

What Money Can't Buy
December 5, 2010
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1 Kings 3:3-15

If you were offered the opportunity to have ANYTHING YOU WANTED, what would you ask for?

- We all grew up hearing the folk tale: “Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp.”
 - It’s a story that starts our mind spinning thinking about what THREE WISHES we would ask for.
 - If you had three wishes today what would you wish for?
 - How has what you would wish for changed as you’ve gotten older?
 - With only three wishes, we’d have to make CHOICES about what we would ask for.
 - It’s been said THE CHOICES WE MAKE REVEAL A LOT ABOUT OUR CHARACTER.
 - A YOUNG King Solomon models for us the best response to the question...WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE.
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- As we begin this study of 1 Kings, let’s SET THE STAGE.
 - The first FOUR CHAPTERS of this book tell the story of the TRANSITION of power from King David to King Solomon on the ROYAL THRONE of the NATION of ISRAEL.
 - In CHAPTER 1 there is a POWER STRUGGLE with David’s son ADONIJAH trying to SEIZE THE THRONE.
 - But ultimately, David’s son by Bathsheba, Solomon is ANOINTED the new king.
 - In CHAPTER 2 David gave Solomon INSTRUCTIONS and a CHARGE of how he should rule the nation.
 - Now, in CHAPTER 3 we get INSIGHT INTO SOLOMON’S CHARACTER when he is faced with the question from God: “Ask for whatever you want.”

1 Kings 3:3-5

3 Solomon showed his love for the LORD by walking according to the instructions given him by his father David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places.

4 The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

- Question: As an outside observer how can you tell that someone LOVES THE LORD? Worship – Certainly a part of it...
- Ultimately OBEDIENCE. – Devotion rather than EMOTION

- Not how HIGH you jump but how STRAIGHT YOU WALK when you land!
- Verse 3 – Says Solomon showed his love for the LORD by walking according to the instructions given to him by his father David.
- In John 14:15 Jesus said: “If you love me, you will obey what I command.”
- Solomon hadn’t read John 14:15; but he LIVED IT OUT based on VERSE 3.
- It’s clear Solomon also took WORSHIP seriously. VERSE 4 – 1,000 sacrifices
- He made them at a HIGH PLACE called Gibeon...WHERE GOD CAME TO HIM IN A DREAM
- Verse 5: God asks Solomon that PIVOTAL QUESTION: “ ASK FOR WHATEVER YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU.”
- What do you think God was doing by asking this question? Testing Solomon’s character.
- Think about this question from SOLOMON’S PERSPECTIVE. He is the NEW KING. What kinds of things might a NEW KING have asked for?
 - Power
 - Wealth
 - Success against enemies
- Here’s the point, you and I might say “Man, I wish I could have that kind of dream!” “I wish God would come to me and say ASK WHATEVER YOU WANT.”
- We might not have the “dream experience” Solomon had but have a WHOLE BOOK FULL OF PROMISES from God.
- Question: What are some of the ways God has promised to help us?:
 - Supply our needs
 - Direct our steps
 - Work all things for our good
- This lesson was very CONVICTING for ME. Let’s make this about ME not YOU! When a MAJOR CHALLENGE comes up in my life where do I go for help? HERE’S WHERE YOU THINK...WELL, WE’RE IN CHURCH SO I’D BETTER SAY ‘TO THE LORD.’
- When I’m in a CRISIS, IS ASKING GOD FOR HELP my FIRST REACTION?
- HOW MANY PEOPLE have some kind of CHALLENGE in your life today? ANYONE?
- Have you ASKED GOD FOR ANSWERS...FOR INTERVENTION? (NO HANDS). How MANY TIMES this week have you asked? Do WE REALLY BELIEVE HE WILL COME THROUGH FOR US?
- Let’s see how SOLOMON responded...

1 Kings 3:6-9

6 Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.

- Before he answers what did Solomon do in that verse?
- He RECOUNTED God’s GREAT KINDNESS to King David

- Depending on your translation: Kindness; Mercy; Lovingkindness.

John MacArthur says...

This term implies covenant faithfulness. Solomon viewed his succession to David as evidence of the Lord's faithfulness to His promises to David.

