

Sermon 1609

1 Kings 3.10-12

August 13, 2017

What would you wish for if the Lord gave you one request? Or do you think he's too busy? What if I told you he came to King Solomon and told him to ask whatever he wanted and the Lord would do it for him. What do you think young King Solomon asked for? And why would it be in the Bible if it weren't something we should learn from?

The short answer is God does come to us and offers to give us what we need, so ask for it! He treated Solomon that way and he will treat you, me, this congregation that way. So what should we ask for, especially on this day when we install our Sunday School teachers and Mrs. Revis as a teacher and Director of our Green Valley Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten?

#### Make Her Wise

1. We have all we need if we have you.
2. We need wisdom to serve those around us.

Martin Luther once said you can tell who a person's God is because God is the one you cannot do without. Some people have money as their god, because if they have no money, all is lost. There is no joy in their life. They constantly fight with children and spouse because they have no money to spend on their selfish desires. They have nowhere to be safe and secure. But a person who has the Lord for their God, he has all he needs. The Lord will never desert his people. Whether rich or poor, he will be content. His life will be filled with loving family and friends. His resting place is heaven.

So if money is our God, I suppose we would wish to hit it big, maybe be holding the winning lottery ticket we bought in California. Maybe a big inheritance would come our way or we'd land a sweet, sweet job so that we'd worry about how much we would have to pay in taxes, even though we could easily pay! And, sad to say, that is exactly what our sinful human nature drools over. How many times haven't you thought the biggest problem this church faces, the biggest problem our Green Valley Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten faces, is a lack of money? Money would solve everything!

In King Solomon's case, he could have asked for wealth for himself. He could have asked for the death of his enemies. He could have asked for a long life. All of these things would fall into the same category of money. Something for your own pleasure and use. The world would have praised him for it. History would judge him well.

What does a soul cost? What is the price of harmony among workers? How much is single-mindedness so that there are no divisions among us? The cost of a soul is the innocent sufferings and death of Jesus, his holy precious blood. The price of harmony is the life-long example of Jesus, who, though he was in very nature God, did not think godhead was something to be grasped but made himself nothing,

taking the very nature of a servant and humbling himself even to death on the cross. And our attitude in dealing with each other should be that of his.

So Luther was right. With the Lord as my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. Hmm. Maybe Luther is considered so insightful because he borrowed so much from the Bible! With the Lord my cup overflows. With the Lord, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

No, we don't want to ask anything for ourselves when the Lord comes to us and says, "Ask me and I will give it to you." Why ask for something you already have or don't need?

Look what King Solomon prayed for. "O 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. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. 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 (7-9)?"

This is what we are asking for. Make her wise. We need wisdom to serve those around us.

Well, who is the "her?" In our 10:30 service it is pretty easy to see it is Mrs. Jennifer Revis. If she is going to serve in the pattern of our past Director, she's going to last a long time. 19 years? Maybe longer? No matter how great our teachers and staff are at Green Valley Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten, they are still human beings with a sinful human nature, so she's going to need a lot of wisdom to lead them. She's going to need wisdom to know how to handle each one of the children who are in her class as well as their parents who will have their concerns and special needs, all on top of running the bureaucracy that a school our size is.

Make her wise, Lord. That's our prayer today. We don't need a billionaire director. We don't need someone who mysteriously doesn't age, so she looks like she is a 23 year old who has just come out of labor and delivery already dropping her pregnancy weight. We don't need someone who is famous throughout our town. We need someone who is wise enough to couple compassion with courage, firmness with forgiveness. And do it all at the right time in the right measure.

With this installation service we are asking the Lord to make Mrs. Revis wise. I am not ashamed to say that. Only the Lord can grant this blessing. We can't bluff our way through life without it. We can't pretend that we already have it as part of our very nature. Make her wise, Lord, because without that everything we have tried to do here at Green Valley Evangelical Lutheran Church and Green Valley Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten will fall apart and come to nothing. But when you give your blessing and daily make Mrs. Revis wise, grace and every blessing

will follow, as you were pleased with King Solomon and promised him a wise and discerning heart as well as many other earthly blessings.

But if we are only speaking about Mrs. Revis, well, that might explain why so few people attend installation services for pastors or teachers. They think it is only about the called workers.

The “her” is also you and me, the Christian Church, the spotless, holy bride of Christ. That’s why this story is written in the Bible. God wants you and me to see Solomon is a type of everyman, an example for you and me.

Make every believer in Jesus Christ everywhere, make your holy Christian Church and let’s not forget this humble gathering of your sons and daughters in faith at Green Valley Evangelical Lutheran Church, make her wise.

Make us wise enough to see our greatest need is not a job that makes us work Sundays, Mondays and any time there is a worship service. Make us see our greatest need is wisdom from you. Make us wise to discern the troubled waters of our own hearts and souls so we can distinguish between selfish pride masquerading as piety and a humble heart determined to serve others before ourselves. Can I give you an example? About fifty years ago there was the largest blooming of parochial, church run private schools in the history of our nation. Almost overnight millions of people discovered the need to have Jesus in their classrooms. What was the impetus? What was the divine spark that lighted the way? *Brown v Board of Education 1955*. Desegregation. People didn’t want their children going to school with those of other races so they hid behind their religion and started segregated schools for their children. And many of them were thoroughly convinced this was the Lord’s will.

Make her wise, Lord. Make her wise to see the greatest needs of others is the message of your Son, that for his sake there is forgiveness of sins, life and salvation granted to us by faith. Make her wise so that she finds many ways to tirelessly reach out with the Gospel, the only message of the only Savior you have provided for our fallen race.

Make her wise, Lord. Make your bride, the Church, wise enough so that she puts service to others ahead of service to self, yes, that she discovers only by serving others is she truly being served.

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We know the Lord was pleased with Solomon’s prayer. He granted Solomon wisdom as none had possessed before or will possess after. In addition he gave Solomon wealth and peace. We know the Lord is pleased with our prayer for wisdom. Open our eyes this year to see the opportunities and resources God has given us to show his discerning and serving spirit.