The Story: Chapter Fourteen

A Kingdom Torn in Two

*‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and* ***brought you to myself****.****5****Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be****my treasured possession*** *among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;****6****and you shall be to* ***me a kingdom of priests*** *and****a holy nation.****’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”*  Exodus 19:4-6

*But you are****a chosen race, a royal priesthood****,****a holy nation****, a people for* ***his own possession****, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.****10****Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.* 1 Peter 2:9-10

**A Holy People: Set apart to serve Christ as a beacon of hope.**

What do you think was or will be the greatest era of Trinity Lutheran Church?

1. 40 – 60 years ago
2. 20 – 40 years ago
3. 10 – 20 years ago
4. The last 10 years
5. The next 10 years
6. Starting 10 years from now

**The Solomon Tragedy:**

1. King Solomon’s reign was considered to be the Golden Age of Israel.
   1. A time without war.
   2. A time of great prosperity.
2. King Solomon turned away from the Lord. (*The Story*, page 192: 1st Kings 11:9-13)
   1. He directly disobeyed God’s commands (ie: married women of other religions).
   2. He worshipped other gods.
   3. He turned to his own self-interests.
   4. Ecclesiastes 12:1
3. King Solomon’s sin reveals that all sin is not equal.
   1. All sin separates us from God.
   2. Some sins have varying degrees of penalties and consequences.
   3. Breaking the 1st commandment leads to breaking the other 9.
   4. The kingdom was torn away from Solomon’s descendants.

**A Healthy Kingdom (Church):**

*Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh,[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Peter%204&version=ESV#fen-ESV-30431a)*] arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,****2****so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.* 1st Peter 4:1-2

1. A healthy church focuses on reaching unbelievers.
2. A healthy church is sold out to reaching spiritually lost and condemned people.
3. A healthy church experiences the power of God’s purpose by embracing change.
4. A healthy church preserves the unity of the Spirit.

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,****2****with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,****3****eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*  Ephesians 4:1-3

*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.****15****Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.****16****Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.[*[*h*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=ESV#fen-ESV-28246h)*] Never be wise in your own sight.****17****Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.****18****If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* Romans 12:14-18

**A Divided Kingdom**

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| **Disunity** | **Unity** |
| *The Story,* page 195  The gathering of forces in order to fight with one another | The joining together to find solutions and advance the mission. |
| *The Story,* page 196  Create distinctions, an “us & them” mentality in order to remain separate. | Gather together, especially for worship, in order to create a sense of belonging. |
| *The Story*, page 197  Attempt to control others with power and manipulation. | Submit to Christ and one another through faith in Christ and obedience (Eph. 5) |
| *The Story,* page 199  Waiting for the other person to make the first move (pride and continual warring). | Pursue healing and reconciliation through humility and grace. |

*But [Jesus], knowing their thoughts, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls.* Luke 11:17