

The “Three Chairs” Framework (Briefly)

- **Chair 1 – Personal Pursuit of God**
Faith is owned, practiced, and prioritized personally.
- **Chair 2 – Inherited / Assumed Faith**
Faith is respected and benefited from, but not deeply cultivated.
- **Chair 3 – Rejected or Marginalized Faith**
God’s ways are ignored or openly displaced by human wisdom.

This is **not primarily about morality**, but about **who sets authority** and **where trust is located**.

Chair 1 — David: God Personally Pursued

Core Posture

David’s defining trait is **relational dependence on God**, not flawlessness.

“The LORD looks on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7)

Key Characteristics

- **God-centered authority:** David repeatedly *inquires of the LORD* (1 Sam 23:2; 30:8).
- **Repentant heart:** When confronted, David *confesses without excuse* (Psalm 51).
- **Covenantal awareness:** The ark, worship, and God’s promises matter deeply (2 Sam 6–7).
- **Identity before function:** David is a worshiper *before* he is a king.

Failures — but not apostasy

- Moral collapse (Bathsheba, Uriah).
- Family dysfunction.
- Yet **never self-justifying**; sin leads him *back to God*, not away.

Why David stays in Chair 1:

His trust collapses *toward* God, not *away from* Him.

Chair 2 — Solomon: God Revered but Not Fully Pursued

Core Posture

Solomon **knows God** and **benefits from God**, but gradually shifts trust to *systems, wisdom, and prosperity*.

“Solomon loved the LORD... **except** he sacrificed at the high places” (1 Kings 3:3)

That “except” matters.

Key Characteristics

- **Inherited faith:** God is “the God of my father David” (1 Kings 8:26).
- **Intellectualized devotion:** Extraordinary wisdom, but diminishing obedience.
- **Divided heart:** Loves God *and* loves what God forbade (1 Kings 11:1–8).
- **Temple without Torah:** He builds God’s house, but violates God’s law.

Structural Drift (Critical)

- **Political marriages** override covenant loyalty.
- **Economic excess** replaces reliance (gold, horses, chariots—Deut 17 violations).
- **Public worship continues** while private allegiance erodes.
“His heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God” (1 Kings 11:4)

Why Solomon slips into Chair 2:

He substitutes **wisdom about God** for **obedience to God**.

Chair 3 — Rehoboam: God Marginalized and Ignored

Core Posture

Rehoboam inherits **power without formation** and **religion without repentance**.

“He did not seek the LORD” (2 Chronicles 12:14)

That is the biblical diagnosis.

Key Characteristics

- **No inquiry of God** at all (contrast David).
- **Rejects godly counsel** in favor of peer affirmation (1 Kings 12).
- **Uses authority coercively**, not covenantally.
- **Religious decline** accelerates (idolatry, high places, instability).

The Critical Moment

Rehoboam stands at a crossroads:

- Elders: servant leadership, wisdom, restraint.
- Peers: dominance, pride, force.

He chooses **ego over obedience**, and the kingdom fractures.

Why Rehoboam ends in Chair 3:

Faith was **never internalized**, only inherited—and inheritance cannot withstand pressure.

Comparative Summary Table

Feature	David (Chair 1)	Solomon (Chair 2)	Rehoboam (Chair 3)
Relationship to God	Personal, dependent	Reverent, distant	Neglected
Authority Source	God’s word	Wisdom &	Self & peers

		success	
Response to Sin	Repentance	Rationalization	Resistance
Use of Power	Shepherding	Administrative	Coercive
Spiritual Trajectory	Enduring faith	Divided heart	Rapid collapse

Key Factors That Contribute to the Shift Away from God

1. Unrepented Success

Success masks spiritual decline better than failure ever could (Solomon).

2. Faith Transmission Without Formation

Rehoboam inherits **position**, not **piety**.

3. Loss of God-Inquiry

David asks God constantly. Solomon asks selectively. Rehoboam not at all.

4. Private Compromise → Public Consequence

What is tolerated privately (Solomon's divided heart) fractures publicly (Rehoboam's kingdom).

5. Replacing Covenant with Control

As trust in God declines, control over people increases.

Theological Bottom Line

The Three Chairs are not about generations **losing religion**— they are about generations **relocating trust**:

- **Chair 1:** God is trusted.
- **Chair 2:** God is respected.
- **Chair 3:** God is optional.