

“If You Had Three Wishes ...”

1. What Would You Wish For?

- A. A long life here on earth? Men have pursued the mythical “Fountain of Youth” in a variety of ways. Diet, exercise, medicine - \$ billions invested to prolong life.
- B. Wealth? The “universal problem solver.” But how much is enough? Are “things” really the secret to happiness? Jesus: *“Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses”* (Lk 12:15).
- C. Honor among men? Would you wish for revenge against your enemies (a driving force behind school killings)? Fame? Popularity? **The possibilities are endless. What would you want the most?**

2. God’s Offer to Solomon – 1 Kgs 3:5-9

- A. The kingdom of Israel is ascending. David had brought prosperity and stability, but enemies abound both inside and outside Israel.
- B. Solomon’s character/self-perception – 3:6-8:
 - 1. Appreciation for covenant which made him king instead of Adonijah (v 6).
 - 2. Humility – *“I am a little child ...”* (v 7). Compare this with Saul’s initial humility and later pride (1 Sam 9:21; 10:22; 15:17).
 - 3. Responsibility toward, love for God’s people (v 8).
- C. Solomon’s request – 3:9: *“give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, that I may discern between good and evil.”*
 - 1. Solomon’s request was **spiritual**, discerning good and evil. What a challenge this is for everyone. We must make daily choices concerning good and evil.
 - 2. Solomon’s request concerned the welfare of **others**.
 - 3. Solomon’s request acknowledged dependence upon God. He needed something beyond himself to serve effectively as king.

3. God’s Response to Solomon – 1 Kgs 3:11-14

- A. Praised for what he did **not** ask – 3:11.

B. Granted unparalleled wisdom – 3:12.

C. Also gave him what he did not ask – 3:13 – Riches, honor and long life (v 14, conditional upon obedience).

Observations: (What we wish for reveals character)

1. Many of our requests, if granted, would lead to our destruction. God often says “no” to our benefit. *Good* things come from God – Mt 7:11.
2. An eternal principle: We will find ultimate purpose, fulfillment and happiness by *giving* rather than *receiving* – OR – we will ultimately *receive* by *giving*. See Ac 20:35.
3. Asking for wisdom is a *sure thing* – Jas 1:5-8. True wisdom (Jas 3:13, 17) is wholesome and beneficial; you can’t have too much of it!
4. There is great need for spiritual wisdom among God’s people today:
 - a. To resolve controversy – 1 Cor 6:5.
 - b. To implement discipline – 1 Cor 5:11-12.
 - c. To effect restoration – Gal 6:1.
 - d. To maintain doctrinal purity – Heb 5:12-14.
5. The basis for godly wisdom is the same as it has always been – the **Scriptures** – 2 Tim 3:14-17.