



Is Anyone Listening to the Wisdom of the Bible?

James 1:5: (NASB) *But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*



It seems like wisdom has become old-fashioned and obsolete. When I think of wisdom, I think of a thoughtful approach that is not driven by self-interest. I think of quiet observation that seeks to understand the people, the facts and the circumstances before weighing in with answers. When I think of wisdom, I think of my Grandma Helen. She lived a hard life and yet judged no one, always found a way to help and contribute, and she continually guided others towards their best and most

integrity-filled path. When I think of wisdom, I think of Jesus. I think of his everyday life, his teaching, his obedience to his Father and his selflessness. When I think of wisdom, I do not ever think of our day and our tech-driven, opinion-heavy and reaction-riddled approach. What happened? Where did we go wrong?

There are many ways to define wisdom.

Google's English Dictionary:

Wisdom: noun

The soundness of an action or decision with regard to the application of experience, knowledge, and good judgment.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/wisdom>

Psychologists tend to agree that wisdom involves an integration of knowledge, experience, and deep understanding, as well as a tolerance for the uncertainties of life. There's an awareness of how things play out over time, and it confers a sense of balance.

The right kind of wisdom thrives in uncertainty!

We are not born with wisdom. It always has to be learned.

Jesus himself had to develop wisdom:

Luke 2:39-40: (NASB) ³⁹*When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.* ⁴⁰*The child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in **wisdom <4678>**; and the grace of God was upon him.*

Luke 2:52: (NASB) *And Jesus kept increasing in **wisdom <4678>** and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

Wisdom: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #4678 *sophia*; wisdom (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual)

(Root word) Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #4680 *sophos*; akin to *saphes* (clear); wise (in a most general application)

Wisdom: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: wisdom, broad and full of intelligence; used of the knowledge of very diverse matters



Curiously, the root word in the Greek means “clear” and “wise,” but why clear? Clear is a key to wisdom because when something is clear, it makes sense. For example, when looking into very clear water of the ocean, we can see every single detail. Then rub your hands through the sand on the bottom



and what can you see? This gives a comparison between wisdom (the clear water) and our typical view of the world (the stirred-up sand). Crystal clear water allows us to see the detail of every little fish and piece of coral.

Even Jesus was not born with wisdom. Wisdom must be developed over time. Wisdom seems like a quaint, old-fashioned idea. Does anyone actively pray for wisdom these days on a regular basis?



I specifically pray for wisdom every single day because so many times in life I'm faced with the circumstance where the answer is needed. What I have learned over time is the answer I truly want to give from the bottom my heart shouldn't come from me. It should come from biblical principle from following Jesus. I want to just reflect that, and I don't do that naturally. Especially with difficult situations I pray, "LORD, please help me see YOUR wisdom and help ME get out of the way."

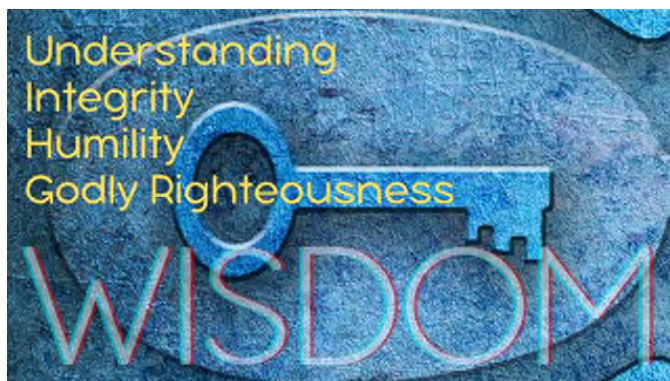
The life of Jesus was not only an example of godliness, it was an example of learning to apply God's ways:

Matthew 13:54-56: (New Revised Standard Version) ⁵⁴He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, Where did this man get this **wisdom** <4678> and these deeds of power? ⁵⁵Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?

This was a caste society with the Pharisees being at the top of the hierarchy. They were the ones who were supposed to know all the answers. Jesus did not have their education, societal standing or recognition. He was a "nobody," a "less than," and yet, he had greater wisdom than all of them.

