



ACQUIRING WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT

Servants Meeting 9.3.17



OUTLINE

- Knowledge, Wisdom, and Discernment
- Is wisdom necessary or convenient?
- The Path to Wisdom
- Living a Wise Life

KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, DISCERNMENT

- All are the work of the Holy Spirit within us, and His grace is necessary
- **Knowledge**
 - "The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge." (Prov. 18:15)
 - Knowing and understanding God's word, will, truths, and principles.
 - Deals with discovery and revelation

KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, DISCERNMENT

- **Wisdom**

- The application of godly knowledge and understanding to everyday life
- "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and understanding is good to all who do according to it." (Ps. 110:10 LXX)
- "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." (Jam. 3:17)



KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, DISCERNMENT

- **Discernment**

- The divine ability to differentiate between:
 - Truth from error
 - Right from wrong
 - Primary from secondary
 - Essential from indifferent
 - Permanent from transient
 - Spiritual sources from personal motives

KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, DISCERNMENT

- Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom
 - "...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power..." (Eph. 1:17-19)

IS WISDOM NECESSARY OR CONVENIENT?

1. Protection

- From evil
 - "A wise man fears and departs from evil..."
(Prov. 14:16)
- Misleading emotions
 - "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered."
(Prov. 28:26)

2. Carries eternal implications

- Ex: 5 Wise and 5 Foolish Virgins
(Matt. 25)
- Wisdom was the difference in their salvation



IS WISDOM NECESSARY OR CONVENIENT?

3. It is the balance of virtue

- Love
- Kindness
 - Eli the Priest
 - "So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the Lord's people transgress."
(1 Sam. 23-24)



4. Speaking



THE PATH TO WISDOM

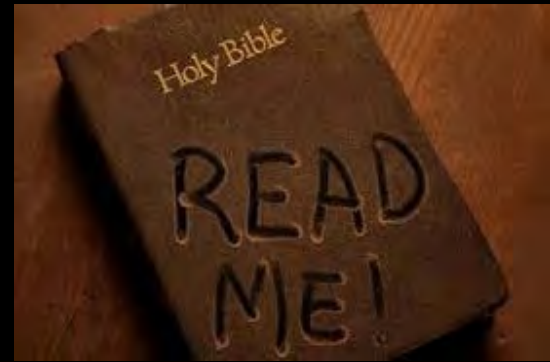
1. Ask in Prayer

- “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” (Jam. 1:5)
- Ex: Solomon
- God only gives heavenly wisdom
- Earthly wisdom (e.g., Rebekah)
- Heavenly wisdom
- “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” (Jam. 3:17)

THE PATH TO WISDOM

2. The Word of God

- "You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me."
(Ps. 119:98)
- Study Scripture



THE PATH TO WISDOM

3. The Experiences of others

"Only a fool learns from his own mistakes. The wise man learns from the mistakes of others."
(Otto von Bismarck)

- "Do not be wise in your own eyes..." (Prov. 3:7)
- "Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him."
(Prov. 26:12)

THE PATH TO WISDOM

4. Seek Counsel

- "If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures." (Prov. 2:4)
- Seek counsel from those with experience
 - EX: Online reviews
- Admit that I do not know everything
- Counsel must be spiritually focused





LIVING A WISE LIFE

1. Be humble
2. Think, pray, and ask before acting
 - "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God."
(Jam. 1:19-20)
3. Learn from your mistakes and those of others
 - Ex: St. Peter



LIVING A WISE LIFE

4. Do not escape criticism

1. "He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding."

(Pro. 15:32)

5. Do not make important decisions while under stress or anger

6. Fear God

1. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10)



SUMMARY

- Knowledge, Wisdom, and Discernment
- Is wisdom necessary or convenient?
- The Path to Wisdom
 - Ask in prayer
 - The Word of God
 - The experience of others
 - Seek counsel
- Living a Wise Life
 - Be humble
 - Think, pray, and ask before acting
 - Learn from your mistakes and those of others
 - Do not escape criticism
 - Do not make important decisions while under stress or anger
 - Fear God