

# AUTOPSY • Week 3: Autopsying Others

## Daily Briefing • Day 2 of 5 • Bad Actions Beat Big Advantages

### WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

*Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.*

**3 John 11**

*Sunday's message showed that you can observe others' outcomes and trace them upstream to beliefs and behaviors. Today we look at the principle that makes that observation possible without arrogant condescension: the Autopsy formula does not make exceptions based on who you are or whatever advantages you're born with. You can watch or listen to the sermon at [1mso.church](http://1mso.church) or on the One Missoula app.*

### OPENING PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, I recognize that I am just like anyone else. If I live against Your design, I will suffer unnecessary and painful outcomes and bring those same outcomes to those around me in my family and community. Please keep me from thinking that I am better than others, that I am an exception, or that I have some advantage that will nullify Your design. Keep me from judging others while believing the rules do not apply to me. Help me to learn from those who had everything going for them and still lost it all because they did not humbly trust the design You have revealed in Your Word. I ask these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

### TODAY'S TEACHING

There is a popular assumption operating just below the surface of most moral conversations: that “good” people get good outcomes and “bad” people get bad outcomes. Not because of specific beliefs and behaviors but because of what category of person they are. This assumption is wrong in both directions. It leads to two equally dangerous conclusions. The first is that someone with bad outcomes must be a bad person. The second is that a good person can adopt bad inputs (beliefs and behaviors) and somehow escape the consequences because of who they are.

The Israelite king Rehoboam inherited the throne of Israel at the peak of the nation's power and wealth. His grandfather David had fought the battles, united the tribes, and established Jerusalem as the capital. His father Solomon had built the temple, accumulated extraordinary wealth, and established trade networks across the known world. Rehoboam started with everything: wealth, proven advisors who had built the entire system, the Davidic covenant, and the accumulated wisdom of his father's reign. He was not disadvantaged. He was perhaps the most advantaged person alive at that moment in history. Then he rejected the counsel of proven advisors, listened to his peers, and within days the empire his grandfather and father had spent their lifetimes building split permanently in two (1 Kings 12:1-16).

The Rehoboam story is not about one bad king. It is about a principle Scripture returns to repeatedly. Proverbs 17:2 says a servant who deals wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully. Galatians 6:7 says whatever one sows, that will he also reap. The formula does not check your background, your reputation, or your starting position before it operates. It checks your beliefs and behaviors. And it works equally in the other direction: the person with every disadvantage who adopts biblical beliefs and behaviors will produce outcomes consistent with God's design. This is not a judgment about who is a good or bad person. It is a description of how inputs and outputs work.

### READ & MEDITATE

**1 Kings 12:6–11**

*Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, who had stood before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?”<sup>7</sup> And they said to him, “If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever.”<sup>8</sup> But he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him.<sup>9</sup> And he said to them, “What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?’”<sup>10</sup> And the young men*

who had grown up with him said to him, "Thus shall you speak to this people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you lighten it for us,' thus shall you say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's thighs.'<sup>11</sup> And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions."

**Proverbs 17:2**

"A servant who deals wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully and will share in the inheritance among brothers."

**Galatians 6:7**

"Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."

Read 1 Kings 12:6-11 and notice what Rehoboam already had available to him before he made his choice. Then read Proverbs 17:2 and identify which variable determines who ends up in the better position. Lastly, read Galatians 6:7 and ask whether the sowing-and-reaping principle makes any exceptions based on the category of person doing the sowing.

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REFLECT

Rehoboam was not a random person handed an impossible situation. He was the son of the wisest man who ever lived, the grandson of Israel's greatest king, and had access to advisors who had built the entire system he inherited. The autopsy formula still applied. Beliefs + Behaviors = Outcomes.

Where in your own thinking have you assumed that being a generally good person would protect you from the consequences of specific wrong beliefs or behaviors? This might look like assuming your track record as a faithful spouse offsets one area where you have been consistently dishonest, or that your years of generosity exempt you from the consequences of a financial decision you knew was unwise, or that your good intentions in a relationship cancel out a pattern of behavior that has been damaging it. Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

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Proverbs 17:2 names the variable that determines the outcome. It is not the position you started in. It is what you do with where you are.

Fill in the blanks from Proverbs 17:2:

"A servant who deals \_\_\_\_\_ will rule over a son who acts \_\_\_\_\_ and will share in the inheritance among brothers." (Proverbs 17:2)\*

\*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

What does this verse tell you about which variable God considers most determinative: the position you were born into, or what you believe and do with what you have been given?

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The same formula that worked against Rehoboam works for the person who starts with every disadvantage. The servant in Proverbs 17:2 rules over the privileged son not because of better circumstances but because of better inputs.

Think of someone you know or know of who came from genuinely difficult circumstances and still produced a life of integrity and good outcomes. What biblical beliefs and behaviors can you identify upstream of their desirable outcome? What does their example tell you about the formula?

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The formula does not promise comfort or ease. It describes a principle: biblical beliefs and behaviors produce outcomes consistent with God's design, regardless of starting position. That is not nothing. That is the best possible result available to anyone.

Looking at your own current and past outcomes, what does an honest upstream autopsy reveal about the beliefs and behaviors that produced them? How would the outcome change if you applied the same formula to yourself that you see at work in Rehoboam's life?

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#### PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

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#### MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite 3 John 11 from memory:

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