

Ministry is all about people: serving people, loving people, helping people, forgiving people, seeing potential in people, counseling people, encouraging people, guiding people, praying for people, working with people at their level. So what we need is a heart for people. In our passage God gives Solomon what he needs for ministry; “Largeness of Heart” This is something we need to ask God to give us.

**1 Kings 4:29** And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore.

## I NARROW HEARTS:

A- It is very natural that we have narrow hearts

1. Think of SELF first: When you look at a group picture, who do you look at first? YOU
  - a. We very instinctively look out for ourself first.
  - i. **Genesis 3:12** The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”
2. Think of our circle first: If its not SELF first, its our circle of relationships
  - a. Wife/kids/family/friends... Not wrong, but it can make us blind to others-
    - i. Hurting people, fringe people, rejected people, missing people, struggling people.

ii **2Sam 9:1** One day David asked, “Is anyone in Saul’s family still alive—anyone to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”... David considered those outside of his circle of relationships.

B- Narrow hearts make for a difficult ministry experience.

1. Frustrating: A narrow heart makes all the details of ministry very frustrating
  - a. B/c people aren’t doing what you want/changing/helping... frustration leads to bad reactions!
2. Inconvenient: You will begin to lose motivation... You will ignore... leads to insult & guilt trips
3. Resentment: begin to view people badly, negatively... treat harshly... start to burn out
4. This is not a Godly ministry approach: **Mark 12:31** The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’
  - a. We need wide hearts for people.

## II GIFTED HEARTS:

A- God GIFTS Solomon with what he needs for ministry!

1. **1 Kings 4:29** And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore.
  - a. God gave Wisdom & Understanding... BUT What good is Wisdom and Understanding without a heart for people
  2. Ever met a brilliant jerk? Condescending leader? *People that KNOW, but have no heart for people*
    - a. Pastors that know the Bible, can preach great, but think disciples and pastors under them are idiots-
  3. God gifts Solomon with a wide heart so that the wisdom he speaks can be heard!
    - a. Our hearts set a tone: **Prov4:23** Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.
      - i. What is the condition of your heart? What is the perspective of your heart? What is the attitude of your heart?
      - ii It will come out... **Luke 6:45** for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

B- This is a Reminder that: God equips the called.

1. He gifts Solomon with what he didn’t know he needed... B/c God wants to help US be effective in our calling!
2. A large heart makes room for effective ministry. The Pastors I revere the most, have large hearts!

## III LARGENESS OF HEART:

A- We need to ask God for a largeness of Heart... If God gave it to Solomon w/o his asking, it reveals to us our need.

1. **Psalms 119:32** I run in the path of Your commandments, for You will enlarge my heart.
  - a. Doing Gods will (the path of the commandments) will cultivate a largeness of heart.
    - i. B/c we exercise biblical virtues like; forgiveness, second chances, encouragement,
2. I believe this is something to pray for... This is a prayer God would want to answer.
  - i. PWM: Ask for largeness of heart...
  - ii This was something I began to pray for early on in my discipleship... I WAS SELFISH!

B- Once you have it; It’s important to learn to recognize when your heart narrows- *B/c life & ministry will do that!*

1. Know when you are Frustrated, Inconvenienced, Resentful, Feeling burnt out, Short, Drained...
  - a. Or you start to express those things to your wife/kids-
2. That’s when you turn to God again... Expand my heart for people!
  - a. Prayer, Bible Reading, Sermon Listening...