Jesus had to develop wisdom as a man. It came through learning the holy Scriptures and through his life experiences. Jesus' own wisdom displayed at least four key elements. As his disciples, let us model our pursuit of wisdom to include these same four characteristics:

Understanding, Integrity, Humility and Godly Righteousness.



There is the wise way of God and the foolish way of self. There is a difference between intellectually hearing these four words and really understanding what they can do for us in our Christian walk. To the best of our ability, we want to leave self behind and focus on godly wisdom. But that puts a lot of pressure and responsibility on us.

Julie asks: Rick, you are a husband, father, church leader, employer - a lot of people come to you for advice. What responsibility do you have to be wise? And do you have any lessons for us from a time when you might have been unwise?



The responsibility for wisdom is endless because we want to give people the best guidance possible. Unfortunately, lots of times I fail.

(Reworded from audio for clarity) Several years ago, I was leading a Bible study. I was trying to lead the study on a difficult, controversial subject and someone attending had a much different scriptural perspective. I was determined to give the other views an audience, to allow them a chance to express themselves. But I didn't control it appropriately and they hijacked the service. This went on for a couple of Sundays and those attending were getting frustrated, seeing this get out of hand.

After one Sunday service, those attending literally lined up to talk to me and give me a piece of their mind! One after another, they told me this is not right; they were not getting anything out of the study. My wife, Trish, just stood off to the side, observing.

I was talking to Trish on the way home, explaining what I had been trying to do in giving this person time to express his views. She told me it wasn't working, and why not try it this way - by standing and watching, she was able to observe without being involved. She suggested I start the service off by clearly stating the doctrinal perspective we held, and then giving the dissenting opinions time. This gave the congregation a stable reference point and changed the tone and benefit everyone received.

She gave me a wiser way of handling the problem that changed everything!



WISDOM NEEDS UNDERSTANDING.

Without a clear understanding of a matter, wisdom cannot be applied because we don't know what we don't know!

Sometimes it is wise to make quick decisions; other times we must be slow and methodical, making sure we have all of the facts.



Let's say a friend comes to you with marital issues. It can happen, but rarely is any person 100 percent responsible for problems in a marriage or even between friends. If we are asked to listen and give advice as a third party, it is difficult if we do not have the perspective of the second person. Any advice we give might be

skewed with either presuming we know what is really going on, or our judgment is based on hearing from just the one side.

PRESUMING IS AN ENEMY OF WISDOM!

Wisdom works in conjunction with understanding, and both require effort:

Proverbs 4:1-6: (NASB) ¹Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding, ²for I give you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction. ³When I was a son to my father (this is Solomon speaking of his father, David), tender and the only son in the sight of my mother, ⁴then he taught me and said to me, Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments and live; ⁵Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth. ⁶Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; love her, and she will watch over you.



Do not forsake her...she will guard you...she will watch over you - wisdom is being personified as a female.

Learn for the purpose of acquiring wisdom and understanding, as it does not come naturally.

She will guard you - wisdom helps us in situations of temptation. Wisdom says we will not just look at the immediate gratification, but can pull back and see the bigger picture of its instability and eventual consequences, hurt and damage. Wisdom will recognize connecting with certain people will eventually lead us away from our spiritual mission of honoring God.

Then live what you learn:

Proverbs 23:23: (NASB) *Buy truth, and do not sell it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding.*



<https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/dads-duty-patrol-louisiana-school-prevent-violence-80836457>

On October 28, 2021, the Associated Press reported that a high school in Shreveport, Louisiana, was having a problem with students fighting. Around two dozen students were arrested. This was a real problem. A group of about 40 fathers got together, calling themselves "Dads on Duty." They now take shifts going to the school and walking around, showing a strong male presence on campus.

One of the dads is quoted as saying: "I don't care how old you are or what size you are, it's something about seeing a man, a positive male figure, a father, your daddy or whatever you want to call them, at the school. It will make you straighten up and fly right." He said there have not been any fights on campus since they started.

The school superintendent and sheriff's office are looking to replicate this for every school in this area and would love for it to go nationwide. There is such great wisdom in the older generation giving guidance to the younger generation.

If we settle for a lack of understanding, it will result in our wisdom being blocked from development.

