains of

the Davidic dynasty. What I'm suggesting to you is this human imagination cannot conceive the majesty of life in the presence of our eternal king Jesus, and can only be revealed to us by the holy spirit, through the pages of scripture.

1 (19m 47s):

We get glimpses like this glimpse in the old Testament book of first Kings, other glimpses of heaven in the book of revelation and elsewhere. But the apostle Paul said this in first Corinthians two in verse nine, as it is written, what no eye has seen nor ear heard nor the heart of man imagined what God has prepared for those who love him. These things God has revealed to us through the spirit for the spirit, searches, everything. Even the depths of God.

2 (20m 16s):

I

1 (20m 17s):

Mean, when we get a sense of the glory and the splendor and the majesty and the wealth and the prosperity of the Davidic dynasty and the Zenith to which it rose under the king Solomon, even from a human perspective, it made queen sheba queen of Sheba, his eyes pop, and what we have to look forward to as believers in Jesus Christ is something that no I've seen nor ear has heard that has perhaps even entered into the imagination of our minds and our hearts. All that God has prepared for those who love him has just an a, an incredible thought.

1 (21m 4s):

It makes me think about the cleanest, she, but in an

2 (21m 5s):

Entirely different manner.

1 (21m 9s):

Now, despite the Lord's blessing at all the splendor of Solomon, the King's heart turned away from God. And that is the sad and tragic story of first Kings United. We stand come the middle of chapter 11 and by chapter 12 divided, we fall against the Lord's command. And his counsel, the Bible tells us that Solomon loved many foreign women who brought with them their foreign gods, and to please his many wives and concubines and Solomon is famous for this hundreds of them.

1 (21m 50s):

He built the high places for their gods, and he participated in their worship. The irony of Solomon's life is that the wisest man who ever lived with the exception of Jesus Christ became the biggest fool in his old age.

2 (22m 6s):

And there's

1 (22m 6s):

An old saying, there's no fool like an old fool. And Solomon played that part, even though he wrote the book of Proverbs about the wise road and the foolish road, Solomon took the foolish road in his old age. I just because you're old doesn't mean you're wise. You can be an old man or an old woman and make the stupidest most foolish choices that have long ranging consequences. And this is, this is what happened with Solomon, this evil, anger, the Lord. So much that he said to Solomon, I'm going to strip the kingdom from the hands of your son.

1 (22m 51s):

The Lord said to Solomon, I won't do it in your lifetime out of respect for David and my covenant with him, but your son will have the kingdom stripped from his hands. And that's exactly what happened in chapter 12. After Solomon died, the kingdom spiraled into civil war under the failed leadership of Rehoboam, who was Solomon's son. He assumed the throne and one kingdom became two chapters, 12 to 22 begins the era of the divided monarchy with a series of Kings. And you get into this through second Kings and on a series of Kings who reign separately over the Northern kingdom and the Southern kingdom.

1 (23m 32s):

Remember the Northern kingdom going forward as called Israel, the Southern kingdom referred to as Judah. There were 19 Kings in the Northern kingdom, 20 Kings in the Southern kingdom, over a span of about 400 years.

2 (23m 48s):

And

1 (23m 48s):

During that time, the king who did what was right in the eyes of the Lord was a rare commodity. I don't think there was anybody in the Northern kingdom for whom it was said he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, one or two for a period of time, Josiah being a bright spot in the Southern one. But Solomon's sin led to a divided kingdom from which you could argue. Israel has never recovered,

2 (24m 17s):

Never recovered solid

1 (24m 20s):

When he levied heavy taxes upon the people to help pay for his extravagances. And this led to a tax revolt right after the King's death. Rehoboam tried to hold things together, but he got some bad advice and he ruled

harshly. And that led to 10 of the tribes forming the Northern kingdom. They denounced their allegiance to David's house and they made a guy named Jeroboam

2 (24m 45s):

Their king. Yeah.

1 (24m 46s):

Ray Bowen and Jeroboam boom, boom, boom. You know, you got all these Kings names, you got to follow them, but Jeroboam became the first king of the Northern kingdom. Jeroboam was an evil king. It says in chapter 22 in verse 20-42, that he made Israel and he did. Here's what he did. He, he realized he was in competition with, with Jerusalem and the Southern kingdom. And he kind of reasoned in his own mind. You know, the people are going to travel to Jerusalem for the festivals and for the holidays and to worship at the temple, the temple is beautiful. It's dazzling, it's all that kind of stuff.

1 (25m 27s):

I need to give them some places up here to worship. And so he built two new centers of worship in Dan and Bethel each with a golden calf. And he introduced pagan idolatrous worship in the Northern kingdom. And it just went downhill from there. Jeroboam also instituted a feast in the same month as the feast of Tabernacles. Hey, you don't have to go to Jerusalem. That's a long journey down there. Now, worship of these temples that I've built for you up here, and here's a little golden calf up there, you know, the gold kind of like the gold down there in the temple. And don't go to Jerusalem for the feast of Tabernacles. We've got a feast right here and we've got our own priests, not from the order of the Levites.

