

Seeking Wisdom

What was the first thing created? (Trick Question)

- Gen. 1:1 – Tells us that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
- But was that the first thing created?
- The Bible tells us that there was something that God had prior to creation that He has made available to each of us.
 - o In fact this item was used by God in His creation of heaven and earth.
 - o This item has allowed scientists, philosophers, and normal men and women to live incredible lives far beyond their own knowledge.
 - o And it is available to everyone in this room today.
- It is Wisdom (Prov. 8:23 – “I was setup from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.”)

Without God’s wisdom we are like ants scurrying around in this maze of life always asking why and doing things our way – never getting anywhere

As a young man fresh out of college I can remember hearing a sermon by Dr. Gibbs that altered my whole thinking.

He spoke about his grandfather that was a simple man that became one of the largest cattle farmers in the country. He spoke of the wisdom of his grandfather.

I soon noticed as I was studying David to see what made him tick the phrase that described him as a young man – The Bible says “he behaved himself wisely”.

Wisdom was a key component that changed the course of both David’s life and his son, Solomon.

- I wanted that for my life.
- So, I followed God’s instruction – James 1:5 – “If any of you lack wisdom (that’s me), let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.”
 - o I’m not here claiming to be a wise man compared to others
 - o But I am here to praise God that He is faithful to His promises and that He has shown me wisdom that I didn’t have and given some to my life.

Tonight, I want us all to have that desire in our life. SEE

- Wisdom doesn't remove trouble – It's not an encyclopedia of facts–knowledge
- Wisdom gives us the tools to navigate trouble
- Wisdom gives us the insight to avoid situations before we're in them
- Wisdom gives us rewards that are eternal
- Wisdom makes us a lighthouse for hurting people

James 3:7 – “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

So let's look at seeking wisdom for our remaining time tonight.

No better passage on wisdom than Proverbs 8 – Wisdom is personified as a woman and she speaks to us describing herself.

READ Proverbs 8

- This is one of the coolest chapters in the whole Bible
- If you have children, read this to them every month. Make it to where it is part of their memory.
- The placement of this chapter is very purposeful (not just thrown together)

Contrast

- Ch.7 – Speaks of the strange woman – loud, stubborn & rebellious (leads to destruction and pain)
- Ch. 8 – Wisdom speaks – beautiful, deliberate, rewarding

The Call of Wisdom (Vs. 1-5)

Wisdom is crying out to all of mankind to hear her. She has something for everyone that is willing to listen.

- Here we see our first critical item involving wisdom. Acknowledgement of need!
- Vs. 5 she speaks to the simple & foolish – There must first be an acknowledgement that we sometimes are simple & foolish and need wisdom.

- We are in need of God's wisdom in our life. We don't have all the answers and we can't do everything in our own abilities.

The Clarity of Wisdom (Vs. 6-9)

God's wisdom is right and truth.

Vs. 9 – God's wisdom is plain & right.

- Plain to him that understands
- It is clear & plain – God doesn't require an IQ test or a PhD to live out His wisdom. Just as you didn't have to be a certain person to get saved.
 - o A person can be from any job, and any level of intellect to follow God's wisdom.
- Think about water – If you've ever seen water in the Caribbean, it looks shallow, but due to its clarity it can actually be 14' to 20' deep.
- Compare that to muddy water – You'll be lucky to see a couple of inches.
- On the surface God's wisdom appears simple, plain – But the depth of it far exceeds the muddy philosophies of the world.
- Plain – Salvation, Loving, Sharing, Prayer, Reading God's Word
- God gives us understanding – It's not a mind issue, but a heart issue.
- When we refuse to humble to God's way we miss out on His wisdom.

There's the acknowledgement of the need, but there must then be

The Choice for Wisdom (Vs. 10-11)

We have to choose to receive the instruction.

We make our own philosophies and means of dealing with life, means of interpreting our world.

- It's the glasses with which we see our world
- When we choose our philosophies – We see the world differently than God
- When we choose God's wisdom – Wisdom helps us see the end of the path or we at least trust the holder of the path.
- The book of Job is a perfect example of this.

- Job – a incredible, godly man is hit with devastation. He asks why, why, why (His view of the world)
- God finally approaches Job and hits him with an onslaught of questions that he can't answer.
- Job's question then moves from why to who
- It moves from his surroundings to Sovereign God
- We show growth in our wisdom when we move off of WHY and onto WHO (See God's view)
- We must get to a point where we choose God's wisdom
- The value of God's wisdom and direction become more valuable than the money offered or available to flee it.
- I'm not following you
 - #1 – The wisdom of God tells us to stay out of business with men that are ruthless.
 - But, the money to work with those men might be very appealing and my family needs the money
(Wisdom shows us the end of the path – Choice)
 - #2 – Wisdom tells us to stay out of other people's business
 - But, I can look good and gain popularity with a group that might be helpful to my kids
(Wisdom shows us the end of the path – Choice)
 - #3 – Wisdom tells us to follow God's commands on raising our children – teaching them God's Word, guarding their influences, keeping them in church
 - But, for this scholarship we need to hang out with this group of people and be gone for months at a time from church.
(Wisdom shows us the end of the path – Choice)
 - We could talk about dating relationships, business, family situations, money and on and on.
- God's wisdom shows us the end of the path.
- You have to decide that following God's wisdom is more valuable than what you think the world has to offer.

- God's wisdom yields eternal fruit – We either pay eternal fruit for the temporary. Or pay temporary fruit for eternal value.

The Characteristics of Wisdom (Vs. 12-21)

Wisdom goes on to describe herself and what she isn't.

Then in Vs. 17 she gives us a critical step on obtaining wisdom.

We saw

- We need to acknowledge our need for wisdom.
- We need then to choose to seek wisdom.
- Vs. 17 we're told those that seek wisdom early shall find it. (3 fold)
 - **Seek early in life**
 - A life that seeks to follow God's wisdom early in life will not deal with the baggage of sin and increase opportunities
 - **Seek early in situations**
 - When we try everything else and then finally seek God, we've missed the boat. Seek God first – His wisdom is the right way. (Seek ye first the kingdom of God...)
 - **Seek early in the day**
 - Every day we should start off our day in God's Word seeking what He has for us that day. That will include God's Wisdom
 - Our greatest source of God's wisdom is found in the pages of the Bible. Don't ignore it and look elsewhere.
- If you remember, Solomon asked God for wisdom and it was given to him.
- James 1:5 – tells us that if we'll ask for wisdom God will give it to us.
 - That will primarily come through understanding of God's Word.
 - It will come through the Holy Spirit opening your eyes to how to handle situations that are brought before you (in light of God's Word that you've studied)
 - Example – Solomon & baby / Jesus & coin

It's interesting to study the remainder of Prov. 8 – Wisdom explains how God used His creation to display His wisdom.

- Wisdom literally woven throughout time and space
- My senior year of college I needed an elective and decided to take a history course. Being a nerd, I stayed the course and took a class on the history of science and technology.
- And as you study the scientists over the centuries you find that the scientists of Europe (mostly God believing men & women) had great discoveries and breakthroughs.
 - However, the scientists in the Far East during the same period did not.
 - A study of this phenomenon went on to show that the God believing scientists went in to their studies expecting a world of order (wisdom), so the patterns were easily discovered.

Wisdom doesn't come from us or longevity – Just as these scientists knew – It comes from outside us. From God

If God's wisdom is good and strong enough to be used in the creation of the world, it can handle our life and should be used by us.

- 1. Acknowledge you need wisdom**
- 2. Choose wisdom**
- 3. Seek wisdom early**
- 4. Ask for wisdom**