Why? We judge what we do not understand instead of finding the truth of the matter:

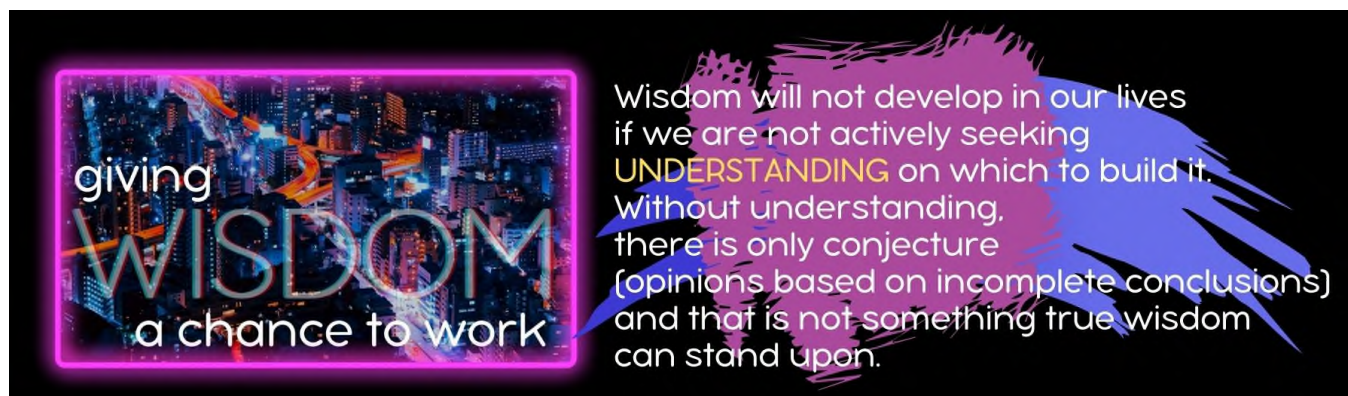
Matthew 7:1-5: (NASB) ¹*Do not judge so that you will not be judged. ²For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. ³Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, Let me take the speck out of your eye, and behold, the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.*

We judge what we do not understand. We cannot read the heart, so we therefore cannot judge the intent.

Do we want to judge, or do we want to be wise?

James 3:13: (NASB) *Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.*

The gentleness of wisdom - wisdom does not need a raised voice or pressure. It simply needs to be present, commanding respect.



Wisdom obviously cannot flourish without a solid foundation of understanding. Easily said and also easily forgotten!

**We now see understanding as a foundation for wisdom.
How do we build this wisdom with integrity?**

Understanding is an EXTERNAL foundation for wisdom. It brings that which we observe into play so we can do something about it. Integrity is an INTERNAL foundation for wisdom that guides what we will do with the understanding we have been given. Stronger integrity will yield more significant wisdom.

In other words, now that you have understanding, integrity will help dictate what you do with it. Someone with a lack of integrity might use it to harm others - anything from evil speaking to corporate espionage. Strong integrity yields more significant wisdom.



Wisdom needs INTEGRITY.

Without integrity, without the core commitment to hold true to that which clear understanding dictates,

wisdom is merely an outward proclamation with no inward substance. Godly integrity is about pleasing God rather than others or yourself.

(Source: Excerpts from <https://careynieuwhof.com/5-signs-you-lack-integrity/>)

You're hiding things. You shouldn't be telling everyone everything (that's not healthy) – but *someone* needs to know everything. If you're keeping secrets, you're heading for a fall. Between my wife, elders, close friends and counselor, I have an inner circle that knows everything about me. (By the way, if you're afraid to give your password on your computer or phone to anyone in that circle, you're hiding things.)





My and Trish's phone passwords and computer emails are interchangeable because we work together on everything. It is a refreshing way to live.



Many years ago when I was starting out in the insurance industry, our corporate home office was coming in for a file audit. My boss called me into his office and there were stacks and stacks of files on his desk. He said, "You gotta help me carry these to my car. I'm going to put this in my trunk for the week the auditors are here!" My answer was, "Absolutely not."

You fail to do what you said you were going to do. This isn't just about keeping promises; it's about keeping your word in everything. Better to say nothing and surprise someone by delivering than blurt out an intention you can't fulfil. Ultimately, people lose confidence in you when you fail to deliver. It's a trust issue. A fairly easy way to address this is to say less and deliver more. A great follow-up system also helps (sometimes a lack of integrity isn't even a moral issue - just an awareness and organization issue).