1 (26m 9s):

I mean, Jeroboam did all of this for 22 years. He reigned in the Northern kingdom and the epitaph on his grave is that Jeroboam made Israel sin. In fact, no king in the Northern kingdom ever led spiritual reforms that brought Israel back. God, it's a sad story of the Northern kingdom. During that time, the word of the Lord came through prophets, starting with a guy named Elijah. Elijah along with Solomon is a giant of a figure in the book of first Kings. And he bursts onto the scene in the Northern kingdom by predicting a drought in chapter 17.

1 (26m 52s):

When we first learned of Elijah, he's standing in the presence of a king named Ahab,

2 (26m 57s):

A wicked wicked king,

1 (26m 60s):

Only outdone by his really, really wicked queen named Jezebel, nobody names their daughter, Joseph

Bell. And there's a good reason for that. Okay. She was just nasty wicked woman and her husband Ahab was just as bad. But Elijah, our first introduction to him is in the presence of the king. He speaking truth to power. We love that about Elijah, this courageous prophet, God sent him to the Northern kingdom, this wicked perverse idolatrous tribe of, or a Confederation of tribes and Elijah speaking, truth to power chapter 18 records.

1 (27m 42s):

Elijah's victory on Mount Carmel. That's, that's worth reading first Kings in and of itself, Elijah, the lone prophet of God against 400 prophets of bail and 450 prophets of Asherah. And it's just, it's just, it's the showdown on Mount Carmel and Elijah wins. And the God of Israel is, is shown to be the one true God. But afterwards and chapter 19, Elijah, who was at the pinnacle of success, experienced victory on the mountaintop. He falls into the slew of despond and he runs like a scared third grader away from queen Jessebelle, who threatened to kill him.

1 (28m 23s):

And Elijah runs and he runs and he runs it. He runs, he ends up in a cave hiding about a hundred miles away. And that's when the angel, the Lord finds him and says,

3 (28m 31s):

Elijah, are you doing, what are you doing? I'm all alone. I'm all alone. I'm all alone. And no,

1 (28m 37s):

No. Yeah. There's others like you, a remnant 7,000 profits, you know, all that kind of stuff. But I love how the angel of the Lord just kind of shepherds Elijah at this point, tells him, go back to sleep. You need some rest. Boy, it's been a hard day at the office. I mean, beating those profits of bail and Asherah, and the long running that you've done, you just need some rest. So Elijah rested, he wakes up, angel sends him back to bed. Again, you need some more rest. Elijah gets up. Angel makes him some angel food cake feeds him. Not exactly, but I just want to see if you're paying attention here, but it's a kind of idea of feeds. The guy gives him some rest. Elijah was weary.

1 (29m 17s):

He was burned out. He's on the edge of just, I mean, he's in the slew of despond and maybe not medically diagnosed depression, but he's in a bad mood until state. And he just, you know, sometimes not always, but sometimes you just need some rest and some food. And to come back to your house shoes,

2 (29m 39s):

When you're have a better sound, mind, need a good night's rest.

1 (29m 45s):

And that's a chapter 19.

2 (29m 48s):

And following United, we stand divided. We fall.

1 (29m 55s):

That's the theme of first Kings. And it was a sad day when Israel divided into two kingdoms later in Israel's history, the Jews dispersed after the time of Christ dispersed to the four corners of the world.

2 (30m 13s):

James

1 (30m 14s):

Writes to the diaspora, the dispersed body,

2 (30m 20s):

And

1 (30m 22s):

The Jews did not come back together as a nation. Are you ready for this until 19 40, 48, 19 48?

2 (30m 31s):

Do the math there United

1 (30m 34s):

We stand divided. We fall and the rift in the kingdom, not until 1948. Did the nation come back together and Jews keep moving back to the Homeland, not under a king, but under a prime minister. No king will rain again in Israel on the throne of a United Kingdom until Jesus Messiah returns.

2 (31m 6s):

All right,

1 (31m 8s):

Just because the kingdom divided doesn't mean that God's plan and the covenant that he made to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and then the Davidic covenant doesn't mean that was nullified because of Israel's sin or a leader's sin or Solomon sin. No, the plan moves forward and there's coming a day when the kingdom will come back together. Now, now you've got your Bible prophecy hat on again, and it's at the end of the tribulation period, following the rapture of the church, seven years of tribulation, the second coming of Jesus Christ. This time he comes not as the, the lamb of God who dies upon a cross for our sins. Now he comes

back the second time as the reigning king and he sits on David's throne in Jerusalem.

1 (31m 54s):

I believe that is a literal kingdom and revelation 20 tells us he'll reign for a thousand years and believers in Christ who were raptured out of this world, return with him to rule and reign. The government will be upon his shoulders. Isaiah nine says, and there will be no end to his reign of peace and prosperity and wealth and honor. And all of that

2 (32m 20s):

Pictured in the Davidic dynasty.

