

LARGENESS OF HEART

1 Kings 4:29

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...