King David learned true wisdom and integrity through the many mistakes and tribulations in his life.

His unending desire was to honor God, so he sought to build Him a house of worship:

1 Chronicles 22:6-8: (NASB) ⁶Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel. ⁷David said to Solomon, My son, I had intended to build a house to the name of the LORD my God. ⁸But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, you have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to My name, because you have shed so much blood on the earth before Me.

God told David he would not be allowed to build a house for the Lord because his hands had blood on them. David stayed true to God's instructions.



The highest good here was God's will and David obeyed.

In **1 Chronicles 22:9-10**, God tells David that he will have a son named Solomon who will be a man of peace and will build the house for God's name. David would now know what was before him, and in his integrity to do God's will would not lose his focus.

When Solomon was finally old enough, David gave him the task:

1 Chronicles 22:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹Now, my son, the LORD be with you that you may be successful, and build the house of the LORD your God just as He has spoken concerning you. ¹²Only the LORD give you discretion (wisdom) and understanding, and give you charge over Israel, so that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. ¹³Then you will prosper, if you are careful to observe the statutes and the ordinances which the LORD commanded Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and courageous, do not fear nor be dismayed.



What was the most important thing David charged Solomon with? NOT building the Temple; rather, it was **the care of Israel by following God's statutes and ordinances**. This was living up to what God gave Solomon to do as ruler of Israel.



The outwardly glorious things must always be subject to the inward and sacred allegiance to God's will and ways.

David prepared for this moment since Solomon was born. His instruction was for Solomon to honor God by the way he would rule Israel...and by the way, build the Temple. David's wisdom kept things in perspective.

David next reveals the proof of his wise and integrity-driven desire to honor God. Here is how he did the best he could in God's service:

1 Chronicles 22:14-16: (NASB) ¹⁴Now behold, with great pains I have prepared for the house of the LORD 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weight, for they are in great quantity; also timber and stone I have prepared, and you may add to them. ¹⁵Moreover, there are many workmen with you, stonecutters and masons of stone and carpenters, and all men who are skillful in every kind of work. ¹⁶Of the gold, the silver and the bronze and the iron there is no limit. Arise and work, and may the LORD be with you.

David was a man of war (1 Chronicles 28:3); Solomon was a man of rest (1 Chronicles 22:9). David put everything he had into making all of these preparations but was told NO! when it came to the actual construction. Quoting from our lesson from the details in Episode 1130: How Can I Fight for God's Purposes Like King David? "If you are not allowed to build a temple, provide the plans and materials for it. By focusing on what you CAN do, that NO! answer becomes a godly opportunity! ...We can still receive blessings from a support role."



If you are not allowed to build a temple, provide the plans and materials for it.

By focusing on what you CAN do, that "no" answer becomes a godly opportunity!



There may be someone more suited for a particular job.

We can still receive blessings from a support role or even a role of simple prayer for those who are doing that job.



David gave Solomon everything he would need to accomplish the God-honoring mission that he himself was not permitted to take part in.



David did all the preparatory work, but it is called “Solomon’s Temple,” and David was fine with that because it honored God.

If we try and approach a circumstance with wisdom while having a lack of integrity, the result will be an approach that looks good on the outside but is actually hollow.

It is empty and unstable:

James 1:5-8: (NASB) ⁵*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, ⁸being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

We cannot live a double-minded life. God is the sole source of our wisdom. The integrity of our wisdom will falter if its base comes from other sources.



Discovering the pitfalls and remedies to distracted thinking

Integrity is extremely important in any kind of leadership role. How many people have suffered under bad kings and bad politicians? Perhaps we do not find ourselves in a big leadership role, but we still positively influence those around us using godly wisdom. We should desire the wisdom of God in every part of our lives.

Do we want our wisdom to be able to help solve issues or do we want it to start new problems?

James 3:14-16: (NASB) ¹⁴*But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. ¹⁵This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.*

Wrong motivations will cause us to *lie against the truth*. Certainly no Christian wants to do this. Earthly wisdom is suspect because Satan rules through sin. Sin creates an ungodly brand of wisdom. Integrity must hold to the wisdom from above.



