

“A Half-Hearted Love”

2 Chronicles 10: 12-19, 11: 13-17, & 12: 1-2a, 12-14

10:12 Three days later Jeroboam and all the people returned to hear Rehoboam's decision, just as the king had ordered. **13** But Rehoboam spoke harshly to them, for he rejected the advice of the older counselors **14** and followed the counsel of his younger advisers. He told the people, “My father laid heavy burdens on you, but I'm going to make them even heavier! My father beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions!”

15 So the king paid no attention to the people. This turn of events was the will of God, for it fulfilled the Lord's message to Jeroboam son of Nebat through the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh. **16** When all Israel realized that the king had refused to listen to them they responded, “Down with the dynasty of David! We have no interest in the son of Jesse. Back to your homes O Israel! Look out for your own house, O David!” So all the people of Israel returned home. **17** But Rehoboam continued to rule over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah.

18 King Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was in charge of forced labor, to restore order, but the people of Israel stoned him to death. When this news reached King Rehoboam, he quickly jumped into his chariot and fled to Jerusalem. **19** And to this day the norther tribes of Israel have refused to be ruled by a descendent of David.

11:13-17 **13** But all the priests and Levites living among the northern tribes of Israel sided with Rehoboam. **14** The Levites even abandoned their pasturelands and property and moved to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons would not allow them to serve the Lord as priests. **15** Jeroboam appointed his own priests to serve at the pagan shrines, where they worshiped the goat and calf idols he had made. **16** From all the tribes of Israel, those who sincerely wanted to worship the Lord, the God of Israel, followed the Levites to Jerusalem, where they could offer sacrifices to the Lord, the God of their ancestors. **17** This strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they supported Rehoboam son of Solomon, for during those years they faithfully followed in the footsteps of David and Solomon.

12:1-2a, 12-14 **1** But when Rehoboam was firmly established and strong, he abandoned the Law of the Lord, and all Israel followed him in this sin. **2** Because they were unfaithful to the Lord ... **12** Because Rehoboam humbled himself, the Lord's anger was turned away, and he did not destroy him completely. There were still some good things in the land of Judah.

13 King Rehoboam firmly established himself in Jerusalem and continued to rule. He was 41 years old when he became king and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the Lord had chosen from among all the tribes of Israel as the place to honor his name. Rehoboam's mother was Naamah, a woman from Ammon. **14 But he was an evil king, for he did not seek the Lord with all his heart.**

For the next two Sundays I would like to contrast and describe what it looks like to have a heart completely God's versus having a half-hearted love. Today I want to look at Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon the wise, had a half-hearted love for God! When I say the name Solomon, what is the first thing that pops into your mind? Wisdom right? God told Solomon that He would give him whatever he asked for and Solomon asked for Wisdom. Solomon became the wisest man ever to live. And because Solomon asked for Wisdom instead of riches, fame, and many descendants, God gave those to Solomon as well. But Solomon didn't stay the course. He did not finish well and ended his life away from God. He was led astray by his foreign wives and concubines. (He only had 700 wives and 300 concubines). Some of us immediately think to ourselves, that is just plain dumb, not wise at all! But we do the same thing. We watch bad movies, read bad books, play video games that have us doing bad things, swear and cuss, and refuse to read our Bible and hardly pray at all during the week and expect all that stuff to, NOT affect us. People of God, we need to be aware that if we give the world (700 wives) all that time and only give God one hour on Sunday we are being just like Solomon and we will not finish well. We certainly won't be dangerous to satan!

Rehoboam followed in the footsteps of his dad in the later years of Solomon's life. Rehoboam knew deep inside that it was God who was really in control of things, but he didn't live like it. He lived like Solomon the last years of his life, detached from God and definitely not dangerous to the evil one. If we look at Rehoboam's life, we see five signs or symptoms we'll call them, of a half-hearted love for God. **[NOTE 1]**

The first symptom of a half-hearted love for God is, "Your words and actions promote division instead of peace. Look at the verses we read from chapter 10. Rehoboam's decision to go with the advice of his younger advisers caused a division of Israel into two kingdoms, the Northern Israel and Southern Judah. Rehoboam caused the split! Throughout history before this the 12 tribes of Israel managed to stay together through good and bad. But Rehoboam is not King for very long at all when he causes a rift that would last forever.

