

Solomon's Wisdom

Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

1 Kings 3

MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 9:10

OPTIONAL VIDEO

Solomon Asks For Wisdom

<https://southside.cc/334-856>

Real wisdom starts with honoring God.

For the Teacher

Read this before you teach. David is dead. His son Solomon is the new king of Israel — young, untested, and overwhelmed by the size of the job. Tonight in a dream, God says something almost dangerous: *Ask me for whatever you want.* A blank check from the Creator. Solomon doesn't ask for what most kings would. He doesn't ask for a long life, or riches, or victory over his enemies. He asks for an *understanding heart* to lead God's people. God is so pleased with the request that he gives Solomon the wisdom — and throws in the riches and the long life on top.

KEY TRUTH

Real wisdom starts with honoring God.

Solomon's prayer is the hinge. Don't rush past 1 Kings 3:7–9. The kids need to hear what Solomon actually said: *I am only a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. Give your servant a discerning heart.* Solomon's wisdom doesn't start with him being smart. It starts with him being humble enough to admit he isn't. That order matters — same shape as Joshua nine weeks ago. The bravery came from God's presence; the wisdom comes from honoring God first.

Wisdom is not the same as smarts. This is the load-bearing distinction in the lesson. Knowledge is knowing things. Wisdom is knowing what to *do* with what you know — and doing it God's way. Proverbs 9:10 is the memory verse for a reason: *the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.* "Fear" here doesn't mean scared. It means honor, awe, taking God seriously. A kid who can name that distinction has the whole lesson.

Where this connects. Last week David offered to build God a temple and God flipped it — *no, David, I'll build you a forever king* (Q3L9). David's response was humble worship: *who am I that you would do this for me?* This week David's son Solomon takes the throne and shows the same posture in a different way — admitting he doesn't know how to lead, asking God for wisdom before anything else. Same family. Same humility before God. Same God.

What we're skipping and why. The source covers chapters 3–8 — the two-mothers-and-one-baby story, plus the temple dedication. Both are good but neither is the spine. The two-mothers story is the *picture* of wisdom in action; we'll mention it briefly so kids know what wisdom looked like. The temple dedication is its own story and gets its own week eventually. Today stays in 1 Kings 3:5–14 — God's offer, Solomon's request, God's answer.

Repeat the bottom line all morning. Say it at least six times. Have the kids say it back. Write it on the board. End with it.

MATERIALS

- Bibles for every student
- Whiteboard or large paper, markers
- Pencils, crayons or colored pencils
- Index cards
- Activity sheets (printed in advance from this week's activities — pick what you'll use)

1. Gather

Welcome the kids and have them sit together. Tell them you're picking up the kingdom story right where you left it last week — David is gone, and his son is taking over.

ASK

If God walked into this room right now and said, “I’ll give you one thing — whatever you ask for” — what would you ask for?

Let three or four kids answer. Don’t correct anything; just listen. Most will say money, a phone, a pet, a sibling who’s nicer. Then tell them: today we’re going to meet a king who got that exact offer. And what he asked for is the whole reason we still talk about him. Write the bottom line on the board:

SAY

Real wisdom starts with honoring God.

2. The Story

Setting the Stage

Before opening the Bible, the kids need to know where they are in the bigger story. Tell them, in your own words:

SAY

Last week we learned about King David — the same shepherd boy who beat Goliath, all grown up and now king. David wanted to build God a temple, and God said no, David — I’ll build you a forever king from your family. That king is Jesus.

David is dead now. The new king is his son Solomon. Solomon is young. He’s never been in charge of anything this big. And he’s about to lead two million people.

One night, God shows up in Solomon’s dream and says something amazing: “Ask me for whatever you want, and I’ll give it to you.” Anything. A blank check from the God who made the universe.

Reading the Text

Have everyone open to 1 Kings 3:5. Pick a confident reader.

1 Kings 3:5–9

After the reading, work through these questions together:

DISCUSSION

1. Look at verse 5. What does God offer Solomon?

→ *Anything. “Ask what I shall give you.” Whatever Solomon wants, God will give him.*

2. In verse 7, how does Solomon describe himself?

→ *“I am only a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.” He admits he doesn’t know how to do this job. He starts with honesty.*

3. In verse 9, what does Solomon finally ask for?

→ *An understanding heart. The wisdom to know right from wrong, so he can lead God’s people well. He doesn’t ask for money or a long life or victory. He asks for wisdom.*

God’s Answer

Pick another reader.

1 Kings 3:10–14

ASK

What did God say back?

Walk them through it. Verse 10 — *the Lord was pleased*. Verse 11 — God lists the things Solomon *didn't* ask for: long life, riches, the death of his enemies. Verse 12 — God gives him a wise and understanding heart, more than anyone before or after. Verse 13 — and God *also* gives him the riches and honor he didn't ask for.