Integrity is not easy, but if we want to have wisdom working in us and through us, it is something we need to strive for!

It is becoming obvious that wisdom does not simply flourish on its own. What else does it need? HUMILITY!

The *external* foundation of understanding and the *internal* foundation of integrity give us the ability to perceive circumstances with wisdom. We can express that wisdom, but the question is can we maintain it as a fixture in our lives? Keeping a wise outlook requires a steadfast dedication to humility because without humility, all is fleeting.

Humility is the foundation of our walk with Christ. Without humility, the gospel message will not appeal to us long enough to have it change us.



What is the difference between wisdom and discernment?

Discernment is the ability to see the difference between things and to understand their connections. It is an important tool.

What should we do with discernment? We can apply it either with worldly wisdom or with godly wisdom. We can use it to manipulate or push our own agenda, or we can use discernment with godly principles to bring us to a righteous conclusion. It can be a powerful tool for doing good.



Wisdom needs HUMILITY.

Wisdom without humility may benefit others for a time but will certainly lead to the faltering and eventual collapse of its bearer and the potential discredit of its own advice.

Jesus spoke the Beatitudes in the famous Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5-7. They are deceptively simple.

The first is, *Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. This is so contrary to human teachings. Earthly wisdom says: *Think highly of yourself. Make sure others see how good you are. Get the credit for yourself. Look important*. And as far as success in earthly matters goes, this might be good advice. Jesus teaches us the opposite. We need a humble appreciation of our own deficiencies and lack of wisdom. Only then can we freely accept the wisdom of God, who according to our theme text, is pleased to grant to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it.

The more important and irreplaceable we think WE are, the less our hearts will be drawn to hear what the Bible has to say.



When we say, *look at how good I am*, we are demanding respect. If we have godly wisdom, we command respect - not for ourselves, but for the Father from whom that wisdom came.

Solomon has become king, and he is so like his father David:

2 Chronicles 1:7-10: (NASB) ⁷*In that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, Ask what I shall give you.* ⁸*Solomon said to God, You have dealt with my father David with great lovingkindness, and have made me king in his place.* ⁹*Now, O LORD God, Your promise to my father David is fulfilled, for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth.* ¹⁰*Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?*

Solomon is given an open-ended invitation by God and responds to it with great humility. God basically says that Solomon can ask for whatever he wants.



Observations:

- He began by recalling God's mercy to his father David.
- He continued by being God-centered - *Your promise to my father David is fulfilled.*
- He continued in humility - *You have made me king over Israel...* He did not brag that he inherited the throne, as was his right.

If we contrast Solomon with King Nebuchadnezzar in bragging about the greatness of Babylon due to his own greatness, (Daniel 4:30: (NIV) *Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?*) we see Solomon's humility against Nebuchadnezzar's conceit. As a result of his pride, Nebuchadnezzar lost his mind and spent seven years living like an animal, eating grass.

- Based on understanding integrity and humility, Solomon now asks for wisdom and knowledge.
- He reiterates that he is to rule the people of God - he wanted wisdom and knowledge so that he could rule God's people with integrity, not his (Solomon's) kingdom. This is profound humility!

Understanding, integrity and humility are fertile ground to plant the seeds of wisdom:

2 Chronicles 1:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹*God said to Solomon, Because you had this in mind (this Hebrew word mind means the inner man, the heart; not just an intellectual decision), and did not ask for riches, wealth or honor, or the life of those who hate you, nor have you even asked for long life, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge that you may rule My people over whom I have made you king,* ¹²*wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed nor those who will come after you.* ¹³*So Solomon went from the high place which was at Gibeon, from the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem, and he reigned over Israel.*

Solomon reigned with wisdom and knowledge, at least at the beginning.



God's answer to Solomon's humble request for wisdom was a resounding YES! Why?

God blesses heart service and not lip service

Wisdom can thrive when it comes from the heart

God recognized Solomon's desire to rule with humility

Humble leadership brings wisdom

God fulfills the needs of one who seeks

Wisdom can grow as we acknowledge our insignificance

God blesses with abundance

Being blessed with wisdom can lead to great abundance

Solomon had it ALL! God blessed him and he blessed others.