1 (32m 24s):

The larger lesson though, that we learned from first Kings is this, write it down, sin, disrupts, unity, and divides people. Let me say it again. Sin, sin, disrupts unity, and it divides people. Yeah, United, we stand divided. We fall, but sin disrupts unity. It divides people. God blamed Solomon for his sin because you did not follow my commandments. And you turned toward these idolatrous ways. Solomon, the kingdom will be ripped and torn from your son. The blame was at Solomon's feet because he did not keep himself well.

1 (33m 9s):

Sin, disrupts, unity, and divides people. I got to tell you for decades, I have witnessed this dynamic as a pastor in a local church and whenever division erupts within a congregation someone's sin is always at the root of the problem. Sometimes it's a leader's sin. Sometimes it's a faction of people in the church. Somebody sin is always at the root of an eruption of division within the church. And it grieves the holy spirit and quenches the holy spirit.

1 (33m 50s):

The Bible says where the spirit of the Lord is. There is Liberty at second Corinthians three in verse 17. I, you, you, you could almost say I'm not adding to scripture, but it's also true that where the spirit of the Lord is there is unity

2 (34m 3s):

Because

1 (34m 3s):

Unity results. When we yield to the holy Spirit's guidance, when we grieve him, when we quench him, when we go our own way, when, when, when there's sin in our lives, that grieves and quenches, the spirit of God, that sweet holy spirit, that brings harmony and unity to a body of believers. Therefore, we must guard our hearts. Solomon didn't. We must practice confession and repentance. Keep short accounts with God.

2 (34m 35s):

All right, quit blaming other people. All

1 (34m 39s):

Right, this person did this. This person did that. I'm offended by this. I'm offended by that. Listen, we need to be offended by what offends God, not by what somebody else said to us.

2 (34m 50s):

Practice confession and repentance, eagerly

1 (34m 52s):

Maintain unity. That's what Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One Lord, one, faith, one baptism. We are one in Christ. If we're not one, then that is not of Christ.

2 (35m 12s):

That is of the devil

1 (35m 13s):

Who divides.

2 (35m 16s):

And he's good at that.

1 (35m 21s):

So guard our hearts, practice confession and repentance, eagerly maintain unity. It takes work to do that. Walk in the spirit

2 (35m 30s):

And not in the flesh. And remember the words of king David acting as a Psalmist who wrote

1 (35m 40s):

In Psalm chapter 1 33 in verse one. And this was when it was a United monarchy.

2 (35m 49s):

David wasn't

1 (35m 50s):

Alive to see the rift in the kingdom.

2 (35m 54s):

And David wrote

1 (35m 55s):

These words, behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell

2 (36m 1s):

In unity, it is good and pleasant. I'm happy

1 (36m 7s):

To say this is a good and pleasant time at this church,

2 (36m 11s):

But beyond your guard,

1 (36m 14s):

Because our enemy, the devil prowls about like a roaring lion. And he loves to divide sin, disrupts unity,

2 (36m 25s):

And

1 (36m 25s):

It divides people. Our nation is more divided, perhaps it never brought on arguably. So by some who don't have the best interest of the United States of America at heart,

2 (36m 37s):

I could argue that, but we're also a sinful nation. If the Lord

1 (36m 44s):

Prescribed this for Israel, I'm going to tear the kingdom in half

2 (36m 50s):

Because as of one leader's sin, what

1 (36m 54s):

Would he do to the United States of America?

2 (36m 57s):

If we don't get our act cleaned up, if we don't

1 (36m 60s):

Come before God in confession and repentance and pray for his mercy, there's no guarantee the United States of America will. I remain.

2 (37m 14s):

So in history,

1 (37m 18s):

We'll do our part as the people of God

2 (37m 22s):

To get our own house in order not

1 (37m 25s):

To point fingers of blame at others, but to look in the mirror and say, God, search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts and see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting and be one bright light in an otherwise dark world

2 (37m 44s):

That is spiraling into division. Okay.

1 (37m 49s):

Take care of you. I'll take care of me. We'll take care of us in the body of Christ. And let's make sure that we work hard to maintain the unity of the spirit within the walls of our own community of faith. Because when the world looks in and sees the church dividing,

3 (38m 9s):

It's a black guy, it's a black guy

1 (38m 11s):

On the body of Christ. They just go, ah, what do I need your Jesus for? You guys can't even get along

2 (38m 19s):

Now. It's good

1 (38m 20s):

And pleasant. Isn't it. When brothers and sisters dwell in unity, as we are today in that a good thing, let's all

commit ourselves to working hard, to making sure the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, major on the major things, right? Let go of some of the minor things. If somebody is offended, you'd go to that person. Be a peacemaker, not a peacekeeper. That's a passive person who brushes it under the rug. Peacemakers intentional about making peace and maintaining and working hard to produce the unity of the spirit. Be a peacemaker, not a peacekeeper.

1 (39m 2s):

Don't be a troublemaker. Who's stirring up division. Let's be a shining, bright, light,

4 (39m 10s):

Salt, and light in this world

1 (39m 13s):

That doesn't know what unity looks like politically

4 (39m 17s):

Or otherwise. And let's learn from the lessons of old Testament history and not presume upon the Lord that our sin won't produce the same result doing divided kingdom.

0 (39m 33s):

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