What about you? Do your words and actions promote peace? Or do they promote division and unrest? Think about it. One of the most tragic things in our society is the loss of the idea that what we do affects those around us. Every time you make a bad decision or good decision it affects the people around you whether you are aware of it or not. Too many times in the last few months have I heard the words, "I'm not hurting anybody else!" "It's my life and I can do what I want with it." I'm sorry, but the words we choose to use and the things we choose to do, affect other people. No matter what you want to say, I believe that what you do, affects everybody, even if it is in some little way. It does. **[NOTE 2]**

The Second Symptom of a half-hearted love for God is that you rely on your own strength, rather than God's. I could sing the song "Depend on Me: every Sunday. The words are so excellent. God wants us to depend on Him. God wants us to rely on His strength and not our own. But Rehoboam gets full of pride and does it himself? He

makes goat and calf-shaped idols and puts them up in the temple! So not the people are worshipping God and these idols. When he gets established and strong he abandons the Law of the Lord.

How many times have you tried to do it yourself this week? How many of us don't try everything we can think of and only when we are exhausted and frustrated so we turn to God and ask Him in prayer to help us? I would bet that every single one of us has done that multiple times. God calls us to rely on His strength. Paul tells us in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things, through Christ who strengthens me." We have an unlimited resource yet we choose not to tap into it. Pray! Talk to God first and let Him provide for you what you need to do His will. **[NOTE 3]**

The third symptom of a half-hearted love for God is that you worship God only when it is expedient or comfortable for you. How many of us only come to church when it is expedient? When it is convenient? Expedient is an interesting word. Webster's says that it means "suited to the circumstances, based on what is of use or advantage rather than what is right or just, based on self-interest." In other words, the question goes something like, "how many of us go to church only when it's convenient? How many of us worship God only when we've gotten plenty of sleep? How many of us go to church only when our best friend or a certain relative picks us up? Do you have a half-hearted love for God? Rehoboam did. He only worshipped God when he needed something. Only when he got himself in trouble! How many of us, like Rehoboam, use God like a fireman? You care about him only when you need him? **[NOTE 4]**

The fourth symptom of a half-hearted love is that you distort God's plan and purpose for the family. You see Rehoboam led his people, Israel, astray. The people started worshipping idols that Ree had made. He got strong, established his kingdom and then ... abandoned God, until he was at the end of his rope and this King Shishak of Egypt had him surrounded. Then he finally turned back toward God. But before Ree was humbled he had abandoned God's Law. Do you know of someone who thinks they have it all together and knows God's will for you? I would be hesitant to tell anyone that they should listen to anybody else but God and the Spirit within. Ask God for a peace in your heart and in your circumstances to help you to know if a certain path is the one God wants you to take. Now I understand that in the time of Rehoboam people couldn't just bow their heads and pray. There always was sin in the way. So God talked to them through visions and dreams and through His prophets. But Jesus changed all that. We don't need to go through a prophet or a priest because when Jesus died the curtain in the Jerusalem temple split in two opening the way between us and God. Now each of us, can receive leading and guidance directly from God. The only way to make sure you get rid of this symptom of half-heartedness is to spend time, DAILY, in God's Word so that you know well what God's plan and purpose for you and your family is. **[NOTE 5]**

The fifth and last symptom of a half-hearted love for God is that you acknowledge God only when you feel helpless. This kind of piggybacks on the second and third symptoms. But here in this symptom we are talking NOT about worshipping God or who we depend on but simply acknowledging Him. God is all-powerful, all-

knowing and everywhere present. That means that you can NOT go anywhere that God is not! He's there whether you acknowledge Him or not. One of my favorite verses of all time is Proverbs 3: 5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." It is vitally important that you acknowledge that you can do nothing for the Kingdom of God apart from Christ within you in the person of the Holy Spirit. NOTHING! IT's that old treating God like a policeman or fireman thing from a different angle. You are not that thrilled with having them around until something goes wrong or a fire starts. Then you are all fired up to make sure they get there quick. (Pun intended)

We are not supposed to wait until we are surrounded by the enemy on every side before we turn to God. But Rehoboam does. That's how he reveals his half-hearted love toward God. But give REE some credit. At least he did turn to God instead of praying to those goat and calf idols that he made. As chapter 12 admits, "There was some good in Judah." You see? God gives us credit for our efforts. But our efforts should be to acknowledge God in everything we do. We are to depend on the power of God through the person of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Every decision we make should first ask the question, "What would Jesus Do?" What is God's plan and purpose for my life? Now make your decision in light of those answers.