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHAT IS WISDOM?
christianquestions.com/youtube



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHAT IS HUMILITY?
christianquestions.com/youtube

We see the wisdom of David being passed on to Solomon. It would be wonderful if this story ended here. One of the big problems with blessings, power and wisdom is our human frailty. All the wisdom of the ages cannot overcome a crack in our humility armor.

Many a great leader - including Solomon - fell victim to the idolatry of egotistical self-worth:

1 Kings 11:3-4: (NASB) ³He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. ⁴For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

His time was devoted to worldly strategies and alliances, as if God wasn't going to take care of him. In being worldly-wise, he forgot godly wisdom.

Solomon never had to endure hardship like his father David had. He was an indulged prince of the realm all his life. He never had to rely on God when he thought he would be killed, like David did again and again with the lion, the bear, with King Saul, his own son and many enemies.

In the end, this is so sad because he compromised his worship of God. He worshipped even the dark and evil Moloch because he wanted to keep his wives happy.

His egotistical self-worth took the wisdom of God away from him.

Wisdom is a commodity requiring continual renewal.

Solomon lost the clear, initial focus he had as the young king. He was able to see all the details clearly, but he "stirred up the sand" and lost that clarity. The result of this prideful approach was a discredit to wisdom and God Himself.



Solomon wrote the book of Ecclesiastes at the end of his very wealthy, fabulous, legendary, exotic life.

Here we find a depressed and bitter man, who sees where he went wrong and warns us what we need to do:

Ecclesiastes 12:13: (NLT) *The last word, after all has been heard, is: Honor God and obey His Laws. This is all that every person must do.*

Honor God becomes a powerful life mission. How do we do this? Get out of the way so that God can work through us without the impediment of our own inclinations and wishes.

Wisdom without humility leads to destructive behavior, for at its heart is some form of idolatry:

James 3:17: (NASB) *But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.*

When we look at all the aspects of wisdom in this scripture, we realize everybody wants purity, peaceableness, gentleness, reasonableness, mercy, good fruits and unwavering wisdom with no hypocrisy in our lives. This is what *the wisdom from above*, godly wisdom, brings. Earthly wisdom does not get us there.



Wisdom cannot survive within us without a genuinely humble spirit. Wisdom is hard to come by. No wonder we see so little of it in our world today - it takes way too much effort!

**For wisdom to work, we need understanding, integrity and humility.
But what is true wisdom based upon?**

Thus far we have focused on what we need to have working for us to be able to live with wisdom. The final and perhaps biggest question of all is what is wisdom itself based upon? As Christians, we will always answer that wisdom is based upon the Bible. But think - the Bible is based upon the righteousness of God!



Plenty of people go through life without ever becoming wise or giving it a second thought. **With all the other parts of our characters we are supposed to be working on, is wisdom really that important?** It is not even listed as a fruit of the spirit in Galatians 5:22-23! There is so much to pray for and so much to work on.



Wisdom is a way to positively affect everyone and everything around us. Even if we are not in a position of great influence, if we have godly wisdom, we are a witness to God Himself.

How important is it for people to see Jesus through us? What did Jesus do? Everything God told him to do. We should also do everything that God tells us to do according to Scripture. Why is it so important? It makes us reflect who God really is. It makes us reflect the humility, the compassion, the drive and mission of Jesus himself. We need to pray for godly wisdom because we need it to follow the example of Jesus.



Wisdom needs **GODLY RIGHTEOUSNESS**.

Without a God-based righteousness approach, wisdom becomes an individual conclusion, a social media trend or a product of groupthink.

We can be self-righteous, or cause-righteous, or group-righteous - all of which can be divisive. We have the right way - "they" have the wrong way. Inevitably it is ALL wrong if we are not looking at it in God's way only.



Today's cancel culture's clashing disagreements with Christianity

There is a stark contrast between one who is wise and God-honoring and one who has the power. Godly righteousness brings wise behavior.

We compare David as a young man with King Saul:

1 Samuel 18:5: (KJV) *And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.*

David did whatever King Saul told him to do and *behaved himself wisely*. David's godly righteousness was initially rewarded by King Saul. The king was impressed with David's fervor and obedience. David was honoring God.

