

Series: Essentials
Spiritual Wisdom

For the week beginning 7.26.10

Run for Cover!

As crazy as our world is around us, we need every advantage that we can possibly get to help us in life. When times are tough, as they are now—our country at war, many people laid off from their jobs, an uncertainty about the future—we need hope for these difficult times. *How can we make it through? How can we ride out the storm?*

For answers to these questions, we turn to the Bible. Take the book of Proverbs for example...the majority of the Proverbs come from King Solomon, the son of David. Solomon was the man who God granted the opportunity to ask for anything. Rather than riches, Solomon asked that God give him wisdom. Listen to what the Bible tells us about Solomon in 1 Kings 4:29-34: *“God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon’s wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man... And his (Solomon’s) fame spread to all the surrounding nations... He described plant life... He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.”*

**“A question that
sometimes drives
me hazy:
Am I or are the others
crazy?”
- Albert Einstein**

Wisdom is a very powerful, and at times, elusive quality that few possess in great quantity. The word “wisdom” is obviously a main theme throughout the Proverbs, occurring 41 times throughout the book. Wisdom has been defined and described in many different ways. The American Heritage Dictionary defines “wisdom” as *“understanding of what is true, right, or lasting; common sense; good judgment; learning.”*

Often, people confuse being smart with wisdom. Automaker Henry Ford asked electrical genius Charlie Steinmetz to build the generators for his factory. One day the generators ground to a halt and the repairmen couldn’t find the problem. So Ford called Steinmetz, who tinkered with the machines for a few hours and then threw the switch. The generators whirred to life--but Ford got a bill for \$10,000 from Steinmetz. Flabbergasted, the rather tightfisted car maker inquired why the bill was so high. Steinmetz’s reply: For tinkering with the generators...\$10. For knowing where to tinker...\$9,990. Henry Ford paid the bill.

No matter how smart you think you are, there is a difference between being smart and being spiritually wise—it is important for you to know the difference. This week’s study will focus on the topic of spiritual wisdom discussed in Ephesians 1 and how we can incorporate spiritual wisdom into our everyday life.

****IMPORTANT**** – Thank you for your patience with the Daily Bible Readings. There will be two chapters to read on Monday and then, the readings will resume on schedule.

MONDAY — Christ: The Wisdom of God

Today's Big Point: Christ is referred to as “The Wisdom of God” throughout the Bible. “In him lie all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Colossians 2:3)

God says that His foolishness is greater than the wisdom of man! And yet in Ephesians 3, Paul speaks of God's purpose as God is presently working to display His wisdom **through the church**. Why would God choose to use such “foolish people” to display His wisdom? How does the church demonstrate His wisdom?

READ...What does the Bible say?

Ephesians 1:3 (New Living Translation)

³ “How we praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we belong to Christ.”

1 John 5:20 (New Living Translation)

²⁰ “And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God...”

THINK...Find the answers

Since Christ is the Wisdom of God, it's logical to assume that we must get to know Christ more intimately in order to tap into the Godly wisdom needed for daily life. Find other verses in the Bible, such as Philippians 3:10, that tell how to know Christ.

- What do Ephesians 1:3 and 1 John 5:20 have in common?
- Do the verses mention any prerequisites to knowing Christ?
- What are some of the benefits or rewards of knowing Christ?

Read Ephesians 1:3 again. Define the terms “spiritual blessing” and “heavenly realms”.

LIVE...What will you do now?

Do you want to have Godly wisdom in your personal life for every situation? If so, you will need to get to know the Wisdom of God (Christ). In what circumstances in your life today do you need Godly wisdom?

One commentary for Ephesians 1:3 states that “every spiritual blessing” means that we have all the benefits of knowing God. For example, we have the power to do God’s will and we have God’s forgiveness. Additionally, we have the blessing of Godly wisdom.

How will possessing these benefits give you confidence to apply Godly wisdom in that critical area identified in the last question?

PRAY...God, What do you want me to know & do?

Lord, thank you for sending Jesus who is the embodiment of your wisdom. I thank You for all the blessings and resources available to me through Him. I ask for wisdom in _____ . In James 1, it says that if I need wisdom then I should pray and ask for it. God, I am asking for the wisdom that only You can provide. I believe that You will give it to me. Amen.

DAILY BIBLE READING: Luke 20 & 21

Luke 20:1-8 This chapter features a series of conflicts between Jesus and the religious leaders in Jerusalem. These conflicts set up the plot to arrest Jesus.

Luke 20:3-4 “From heaven” means “from God,” a Jewish expression used to avoid using God’s divine name.

Luke 20:6 “The people will stone us.” Stoning was the Old Testament punishment for blasphemy and the religious leaders were concerned that if they rejected a prophet of God, then they might be at risk of that punishment.

Luke 20:9-19 Parable of the Talents – in this parable the owner is God, the tenants represent Israel’s corrupt religious leaders, the servants represent the prophets, the owner’s son represents Jesus.

Luke 20:17-18 “Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces...” God’s kingdom is portrayed as a stone not made by human hands and endures forever. Jesus is considered the rejected stone who will triumph over all who rejected him.

Luke 21

Luke 21:1-4 The term “gazophylakion” is the Greek term referring to the trumpet-shaped chest or receptacle that people are throwing their offerings into. The widow modeled generosity, even in her meager circumstances. In 2 Corinthians 9, the Apostle Paul discusses generosity at length. Challenge yourself to read that chapter and ask yourself the question: “What would it take for me to be generous?”

Luke 21:5 Herod the Great’s greatest building project was the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem. The project began in 20BC and took over 45 years to construct the Temple. Rather than stone, the temple was constructed of imported white marble and some of the building stones weighed over 100 tons. The temple would be destroyed in 70 AD.

Luke 21:6-11 While it is natural for us to want to know about the timing and specific details of future events, it is more important for us to be focused on the things God has called us to do.

Luke 21:12-18 “Not a hair of your head will perish” is an idiom meaning complete protection. There’s a reference to martyrdom in verse 16, so this idiom is probably referring to spiritual rather than physical deliverance.