- Solomon was REFLECTING ON GOD'S PAST FAITHFULNESS

7 "Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties.

- "I am only a little child and do not know how to carry our my duties"... was Solomon a child?
- Look up at VERSE 1 of CHAPTER 3. What does it say Solomon did?
 - Married the daughter of Pharaoh King of Egypt
 - So, clearly he wasn't a child...it's believed he was about 20 years old
- What is Solomon expressing when he says this? His feeling of INADEQUACY
- Sometimes Susan will look at me and say: "We're not old enough to be doing what we're doing...we're still just kids!" It does feel that way. But we're NOT!

In our culture of "LOOK CONFIDENT" "NEVER BLINK" "NEVER LET 'EM SEE YOU SWEAT" and "NEVER ADMIT A MISTAKE"...it's OKAY to admit our INADEQUACY as long as we BELIEVE God CAN and WILL EQUIP us to do what he's called us to do!

F.B. Meyer said:

It is to those who count themselves as little children that God reveals things hidden from the wise and prudent, and shows Himself strong. Happy is the man, who, in the presence of a great responsibility, can say, "I am but a little child; I know not" (1 Kings 3:7).

- Solomon not only confessed how SMALL he felt. He CONTRASTED that with how BIG the job was...

8 Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number.

- Now in VERSE 9, we come to it! Solomon responds...

9 So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"

- A DISCERNING HEART. What's another WORD for what Solomon has asked for? WISDOM.
- Question: What is the difference between being WISE and being SMART?

Warren Wiersbe says it this way...

(Wisdom) meant much more than the ability to make a living; it meant the ability to make A LIFE (emphasis mine) and make the most out of what life might bring. There are many people who are smart enough to make a good living but they aren't wise enough to make a good life, a life of fulfillment that honors the Lord.

- God has INVITED US to ask for WISDOM

James 1:5

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

- Solomon could have asked for POWER or WEALTH or HEALTH. But he understood the concept that Jesus would later teach in...

Matthew 6:33-34

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

The Life Application Study Bible points out:

Notice that Solomon asked for discernment to carry out his job; he did not ask God to do the job for him. We should not ask God to do FOR us what he wants to do THROUGH us. Instead we should ask God to give us the wisdom to know what to do and the courage to follow through on it.

- How did GOD respond?

1 Kings 3:10-14

10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. 11 So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, 12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. 13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. 14 And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life."

- VERSE 10: THE LORD WAS PLEASED
- Our Lesson Commentary says: "*We can be confident that God is delighted when our prayers are consistent with His purposes. God was pleased that Solomon's request centered on the successful accomplishment of God's calling and not on worldly or self-centered desires.*"
- God RESPONDED: Solomon, I'll give you what you asked for AND SO MUCH MORE!
- Our God is the God of SO MUCH MORE!
- Remember that verse we studied a few weeks ago in Ephesians?

Ephesians 3:20-21 (New King James Version)

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

- If we will SHOW OUR LOVE through OBEDIENCE, God will give us EXCEEDINGLY and ABUNDANTLY ABOVE all we ASK or THINK!
- So, how did Solomon CELEBRATE this great ENCOUNTER with God?

1 Kings 3:15

15 Then Solomon awoke—and he realized it had been a dream.

He returned to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord's covenant and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he gave a feast for all his court.

- Solomon immediately WORSHIPPED God!
- As we prepare to go into our worship service this morning...think about this: How does REFLECTING on God's promises bring RENEWED VITALITY to our worship this week?

What's The Takeaway?

- Do we tend to ask God for STUFF WE WANT or HELP WE NEED?
- Is MY first reaction to a crisis to PANIC and WORRY, or to TRUST GOD FOR WISDOM and GUIDANCE?
- What situation in your life right now makes you feel inadequate? How have you asked for God's help?
- The Leadership Bible says Solomon modeled three things for all of us:
 1. *Cultivating a heart for God*
 2. *Cultivating an awareness of personal limitations*
 3. *Asking for the wisdom to make good decisions.*

As expressed by James: If you lack wisdom...ASK GOD!