David continued honoring God as Saul began to descend into the self-centered darkness of his own mind:

1 Samuel 18:12,14,16: (KJV) ¹²*And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.* ¹⁴*And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him.* ¹⁶*But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.*

Here we have the contrast: Saul knows God has departed from him, but now he is angry and is going after David to kill him. The one who is doing the right way, the godly way, cheerfully following all the orders is the one who becomes the enemy. In the world where we live, this is what happens. We have heard the phrase, "No good deed goes unpunished!" Sometimes it seems as if no **GODLY** deed goes unpunished! David stayed on the godly path.



True wisdom seeks and finds its strength in godly righteousness, no matter what the cost.



The process of godly works overcoming our sinful mistakes



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHO WAS DAVID? PARTS 1 & 2
WHO WAS KING SAUL? PARTS 1 & 2
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Godly wisdom is such an important part of our lives. Is it work? Yes, of course. It is well worth it. The beauty and peace we get when we are reflective of God's wisdom is profoundly powerful and life-changing.

As Christians, we also need God's righteousness to continue as disciples:

Matthew 6:30-33: (NASB) ³⁰But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! ³¹Do not worry then, saying, what will we eat? or what will we drink? or what will we wear for clothing? ³²For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

If we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness by focusing on the highest things, God helps us to take care of the other things. We might think we do not have time for God because we have to work and support our families. However, if we seek godliness first, our ability will expand if we truly are seeking righteousness. This will enable us to follow godly paths and take care of all our other responsibilities as well.

A wise and productive Christian approach presents an inherent contradiction to worldly wisdom:

1 Corinthians 1:23-25: (NASB) ²³but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.



The foolishness of God is wiser than men... the weakness of God is stronger than men - **How is God foolish and weak?**

He is not - this is the Apostle Paul using sarcasm to make a point. He is using the comparison that God is so far above us there is no way to compare Him with humans.

Wise Christian thinking embraces godly righteousness as its sole source.



This stand is sure to bring criticism from others, as those called are not usually in the highest worldly positions:

1 Corinthians 1:26-30: (NASB) ²⁶*For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no man may boast before God.*

We are like salmon swimming upstream. Our natural inclination is predisposed to think and act sinfully. However, we have the ability to rely on God's righteousness and not worldly money or social status or earthly wisdom. Everything we do must be fueled by godly righteousness and all our thoughts should be God-driven. That is what needs to be in front of our minds each day. This is why seeking godly wisdom is so important - it teaches us how we apply godly thinking to a world that is completely contrary and self-serving.

God chooses "regular" people like the Apostle Peter, a hard-working fisherman, kind of rough around the edges, gruff and impetuous. He became one of the great leaders of the apostles because he had a heart for God. Even the "foolish" can be used for great things by God. The scripture says, *so that no man may boast before God* in the way God sees fit to use him. This is why godly wisdom needs the humility we were talking about earlier. It is not about you - it is about God working *through* you!

Our call to Christ and our stand in God's wisdom and righteousness will eventually *nullify* worldly wisdom because all of this will come to an end:

³⁰*But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,*

We are disciples of Jesus - he is our wisdom, he brings us our understanding, teaches us integrity, models for us our humility and provides us with righteousness and redemption before God. Following in the footsteps of Jesus is a great way to develop godly wisdom. Godly wisdom is summed up in his life, his teachings, his experiences, his death and his resurrection!

Any lack of God-based righteousness in our wisdom results in it becoming no more than a conclusion based on a compiled collection of self-centered and worldly-influenced thinking.

James 3:18: (NASB) *And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

This is the opposite of self-centered and worldly-influenced thinking. We have this calmness, an unruffled peace when we exercise godly wisdom.



How do we seek wisdom?

We pray and ask for wisdom. We study Jesus and see how he applied godly wisdom because he is wisdom personified.

We should observe and look for God's providences in our lives.

We can observe those who have a spirit of humility and who regularly apply godly wisdom. We can apply that to our own lives, praying that we might get "out of the way" to let God work through us to be of help to those in need.



If we have someone who shows godly wisdom, we need to learn from them and add that to our studies and prayers.



