



Small Group Guide: What's In There?

Summary: This sermon uses the life of Solomon as a warning about how small, unchecked compromises ("excepts") in our hearts can slowly drift us from full devotion to God, even amid great blessing and success. It calls listeners to examine their hearts, reject compromise, live by Scripture with accountability, and turn back to God wherever they've wandered.

Key Scripture References

- **1 Kings 11:4-8 (Solomon's drift from God)**
- **1 Kings 3:3 ("Solomon loved the Lord, except...")**
- **Proverbs 4:23 ("Guard your heart above all things")**
- **Deuteronomy 17:14-17 (God's commands for kings)**

Key Takeaways

1. **Guard your heart** - Small compromises ("excepts") can lead to major drift over time
2. **Blessings require boundaries** - The more God blesses you, the more you need to protect your heart
3. **Your gift ≠ your character** - You can operate in spiritual gifts while your heart is far from God
4. **Isolation is dangerous** - We need accountability and transparency with trusted counsel
5. **Turn now, not later** - Don't wait to address heart issues; turn back to God immediately
6. **Immaturity needs growth; woundedness needs healing** - Identify which you're dealing with

How to Avoid "Drifting."

1. **You must live by the Book**
 - Make the Bible your standard and way of life, regardless of what culture or people think.
 - If you fall, get back up—Scripture says He is faithful to forgive.
2. **You must live in transparency with counsel**
 - Don't live in isolation, especially if you're gifted.
 - Have people who can see your life, speak into it, and call you out when you're drifting.
3. **You must work out dysfunctions**
 - What you don't address in your heart is not dying; it's growing.
 - Time alone doesn't heal wounds or produce maturity—intentional dealing with issues does.
4. **You must grow and develop greater dependence on God**
 - Gifting, success, and long church tenure can become enemies to true longevity and legacy.
 - Keep deepening your surrender; don't coast on what you already know or have done.
5. **You must turn if you find yourself here**
 - If you realize, "I'm somewhere I never thought I'd be," turn now.
 - Don't hesitate or try to "figure it out" while staying in the same place.
6. **Come back to God**
 - Unlike Solomon, who's left with no clear record of repentance, choose to return.
 - Pray like David: "Create in me a clean heart... and renew a right spirit within me," and let God anchor your heart so it doesn't drift again.

Discussion Questions

Part 1: Recognizing the "Excepts"

1. **The Power of "Except":** The sermon highlighted that Solomon "loved the Lord, except..." What are some common "excepts" people might have in their relationship with God today? Do you recognize any in your own life?
2. **Early Warning Signs:** Solomon's compromise started small and grew over time. Why do you think we often ignore small compromises rather than addressing them immediately?
3. **Personal Reflection:** Have you ever experienced a time when something you tolerated eventually became something you participated in? What happened?

Part 2: Understanding the Drift

1. **The Blindness of Blessing:** It was said, "Blessings can blind you." How can success, prosperity, or even spiritual gifts cause us to become less dependent on God?
2. **Unwise Alignment:** God warned against marrying foreign women not because of ethnicity but because of their gods. How does this principle apply to our relationships today (romantic, business, friendships)?

Part 3: The Path Back

1. **The Difference Between David and Solomon: Both sinned greatly, but David repented while Solomon's ending is unclear. What made the difference? Why is repentance so critical?**
2. **Time Doesn't Heal:** The pastor said, "What you do not address in your heart is growing, it's not dying." What dysfunctions or wounds have you been avoiding that need to be addressed?

Practical Application This Week

Day 1-2: Self-Examination

- Pray Psalm 139:23-24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart..."
- Journal: What are my "excepts" with God? Where am I saying "yes, but..."?

Day 3-4: Identify Your Weak Points

- List areas where you're tolerating things you shouldn't
- Ask: "What am I comfortable with that I shouldn't be?"
- Identify one thing you need to create distance from

Day 5-6: Seek Accountability

- Identify 1-2 people who can speak truth into your life
- Have an honest conversation with them about areas you're struggling
- Give them permission to ask you hard questions

Day 7: Create a "Turn Around" Plan

- Write down specific steps to address one area of drift
- Pray David's prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10)
- Share your plan with your accountability partner

