

TOPIC : Grow in Wisdom from Above

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Date : 27th January 2013

Passage : **Colossians 1:9-12**

How to have the marks of a maturing disciple?

We must continually know the will of God. How do we do so?

We need to grow in spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. (NIV)

I. God is the Source of All wisdom

1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.

God alone is the creator and master of all creation. He is the Ancient of Days. For Him, all is present. He is outside of time. He can step into time into our lives. He determines and sets up kings and presidents, directing their hearts according to His purpose. Why do the nations rage? He laughs over their schemes.

Romans 11:33-36

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! **34** “For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?” **35** “Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?” **36** For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

God alone is measureless and boundless. The created ones have boundary and they receive a measure of the infinite wisdom of God.

II. When the created lose their connect with God, their wisdom will deteriorate.

“**Connect**” means relationship and the fear of God. Without this connection, our wisdom begins to fracture, fall apart and deteriorate.

1 Corinthians 1:19-20, 25

19 For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." **20** Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? **25** Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Romans 1:21-22, 28

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Professing to be wise, they became fools ... **28** And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting ...

The wisdom of the devil is a deteriorated and corrupted wisdom. Lucifer thought he could be like God. In **Luke 10**, Jesus saw him fall like lightning. All those who followed the devil became futile in their thinking. The wisdom of the world is foolishness. Another word for 'foolish' is stupidity. With debased mind, people become obscene, likened to trash and rubbish. Solomon started well but the day his heart was not holy unto God and he depended on his own wisdom, he became the world's most knowledgeable fool, not the wisest. If it could happen to him, it can happen to us.

2 Timothy 3:1-5, 7

1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: **2** For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, **3** unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, **4** traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!
7 Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

In **verse 9**, we see a warning. These people are always learning but they are not able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Look at King Saul. He started right but became envious and angry. Finally, he consulted a witch.

James 3:13-16

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. **15** This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. **16** For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion.

The wisdom of man is earthly, become increasingly soulish and demonic as ground is given to the evil one.

III. The wisdom of God will be given to those who seek and connect with Him.

Proverbs 2:3-6

3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, **4** if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; **5** then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. **6** For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding...

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Solomon lost the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord keeps us on alert mode, giving us a sense of submission to authority. Isaiah said, "Woe am I. I better know where I stand in the presence of this Holy God." When we fail to know the fear of God, we fall. Such is with Lucifer, King Saul and Solomon. That will happen to us if we lose the fear of God.

IV. Believers already have all the wisdom they need for life.

1. This wisdom from above is Christ in the believer.

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—

Jesus became our Justifier and Sanctifier. He will give us resurrected body. He is the One who holds the keys of death and hades. He became for us wisdom.

Colossians 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

2. This wisdom from above is supplied to the believer through the Holy Spirit of Wisdom.

The Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom.

Ephesians 1:17-18

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, **18** the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know ...

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Sound mind is a mind that is collected, composed and focused. The opposite of a sound mind is a scattered mind – confused and double-minded.

As in **John 16:13**, the Spirit of truth will lead us into all truth. Truth exposes lies, error and deception.

3A. The Holy Spirit of Wisdom is perfectly ONE with the Word of God.

Psalm 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple ...

He will give us wisdom and inward witness regarding decisions we need to make.

3B. The Holy Spirit of Wisdom will quicken the Rhema Word for the situation.

2 Corinthians 3:6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Senior Pastor reminded the congregation not to believe every word he speaks but when it is what Scriptures say, they'd better believe. We have the Word and we need the Spirit of wisdom to weigh and understand it. Listen to the Holy Spirit.

4. The believer must intentionally ask for wisdom from the Holy Spirit of Wisdom.

Having wisdom is not automatic.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

5. The wisdom from the Holy Spirit of Wisdom is available in the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:16 For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

We have the mind of Christ in the council of elders. Six years ago, we decided to tear down the old building and have this new building erected. Wisdom tells us that when a congregation is about 80-85% filled, we have to position and prepare for growth. That's why we will be having the Saturday Service. We give people enough runway to re-adjust and to think of people they can reach out to.

1 Corinthians 12:8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit ...

There are specific gifts – word of wisdom, word of knowledge, etc. We release those words at the end of the service. Are we perfectly 100% correct? No but we are getting there.

Proverbs 11:14, 15:22

14 Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety. **22** Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.

We need right counsel. When we are sick, don't just see the pastor for prayer but go to the doctor as well. If you are buying a property, check with an agent. If you have issues with marriage, talk to those who are doing well. Wisdom requires us to seek right counsel. To be godly is to factor God in all our decisions. To be ungodly is to crowd God out of our lives. Whether it's about health, job or marriage, we have the mind of Christ.

V. The proof of wisdom and understanding is in our deeds.

Who is the wise person? Look at **James 3:13**:

James 3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.

Matthew 7:24-25

24 Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: **25** and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

The world will get darker but the church (not the institutional church but overcomers who are rooted to the Word and connected to the Spirit) will get more powerful.

1. The unwise person will reflect evil.

James 3:14-16

14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. **15** This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. **16** For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

2. The wise people will reflect goodness.

James 3:17-18

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. **18** Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

3. The wise person will be promoted.

1 Samuel 18:5 So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

They accepted David though he was young.

1 Samuel 18:30 Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

The name of David was more esteemed even amongst his enemies.

4. The wise person will be victorious.

1 Samuel 18:14-15

14 And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him.

15 Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him.

2 Samuel 16:23 Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

2 Samuel 15:31 Then someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O Lord, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!"

Ahithophel became bitter towards David because his granddaughter was Bathsheba. He held a grudge against David. Ahitophel was connected to God but when he held on to the grudge, his wisdom deteriorated.

Isaiah 33:6 Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation; the fear of the Lord is His treasure.

How do we have strength of salvation? It is to have the fear of the Lord.

Matthew 5:13-16

13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavour, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. **14** You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. **16** Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Salt preserve from decomposition. Light shines when there is darkness. We can no longer sit on the fence but be people of conviction. We cannot be ignorant. There is no such thing as an alternative lifestyle. We need to know who we are contending with.

Bottom-line:

Ephesians 5:15-18

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, **16** redeeming the time, because the days are evil. **17** Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit ...

There is a difference between zeal of the flesh and zeal of the Spirit. Zeal of the Spirit is knowledge. In **Exodus 32**, when Moses saw the people worshipping the calf, he issued a call to such who were on the Lord's side. The Levites stood with him. In **Numbers 24**, Balaam couldn't curse Israel and the enemies came up with a plot to seduce the men. Many ended up committing harlotry and Israel was struck with a plague till Phinehas arose and killed a couple who were engaging in immorality. Twenty four thousand people had died.

It will be increasingly more and more difficult to sit on the fence. Make your stand.

As in **Ephesians 5**, to walk circumspectly means that every step is measured. We are to understand His will and be filled with the Spirit. It is to give the Lord every area of our lives and to let Him reign in our lives.

We are living in end times. The shift can change either way and the church can change it.

End

Questions for discussion

- 1) Share what you understand by the Bible's definition of wisdom? **James 3:13-18**
- 2) What does it mean to have the mind of Christ? How can we grow in wisdom from above?
- 3) Why is it that some people start well but end poorly? E.g. Why would a wise man like Solomon fail? What lessons and applications can we draw?
- 4) In the light of eternity, what is a word of wisdom from Scripture for us to run our lives?