

- *Family service*

Focus on God...

- Before opening prayer:
 - time for quiet reflection about God, thinking about all that he is
 - Alison's going to play, some slides will appear, and then we'll pray
- If we want to make wise choices in life, then we need **God's bl help and his wisdom**
 - **for which he has given us the Holy Spirit**

Solomon Moves Out: part One

- *From the all-age talk, with drama and powerpoint*
- Show bride and groom picture:
 - think back to the last wedding you attended
 - at the point they were getting married, what did the bride and groom say to each other?
 - **display "I will" alongside...**
 - when Solomon was made king he promised to obey God
 - he said **"I will"** to God! (**display Solomon saying "I will"**)
 - for a long time Solomon kept that promise, and obeyed God closely
 - but then Solomon decided to do his own thing
- We'll read about it in the Bible in a little while, but basically what happened was this:
 - Solomon wanted to be friends with other kings
 - in those days to make friends with other kings you married their daughters!!
 - **display Solomon with lots of brides!**
 - no doubt Solomon's weddings were happy occasions - **the problem was that God had told Solomon not to marry these wives!**

Drama

- Talk to congregation about their feelings about what happened in the sketch
 - aiming to get round to **link between actions and their consequences**
- When Solomon married the daughters of other kings he'd done wrong:
 - **what, then, were the consequences?**
 - God was hurt, angry and sad that Solomon had let him down, had disobeyed him, had valued friendship with other kings more than friendship with God
 - God had given Solomon so much, yet now Solomon was taking no notice of what God said!
 - instead of everyone feeling glad about their king's loyalty to God (**display Solomon surrounded by happy people**) they began to see the consequences of his behaviour
 - there was war in their country, one of Solomon's close friends and advisers rebelled against him, and everyone felt upset and afraid (**display Solomon surrounded by frightened people**)
- There are consequences when we ignore and disobey God
 - God feels hurt and angry because he loves us and hates it when we spoil the friendship we have with him by ignoring him and treating him as if he doesn't matter
 - **nevertheless** God goes on loving us even when we make bad choices with unfortunate consequences (**display Jesus on Cross**)
 - if we are wise, we will learn from those consequences to make God's choices in the future

Solomon Moves Out: part Two

- *Simple take on the adult-oriented sermon*
- God gave Solomon wisdom and wealth
 - yet Solomon chose wives for himself in a compromise that had serious consequences for his people

Sowing

- Though acceptable to the surrounding nations, marrying outside God's people was an evil in God's sight ([Deuteronomy 7:1-4](#))
 - political alliances with foreign kings were sealed by marriages
 - Solomon chose to use the world's values to guide him, marrying daughters of foreign kings
 - it led to worship of false gods, leading him away from total commitment to the Lord ([v.4](#))
- Our loyalty to God must not be divided:
 - Solomon's disobedience sowed seeds that would divide the kingdom
 - our disobedience will likewise sow seeds that will break up God's kingdom

Reaping

- God became angry:
 - allowing conflict ([vs.14-25](#))
 - and rebellion ([vs.26-40](#)) to threaten the kingdom
- God fulfilled his warning to Solomon that:
 - *"I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you..."* ([v.11](#))
 - the people who were united in celebration are now divided through compromise
 - sin affects our relationships with people
 - compromise with sin may well result in the absence of God's blessing
 - Solomon's compromise affected future generations - ours can too
 - healthy on the outside, strong on the outside, powerful on the outside, Solomon's heart became spiritually poor as he compromised...
 - **take heed!**
- *But...*

September 17, 1868: Walter Gowan's Life Drained out for Sudan

- *This to be the closing illustration...*
- Despite the African heat, Walter Gowans shivered. He was miserable; malaria had laid him low. Seeing the desperate need of the Sudan for the gospel he had left his home in Canada, but here, barely a year later, in 1894, the mission pioneer was dying, separated from his co-workers.
- Two other men had come out with him. The first, Rowland Bingham, had become so ill he had remained on the coast to procure supplies and act as a go-between. Thomas Kent, of Buffalo, New York, had traveled inland with Walter, but gone back to the coast to bring up the needed supplies. Meanwhile, an Emir who was raiding for slaves captured Walter, who was starving. When released, Walter tried to get back to the coast. He died alone in a town called Girku.
- Walter was only twenty-six years old. Born on September 17, 1868, he had developed a passion for the peoples of the Sudan. At that time, the name "Sudan" referred to all of Africa from Senegal to Ethiopia.
- Rowland and Thomas were in the Sudan because of Walter. Walter's mother was sold on her son's vision to carry the gospel to the sixty million people of north central Africa. She invited preacher Rowland Bingham to her home. In her parlor, she laid Walter's dream before him. He was deeply moved. When Rowland left the Gowan residence that day, he was determined to join Walter. Hearing of their decision, the third man, Thomas Kent of Buffalo, New York, teamed up with them.
- Unable to interest established mission agencies in their work, the three set out to

tackle the work alone. They landed in Lagos, Nigeria. Their hope was to establish a work five hundred miles inland in one of the most treacherous regions of the world. But the three immediately found themselves sick.

- Thomas died, having brought the supplies up to where he had left Walter. Rowland was still desperately ill; and returned to Canada, where he took Walter's few belongings to Mrs. Gowan.
- As Rowland remembered it, Mrs. Gowan met him with extended hand. "We stood there in silence. Then she said these words: 'Well, Mr. Bingham, I would rather have had Walter go out to the Sudan and die there, all alone, than have him home today, disobeying his Lord.'"
- Walter's dream did not die with him. In 1900, Rowland Bingham made a second attempt to establish a mission work in Sudan. Again he failed. But the following year, he managed to send a team into the Sudan, and it established a base five hundred miles from Lagos.
- Walter's vision resulted in the formation of the Sudan Interior Mission. In the 1980s this mission merged with two others to become the Society for International Ministries.