

## Increasing Abilities (Part 2) - The Ability to Grow in Wisdom

### Sermon October 21, 2018

“How can we define wisdom?

- Wisdom is the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgment; the quality of being wise.
- Wisdom is more than intelligence or knowledge or even understanding.
- Wisdom is the ability to use the good or bad experiences, the knowledge we learned from our parents, or from **our own** daily experiences, and then use these values to think and act in a way to build our society productively.

We cannot learn **wisdom** from a **textbook**.

- By reading books, we can increase our abilities to have more knowledge about certain things.
- However, from the knowledge, we cannot learn **real wisdom**.
- If we are studying a book or a subject, we can gain an understanding of a subject.
- However, wisdom is more than knowledge.

Our own experiences **can** lead us closer to wisdom.

- There is a saying in Hungarian that wise people learn from other people's mistakes. Stupid people cannot learn, even from **their own** mistakes.

The good or bad experiences gives us the wisdom of whether to try a particular thing again or not anymore.

Who can swim?

- Did you read books or did you get lessons about swimming at the lakeshore or a swimming pool, and this is how you learned to swim?
- Or, did you jump into the water to learn how to swim?

You can read books on swimming, but if you do not have experiences in the water, you will not learn how to swim.

- Often, experiences are great opportunities to learn.

Now, let us see what wisdom is according to God's definition in the Bible.

- Also, let us see how we can increase the ability to be wise enough in all our decisions.

### **What is wisdom according to God's definition in the Bible?**

The terms wisdom and wise apply to a person who represents a special way of thinking, and their life is socially and morally a great example for everybody.

God gave our world moral requirements, which we should follow.

- Ecclesiastes 12:13 says: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

### **What does the Bible say about wisdom?**

The Bible says that wisdom begins and ends with the fear of the Lord.

### **What is the fear of the Lord and what does it mean to fear the Lord?**

- This is not a fear of God's punishment if we do something wrong.
- It is a deep, abiding, holy reverence and respect for the Lord and for his Word, the Bible.

The Book of Proverbs helps us to increase our abilities gain this kind of wisdom.

In Proverbs 9:10, Solomon said that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight."

- That means that we should love and obey God no matter what He says or what He does; either we understand Him or not.
- God prefers obedience. Where there is fear, there tends to be obedience and God has said He prefers unconditional obedience from all of us.

Sometimes we cannot understand God, but we still should obey our Lord, knowing that we can see only the short present but He can see the future as well and He is acting based on His plans.

- So obedience has to come before understanding.
- The time will come when we will understand Him.

Please note that wisdom begins with reverence for God and fear for Him and His Word.

Probably you remember because I shared with you, that once I was talking to my mentor Rev. Frank Visky, who was jailed for 7 years for being a faithful minister of Christ. I asked him if he always understand God. He said:

- "NO!!! Sometimes I don't understand God's decisions.
- I don't always understand why things have to happen with me or with others.
- But when I struggle, not understanding Him, I go on my knees and I pray.
- I am telling God that, with His decision, He broke my heart, that I am almost losing my mind, that I cannot stop crying being in pain. And when I pray and talk to Him, God gives me peace to accept what I don't understand and what I cannot see at this moment I know that one day I can ask Him to tell me about His decisions, which I cannot understand, but accept today."

## **Wisdom begins with reverence and prayer.**

The Bible is teaching us that, where there is no fear of the Lord, there can never be any true wisdom.

- It is just not possible.

When Solomon became King of Israel, God gave Solomon an opportunity to ask for anything, and He would give it to Solomon for free.

If God would ask you NOW to ask for anything and He would give it to you, what would you ask for? Here and Now !!!

- He could have asked God for many things but did you hear through the Scripture reading what he asked for? ...
- Solomon asked for **wisdom** (1 King 3:9). God answered that prayer and
- “God said to him,
  - “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be” (1 King 3:11-12).

The Bible says that, after Jesus Christ, King Solomon was the wisest person on earth.

Solomons' wisdom grew so great that almost all that heard of him came to seek his wisdom and “came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon” (Luke 11:31).

**WISDOM – WOW – What a blessing!**

How many times did you regret a decision you made?

How many times did you have sleepless nights, tears flowing on your cheek because of a bad decision?

How many times you say: “Oh, if I would be wiser”?

## **What is the value of WISDOM?**

In the New Testament, James is teaching us about the values of wisdom.

- He says: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” (James 1:5).
- James understood that it is important not only to wish to be wise but also to pray for and ask God for wisdom.

- James asked the question, “Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom” (James 3:13).

Wisdom and meekness are always together like two good friends. Wisdom, meekness and quietness are walking together.

Based on James, there is a difference between earthly wisdom (James 3:15) and godly wisdom. He says: “the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere” (James 3:17).

**Wisdom, meekness, quietness and gentleness are siblings.**

### **How can we gain the ability to grow in wisdom?**

As Jesus said: “I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict” (Luke 21:15), indicating that He, as God, is the real source of all wisdom.

Proverbs says:

- Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.” (Proverbs 28:26)
- “By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.” (Proverbs 24:3).
- The value of wisdom is seen in Solomon’s statement “Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.” (Proverbs 23:23)

Wisdom is the fear of the Lord. Wisdom begins where a person fears the Lord. The earthly wisdom is really no wisdom at all because “the wisdom of this world is folly with God” (1 Corinthians 3:19). True wisdom is found in obedience to God, fearing Him and His Word, the Word of God in the Bible, and by praying or asking for it. All other ground is sinking sand.

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity.” (**Ephesians 5:15**)

Let’s come to the Lord today and let us pray for the ability to pray more for wisdom, so we might love the Lord, fear Him with humble hearts and admiration, and may God give us wisdom through His Holy Spirit in every moment and in everything we do or say in order to minister to others. May Jesus be living and shining out of you and me. Amen