With all of these wisdom lessons in mind, let's now look at the words of Jesus, seeing them through the eyes of understanding, integrity, humility and godly righteousness:

Matthew 5:3-9: (NASB)

- ³Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- ⁵Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.
- ⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- ⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
- ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

When we look at these things, we should pause and consider the importance of putting godly wisdom to work as we try to live up to our commitment to Jesus. Remember, our godly wisdom is only as good as our last request for it in prayer! It does not just become something we own - we need to ask for it in every situation, again and again. By looking at the Beatitudes and all of Jesus' teaching with understanding, integrity, humility and godly righteousness, we will change OUR lives AND, by God's grace, we can change the lives of those around us.

Godly wisdom is something we want to strive for every day!

*So, is anyone listening to the wisdom of the Bible?
For Jonathan, Rick, Julie and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on November 8, 2021
Ep. 1203: Why Aren't My Prayers Answered?

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.

Bonus Material and Study Questions

We learn wisdom from failure much more than from success. We often discover what will do, by finding out what will not do; and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery. – Samuel Smiles

What about trials and difficulty? Wisdom knows they are necessary:

Hebrews 12:3-12: (New Revised Standard Version) ³Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart. ⁴In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as children - my child, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, or lose heart when you are punished by him; ⁶for the Lord disciplines those whom he loves, and chastises every child whom he accepts. ⁷Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline? ⁸If you do not have that discipline in which all children share, then you are illegitimate and not his children. ⁹Moreover, we had human parents to discipline us, and we respected them. Should we not be even more willing to be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share his holiness. ¹¹Now, discipline always seems painful rather than pleasant at the time, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. ¹²Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,

Psalms 1:1-3: (NKJV) ¹Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ²But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. ³He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

1 Timothy 6:10-11: (NKJV) ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue his, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.



Living wisdom every day:

Colossians 3:12-17: (NASB) ¹²So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. ¹⁴Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

Proverbs 1:7: (NASB) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

Proverbs 3:13-18: (NASB) ¹³How blessed is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding. ¹⁴For her profit is better than the profit of silver and her gain better than fine gold. ¹⁵She is more precious than jewels; and nothing you desire compares with her. ¹⁶Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. ¹⁷Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are peace. ¹⁸She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who hold her fast.

We thought, because we had power, we had wisdom. — Stephen Vincent Benét

It is characteristic of wisdom not to do desperate things. — Henry David Thoreau

To know when to be generous and when firm—that is wisdom. — Elbert Hubbard

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Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1202: Is Anyone Listening to the Wisdom of the Bible?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1202-wisdom/>

See:  CQ.Rewind
SHOW NOTES

1. How is wisdom defined? What can we learn about wisdom from the example of Jesus' life? How did Jesus gain wisdom? (See Matthew 13:54-56, Luke 2:39-40,52)
2. What are four of the key elements which underpin Jesus' wisdom that we should pursue? Why is understanding essential to applying wisdom? (See Proverbs 4:1-6, 23:23)
3. How can presumptions and judgment inhibit the development and application of wisdom? (See Matthew 7:1-5, James 3:13)
4. What can we learn about integrity and wisdom from David's efforts towards the construction of God's temple? (See 1 Chronicles 22:6-16)
5. Without integrity, how might someone misuse wisdom? Why must we develop proper, spiritual integrity? From where should our wisdom come? (See James 1:5-8, 3:14-16)
6. How did Solomon show humility when asking for wisdom from God? In what way does he remind us of David? How did God respond to him? (See 2 Chronicles 1:7-13)
7. What happened when Solomon let his self-worth overtake his humility? What can we learn from his example? (See 1 Kings 11:3-4, Ecclesiastes 12:13)
8. What is the basis of true, godly wisdom? What does the "wisdom from above" bring to us? How does David exemplify this attribute when contrasted with King Saul? (See 1 Samuel 18:5,12-16, James 3:17)
9. As Christians, how can we follow David's example to develop wisdom in our lives today? What is necessary as the source of this wisdom, and for us to continue as disciples of Christ? (See Matthew 5:3-9, 6:30-33, 1 Corinthians 1:23-30, James 3:18)
10. Do you listen to the wisdom of the Bible? What do/will you do to continue to develop true, godly wisdom?