

The Secret to Long-Life, Riches, and Honor

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.” - *Proverbs 3:13-16*

The entirety of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are dedicated to imparting wisdom to its readers. A case could even be made that all of Scripture seeks to impart wisdom. *Proverbs 4:7* says, “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom:...”. What imagery comes to your mind when you think of wisdom? What is wisdom and how do you obtain it? Is it available to you?

Defining Wisdom

Wisdom is built upon knowledge and understanding. These three terms are used many times throughout Scriptures, especially in Proverbs. Generally, they each carry a different connotation.

Knowledge – “Acquaintance with facts” (Webster’s)

“Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge”. - *Proverbs 12:1*

In relation to Scriptures, how would you describe someone with knowledge?

They have an acquaintance with facts and knowledge of particular subjects.

Understanding – “A specific interpretation or inference of a matter” (Webster’s)

“Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me” - *Job 34:34*

In relation to Scriptures, how would you describe someone with understanding?

They have a comprehension of the facts and their interrelation. They are able to teach.

The Qualities of Wisdom

“He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous... Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity, yea every good path”. - *Proverbs 2:7-9*

Webster’s defines wisdom as, “The power of judging rightly and following the soundest course of action, based on knowledge, experience, and understanding”.

Read *James 3:17* and discuss the seven qualities of wisdom. Based on what we have read and discussed so far, how does Scripture define wisdom?

Specifically, wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge and understanding to everyday life. One who is wise has a consistent godly pattern of living.

Read *1 Corinthians 1:17-31* and contrast worldly wisdom from godly wisdom? Is there a difference?

Godly wisdom is considered foolishness by this world but it will rise up and destroy the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness in God’s eyes.

Wisdom is not the accumulation of a body of knowledge, but a way of life. Likewise, foolishness is not a lack of knowledge but a rejection of a godly way of life.

The Pursuit of Wisdom

Pursuing God / Pursuing Wisdom

“One becomes competent and expert as far as the orders in life are concerned only if it begins from knowledge about God.” (G. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 1972, 67)

Read the following passages and discuss the key concepts taught in them.

Proverbs 9:10 – **Wisdom begins with the fear of God**

Daniel 2:20 – **Wisdom belongs to God**

Ecclesiastes 2:26 – **God gives wisdom to those who are good in His sight**

James 1:5 – **God will grant wisdom unto us liberally if we ask and seek after it**

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The Wisdom Hungry Lifestyle

Read *Proverbs 8:32-36* and discuss some of the qualities of one that pursues wisdom.

- They accept instruction
- They are humble
- They seek God's wisdom daily to make godly decisions
- Their lives are marked by God's favor as He blesses their pursuit of wisdom

Do you see any correlations between the pursuit of wisdom and *Matthew 5:6*?

They are strongly correlated. One who hungers and thirsts after righteousness seeks to be holy. The natural extension of the craving for righteousness is the pursuit of wisdom. The promises of God's provision are also the same for both.

Read *Proverbs 1:1-6*. Is wisdom available to anyone, regardless of intellect?

Yes. God's wisdom makes the simple wise. One only needs a receptive heart that receives instruction and seeks to understand its application.

Solomon: An Example of Wisdom

Read through these passages on wisdom one by one and discuss how the principles we learned about wisdom and the pursuit of wisdom applied to Solomon.

Proverbs 4:1-13 – David taught Solomon to seek after wisdom. Solomon received instruction.

2 Chronicles 1:1-6 – Solomon pursues the pure worship of God. He has a fear of God.

2 Chronicles 1:7-12 – Solomon seeks and God grants.

1 Kings 3:16-28 – An example of Solomon's wisdom. He applies truth to a unique circumstance.

The Need for Wisdom

Solomon desired wisdom so that he could be a good ruler of his people. Thus far, none of us are in a position like that. Why would you need wisdom?