

A Receptive Heart
1 Kings 3:4-15

Aug 25, 2024

INVOCATION: Blessed God, we are here today to praise Your name. We are thankful that You have allowed us to be here today. Hear our songs as we sing praise to You and hear our prayers as we call out to You today. Awaken and enliven our spirit today through Your word. In the name of Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.

WELCOME: Be sure to welcome visitors.

HYMN # 591 Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling
HYMN # 606 I Gave My Life for Thee

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MISSIONARY PRAYER CALENDAR

PASTORAL PRAYER:

OFFERTORY HYMN # 448 Just a Closer Walk

SERMON FOCUS: I must have a heart receptive to God's wisdom.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will understand what is required to receive and use gifts that God has given him.

BACKGROUND: The book of I Kings begins with the last days of King David and his succession by his son Solomon. Solomon was very young when he came to power, probably about 20.

SCRIPTURE READING: I Kings 3:3-15

INTRODUCTION:

Stanley Kirk Burrell, of Oakland, CA, came out of nowhere in 1990 with one very catchy song. Suddenly, he was on radio and MTV and literally everywhere. Money was flying at him really fast. So he spent it. He bought and remodeled a mansion, bought cars, helicopters, and an airplane. He gave money and jobs to family and friends, at one point having 200 people from his old neighborhood in his entourage. At one point, he had \$70 million dollars. Then, in 1996, he was millions in the hole, and filing bankruptcy. What happened was that he did not discern correctly what to do with the abundance that had suddenly come his way.

Since that time, and having learned lessons from that point of his life, Stanley has become a preacher and a savvy tech investor. One thing that he had missed at the height of his career and fame was his relationship with the Lord. He has come a long way since we heard him say, "Can't Touch This." Yes, Stanley Burrell is MC Hammer.

We can learn something from Stanley, as well as from King Solomon, about receiving gifts from God. We should be careful about what and how we ask for anything from our Father in heaven. We must have the right attitude, which is one of worship. We must have the right requests, as well as the right motives. We must also use any gifts that God gives to us in the right manner. Let's take a look at those today.

MESSAGE:

1. I MUST HAVE RIGHT WORSHIP

- a. (3) Solomon loved the Lord by walking in the statutes of his father David, but he also sacrificed and burned incense in the high places."
- b. Since the Temple has not been built yet, people are worshiping in the high places. This is against the law *after* the Temple is built.
- c. God sees the heart in Solomon's sacrificial worship.
- d. Of course, we also know that Solomon did not walk perfectly. He had already started marrying for political alliances.
- e. However, he demonstrated love for God. Of course God knew Solomon's heart, but Solomon also lavishly demonstrated affection for God.
- f. We must also spend our time in right worship of God, both in our individual lives and in our church life.
 - i. Right worship is a result of love.
 - ii. Right worship is a result of gratitude.
 - iii. Right worship recognizes who God is and who we are.

- g. Engaging in right worship is a beginning to receiving something from God, but it is not all that is required. I must also have the right requests.

2. I MUST HAVE RIGHT REQUESTS

- a. (9) "So give your servant a receptive heart to judge your people and to discern between good and evil."
- b. When the God of the universe asks you what he should give you, and you're a young king, this is what you want to ask.
- c. What Solomon is legitimately asking for is that his heart would understand what God wants in each situation. That looks different for him as a king than it does for us, but the same principle still applies.
- d. "God, give me a heart that understands Your will in each situation."
- e. For any request to God to be "right" it must be:
 - i. In God's will
 - ii. Used for God's glory
- f. (James 4:2-3) "You desire and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and wage war. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and don't receive because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures."
- g. This leads to our next point, I must have right motives.

3. I MUST HAVE RIGHT MOTIVES

- a. Solomon was already king. His motive was not to ascend to power, because he had the highest office in the land.
- b. He asked for discernment to administer justice. In other words, he wanted to do the right things in leading God's people.
- c. Solomon could have asked for fabulous wealth. He could have asked for God to destroy all his enemies. He could have asked for a million different things, but he asked God to give him the ability to do the job to which he was called.
- d. Solomon wanted to do what was right for God and His people.
- e. It is useless to ask God for any gift which I will misuse. And when God gives me gifts, I must use my gifts rightly.

4. I MUST USE MY GIFTS RIGHTLY

- a. The very next passage that we read is about Solomon using the gift of wisdom to settle a dispute between two women arguing over a baby.
- b. God also gave Solomon much wealth and peace, but Solomon misused his gifts.
 - i. He made slaves of the descendants of the Amorites, Hethites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Their ancestors (with their idols) were supposed to have been removed from the land hundreds of years earlier.
 - ii. Solomon loved many women, particularly idolatrous women. He even, later in life, followed these wives into idolatry.
 - iii. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines.
- c. How much better a king could Solomon have been if he had used his gifts wisely?

- d. How much more would God have given him had he been obedient?
 - e. How about us? What gifts has God given us, and how do we use them?
 - i. Time?
 - ii. Talent?
 - iii. Treasure?
 - f. Do we engage in right worship? Do we have right requests? Do we have right motives? And do we use our gifts rightly? Do we tell others the good news about Jesus?
5. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).
- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
 - b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
 - c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
 - d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

INVITATION HYMN # 285 Wherever He Leads