

Being Wise

Proverbs 1:20-33

A few months ago I told you that I was reading through the Psalms and had encouraged others to do the same. I brought a few lessons from what I learned in that process. Lately I have started into the book of Proverbs and I found a text at the beginning of the book that I want to share with you today.

First let's introduce the book of Proverbs with some background information and the beginning of the first chapter. Solomon authored the book and even though there are only 31 proverbs written here, we are told that he had recorded 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:29-32). Read Proverbs 1:1-7

Wisdom is a subject that often makes us uncomfortable. To claim to be wise we become fools. God alone is wise. Yet, we are given instructions from God and if we follow them, we become wise.

From the time of the Garden of Eden where Eve was tempted by a tree that was desirable to make one wise, to the last great day where we will be called wise by God or regarded as a fool, men have been in pursuit of wisdom (Deut. 4:5-9).

Paul asked an important question when He said, "where is the wise?" (1 Cor. 1:20).

When we think of one who is wise, we often picture someone who has a depth of knowledge and discernment. We would consider it a rare find to come across someone that we truly considered wise.

There are many who are called wise, but most of the time, their wisdom is measured by the standard that is in the world. The insight that they impart will not meet any moral or spiritual need, but will instruct or teach regarding a specific area of study in the physical world.

While having a healthy understanding of the things of this world can be helpful, there is a wisdom that only God can give that actually requires us to become fools in order to obtain it (1 Cor. 3:18). The wisdom and knowledge that we gain, if we are not careful will lead to pride and arrogance (1 Cor. 8:1). The fear of the Lord is the starting place in our pursuit of wisdom.

We cannot be wise in our own estimation, but we must humbly seek the wisdom that comes from above (James 3:13-18). This brings us all to the place where we will seek to grow in the knowledge of the truth of God and when we are filled with that wisdom we will not have any room to boast, except for in the Lord.

Solomon was the wisest man in his day. But when Jesus came he proclaimed himself to be greater than Solomon in the way of wisdom (Matt. 12:42). This is true because Jesus was wisdom personified, God in the flesh; He is the truth. While he grew in wisdom, it was evident that his wisdom confounded those who heard him (Matt. 13:54). Just as Solomon asked God for wisdom, we are encouraged to do the same (James 1:5). We need to pray that we might be filled with wisdom (Col. 1:9-10, 28)

Will you be wise? (Prov. 3:5-8; 14:1-2; 15:20)

- 20 Wisdom shouts in the street, she lifts her voice in the square;
- 21 At the head of the noisy {streets} she cries out; at the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:

Wisdom is always present crying out loud for us to make the right choices in life. It is up to us to choose the way of escape when it is presented to us. We must heed the voice of God that calls us.

- 22 "How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing and fools hate knowledge?"

Three questions are asked that demand an answer. Will the naïve continue to be simple-minded, tossed here and there by every false scheme the devil put before them or will they be wise as serpents, knowing good and evil? Will scoffers despise wisdom and continue to enjoy mocking what is right? Will fools hate it when they are corrected for their error or taught the truth?

- 23 "Turn to my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you."

BEHOLD! Get this point. Wouldn't it be great in every circumstance to have an answer to get through it? Yes. Of course! If we will heed wisdom, we have a guide and we will not be without understanding in whatever dilemma we face. When we heed correction we open the door to getting an outpouring of wisdom and insight into the knowledge of God.

- 24 "Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;
- 25 And you neglected all my counsel and did not want my reproof;

Unfortunately, we often refuse the blessings of wisdom. When we hear words of advice, we should not tune them out. When a brother or sister, who is filled with the Holy Spirit is standing in our pathway and is trying to stop us from making an unwise decision we need to take their hand and be willing to accept godly counsel. It hurts to be corrected, but it is more painful to fall into many sins and reap the consequences of them. Heed wisdom.

- 26 I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes,
27 When your dread comes like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you.

Wisdoms' call turns to laughter as if to shame those who would not listen. Those who scoffed at wisdom are now being mocked for their disobedience. They will have to go through the dread and calamity that will come upon them like a storm or a whirlwind. Distress and anguish is the ultimate end of those who do not do what is right.

- 28 "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but they will not find me,
29 Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD.
30 "They would not accept my counsel, they spurned all my reproof.
31 "So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be satiated with their own devices.
32 "For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.
33 "But he who listens to me shall live securely and will be at ease from the dread of evil."

Here wisdom reassures the sinner of his/her consequences. By the time that a fool has done evil, they will seek for wisdom and she is nowhere to be found. The knowledge that could have helped them overcome their difficulty was hated and they did not choose the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. Every piece of advice and instruction is despised and denied. Wisdom says that those who do such things will have to eat what they produced and be satisfied with the result of their actions. Naivety will kill you if it is not tempered with direction from God. Because a fool will not heed the warnings given to them, they will be destroyed. Only those who hear and obey will be safe and will find rest from evil and wicked situations that they face. What about you? (Prov. 19:20)

Rom. 16:19, says, "For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil."

Eph 5:15-17 says, Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.