Write on the board:

Solomon asked for wisdom. God gave him wisdom — and threw in everything else on top.

Then ask:

DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think God was so pleased with Solomon's request?

→ *Because Solomon wanted what God wanted — to lead God's people well. Solomon honored God before he asked for anything else. That's the order.*

2. What if Solomon had asked for a long life instead?

→ *He probably would have gotten a long life. But he wouldn't have become the wisest man in the world. The thing he asked for is what he got most of.*

3. So where does real wisdom come from? From being smart? From reading a lot of books?

→ *No. Real wisdom comes from God. And it starts with honoring God — admitting we need him, and asking him for help. Smart kids ask for the right things.*

What Wisdom Looks Like

Tell the class: a few verses later in the same chapter, Solomon gets to use the wisdom God gave him. Two women come to him fighting over a baby. Both claim the baby is theirs. There are no witnesses. Nobody can tell who's lying.

Solomon says: *Bring me a sword. Cut the baby in half. Give half to each.* One woman says, "Yes, fair." The other woman screams, *No! Give her the baby! Don't kill him!*

ASK

Which one is the real mom?

Let a kid answer. *The one who would rather lose the baby than see him hurt.* That's the real mom. Solomon hands the baby back to her.

SAY

That's wisdom. Solomon didn't have a list of rules for "how to find the real mom." He had a wise heart from God — and he knew how to use it. Wisdom isn't just knowing facts. It's knowing what to do with what you know.

The Memory Verse

TRANSITION

The Bible has a one-sentence definition of where wisdom starts. It's your memory verse this week.

Have everyone turn to Proverbs 9:10.

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

ASK

“The fear of the LORD” — what does that mean? Does that mean we’re supposed to be scared of God?

Let a kid try. Then steer:

SAY

“Fear” here doesn’t mean scared like a horror movie. It means honor. Awe. Taking God seriously. It means God is so big and so good that we live our whole lives in front of him — and we want to make him glad. That’s where wisdom starts. You can’t be wise without it.

3. The Point

Say the bottom line again, with the kids:

SAY

Real wisdom starts with honoring God.

Wise or Foolish?

Tell the kids you’re going to read four situations. After each one, they say *wise* or *foolish* — and why. Connect each one back to honoring God.

1. You cheat on a math test because you didn’t study. (*Foolish. Doesn’t honor God or the teacher. The grade is fake.*)
2. You’re about to make a hard choice, and before you decide, you pray. (*Wise. You’re starting where Solomon started — asking God.*)
3. Your friends are all making fun of a kid at school, and you join in so they don’t turn on you. (*Foolish. You know it’s wrong. Wise kids don’t follow the crowd into something God hates.*)
4. You don’t know what to do, so you ask a parent or a teacher who loves God. (*Wise. James 1:5 says if anyone lacks wisdom, ask God — and God often answers through the wise people he’s put around you.*)

SAY

You don’t have to be a king to need wisdom. Every one of you makes choices every day that need it. And the same God who gave Solomon a wise heart gives wisdom to every kid who asks for it.

The Index Cards

Hand out index cards. Tell each student to write or draw one decision they have coming up this week where they need wisdom — a choice at school, with a friend, with a sibling, about something they’re going to watch or play or say. Tell them no one else will read it.

NOTE

While they write, walk around quietly. If a kid is stuck, ask them to name one hard decision in their week. Help them put it in one sentence.

When they’re done, have everyone hold their card. Pray over the cards:

PRAY

God, Solomon asked you for a wise heart, and you gave it to him. We’re asking you for the same thing. For every choice on these cards, give us wisdom that starts with honoring you. Help us want what you want before we ask for anything else. Amen.

4. The Work

Pick one or more activities from this week's menu. Print enough copies for each kid in advance. The kids don't have to do all of them — pick what fits the group's energy and what time you have left.

The menu for this week:

- **Solomon's Choice** — coloring page reinforcing Solomon's prayer for wisdom and the bottom line.
- **A Wise Heart** — word search with the names and key words from 1 Kings 3.
- **One Thing I Need Wisdom For** — drawing prompt connecting the lesson to the kid's own life.
- **What Solomon Asked** — fill-in-the-blanks recall using the kids' Bibles (1 Kings 3).

The full production specs for each activity are in this week's activities file.

NOTE

While the kids work, sit with them. Ask one or two what they're working on. Reinforce the bottom line one more time before class ends. If you finish early, have a few kids share what they made. If you run long, send the activity sheets home.

What Comes Next Week

Solomon's wisdom doesn't get passed down. His son Rehoboam takes the throne, makes a fool's choice on day one, and the kingdom splits in two — north and south, never the same again. The kids will see what happens when a leader stops asking God and starts listening to bad advice.