



The Good News

January 29th, 2017

Volume 17, Issue 5

The Need to Seek after Wisdom

By Michael McCleary

Wisdom is often defined as the ability to apply knowledge. Some wisdom comes with practice and doing, and some wisdom can come by teaching. Some people who think they are wise really aren't, and often some of the least learned people are some of the wisest you'll ever meet. Wisdom is one of those qualities that is hard to clearly define and even harder to measure. Yet, Solomon uses the term "wisdom" 53 times in the book of Proverbs. He considers it the most important quality to strive for, being a quality that God requires of His people.

Solomon says in **Proverbs 1:7**, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*" If I fear and respect the Lord, I will seek out the knowledge of how to please Him. That knowledge brings instruction and wisdom regarding what my character and attitude should be as I strive to serve the Lord. If I do not fear the Lord, I will not care to seek out that knowledge. A fool despises wisdom and instruction. Therefore, the man who does not fear God is a fool. Knowing that I should fear God and that I will stand in Judgment for my life, I should do everything in my power to seek out what God wants me to do and be in this world.

Solomon says again in **Proverbs 2:6**, "*For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*" It is understood that there are different kinds of wisdom. Some wisdom is what we call "street smarts" that conveys an understanding of how the world works outside of words on a page. Some wisdom may be specific to a field of expertise or area of study. Someone who is a farmer would have far more wisdom in the ways of farming than someone who is a doctor, and vice versa. The wisdom that should be the main goal of every individual is the wisdom that God teaches us. The only way to obtain that wisdom is to listen to the words of His "mouth" which come by way of the Bible. Within the Word of God, we find the lessons that are taught by

the events recorded in its chapters, the characteristics that God exalts and approves, and the behavior that God demands.

Solomon again says in **Proverbs 3:13**, "*Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding.*" Solomon recognizes there are some benefits for the person who seeks, and obtains, the wisdom that God gives. One of these benefits is "happiness". This would seem to be a contradiction to what Solomon would later say in **Eccl. 1:18**, "*For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.*" It is important to understand the lesson that Solomon is teaching between these two Scriptures. On the one hand, the more we learn and gain knowledge, the more we will recognize that so many things in this world are "vanity and grasping for the wind". All of our physical pleasures and sources of enjoyment, while being blessings from God, are ultimately pointless and temporary. However, the term that Solomon uses in Proverbs 3:13 for "happiness" means "blessed" or "joyous". While it is true that the wiser and more knowledgeable we get there are certain griefs and sorrows that come with it, there is also an overriding understanding that I am blessed as I allow my character and behavior to be tempered and tested by the wisdom of God. Even though I understand this world and my life are temporary, I can enjoy each moment as I serve God, knowing that I have a future with Him as I serve Him faithfully.

As we mentioned before, wisdom is a difficult quality to define and measure. However, in the life of a Christian godly wisdom is shown by the character and conduct of the servant of God. Let us always seek after God's wisdom and allow it to guide us to Heaven.