There are some people, no, I think I'm going to say that every single person here was convicted because their lives are plagued by at least one of these symptoms. We don't want to be like Rehoboam. We want to finish strong like Solomon, Ree's dad, did not! We don't want to be like Rehoboam or anyone else for that matter that has modeled a half-hearted love for God. For the Bible commands us as it quotes Jesus saying that we are to love God with all our heart, with all our mind, all our soul and strength! If you have a half-hearted love for God, you are NOT dangerous to the evil one. **[NOTE 6]**

I spent a good amount of time on the symptoms of half-heartedness, now let me spend at least a little time on the symptoms or signs of a whole-hearted love for God. First you must agree with God that you are sinful and that you fall short of God's glory. It's called confession. It's what we did earlier in the worship service. Confess your sins to God and turn away from your sins and turn toward God and ask for forgiveness. You can know from 1 John 1:9 that your sins are forgiven. In fact it says in that verse that if we confess our sins that God is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness." That's awesome! So we can know that we are forgiven. Then we need to receive Jesus into our hearts as Lord and Savior. John 1:12 reads to those who received Him He gave the right to become children of God." Acknowledge Him as your Lord and your Savior. Which means that you recognize that He should be in the driver's seat of your life. It also means that you acknowledge that when you have Jesus in your heart that you will have eternal life in heaven with Him. Now that doesn't mean that you will never experience earthly death. It means that when you die, that your Spirit and your soul will be in Christ in Paradise. It tells us in Revelations chapter 3 and verse 20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into Him." We know that we must receive Jesus Christ. In first John chapter

5 we read, “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; He who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you **may know** that you have eternal life.”

If you do those things you will show a whole-hearted love for God. But then we have to live it out. Now that’s where the rubber meets the road. WE can’t rely on feeling. No matter what we feel we must do our best to live by the Word of God. We must acknowledge God in all we do or say. We must love justice and mercy and walk humbly with our God. If you do your best to pray regularly, spend time in the Bible regularly, you will be living out the best symptoms or signs of a whole-hearted love for God. Next week we are going to talk about King Asa and what it looks like to have a whole-hearted love for God that makes you dangerous to the evil one. [NOTE 7]

Let me ask you something? Did you feel convicted at all? Are there two or three of those signs or symptoms of half-hearted love that apply to you? What are you going to do about it? Please write something down. Anything! Write down one thing that you can do this week to eliminate one or more or all the symptoms of a half-hearted love that you see in yourself. If you are really brave ask a loved one or a friend if they see any of those signs or symptoms of a half-hearted love in you. Please! Take an honest look. My “I will ... statement” is that I will think about each symptom and ask the Lord in prayer if He sees it in me and then listen to what God says. Let’s pray ... AMEN

**“Sermon Notes for “A Half-Hearted Love” based on
2 Chronicles chapters 10-12, given in Doster on November 12, 2025**

- I. The first sign or symptom of a half-hearted love is that your words and actions promote division rather than peace.
- II. The second sign or symptom of a half-hearted love is that you rely on your own strength or power ...not on God’s.
- III. The third symptom of a half-hearted love is that you worship God only when it is expedient (convenient) or comfortable for you.
- IV. The Fourth symptom of a half-hearted love is that you distort God’s plan and the purpose for the family. Rehoboam abandoned God.
- V. The Fifth Symptom of a half-hearted love for God is that you acknowledge God only when you feel helpless.
- VI. Symptoms of a whole-hearted love for God.
 - a. You agree with God that you are sinful and you fall short of God’s glory. You confess your sins.
 - b. You breathe in and receive His forgiveness.

- c. You acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior
 - d. You live it out. You are dangerous to the evil one!
- VII. What are you going to do about it? Write down one thing that you will do to remove a sign of half-heartedness. Write down one thing you will do to add a sign of a whole-hearted love? "I will ..." statement.