

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



In Search of Wisdom

KEY PASSAGE: Proverbs 2:1-7 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:** Genesis 1:26 | Proverbs 4:10-11; 5:1; 6:6; 8:17; 9:10; 12:15; 13:20 | Ecclesiastes 2:26; 8:1; 10:10 | James 1:5

SUMMARY

The Lord values us so much that He has worked out the best possible plan for each of our lives.

That's why He created us in His image—so we could understand who He is, relate to Him personally, and discover what He wants to do in our lives. But the only way we'll experience all of this is by following His plan. Those who never consider what the Lord desires for them lack a meaningful sense of purpose and end up wasting their lives. Some people even go so far as to willfully reject God's purposes because they don't want anyone dictating how they should live. But to those who desire to live according to His plan and are willing to seek Him, He freely gives the gift of wisdom.

SERMON POINTS

Throughout the Scriptures, the Lord has given us principles that will make us wise if we'll live by them.

Wisdom is simply the ability to view things from God's perspective and on the basis of His Word. He wants us to become wise, but we have a responsibility in the process.

- **We acquire wisdom by seeking it as hidden treasure** (Prov. 2:1-7). Since God is the source of all wisdom, we must diligently seek Him because wisdom doesn't come automatically. In order to hear what He is saying, we must listen attentively. As children of God, we have each been given a spirit that enables us to hear His voice, perceive His mind, and understand His purposes.

- **We acquire wisdom by meditating on God's Word** (Prov. 4:10-11). The Bible is the Lord's guidebook that leads us down the pathway of wisdom. Although it was written to people who lived many years ago, it still applies to us today. The best way to begin each day is by meditating on the Scriptures. Then we'll know how to make wise decisions all day long. Without a sound understanding of the Word, we could easily be led astray by the influences of people who are ignorant of the Lord and His ways. Those who neglect the Scriptures will never live wisely.

The Bible is also the means by which we learn to know the Lord. When we begin to understand who He is—that He's the sovereign Lord of the universe who holds all power, yet loves us unconditionally—we'll revere Him. Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." As our Creator, His plans for our lives were already in His mind when He fashioned us. That's why every morning we should ask Him, "How do you want me to invest my life today?" Each day should be directed by Him and filled with whatever brings Him glory, whether it's restorative rest or productive labor.

- **We acquire wisdom by praying specifically for it** (James 1:5). Since the Lord is generous and promises to give wisdom to those who ask Him, we should diligently request it. After all, we never know when a crisis will arise which calls for divine wisdom. When unexpected trouble comes, our human tendency is to immediately be consumed with anxiety, fear, and worry. But a wise person quickly turns to the Lord asking, "How do you want me to respond to this situation?" Sometimes we just have to slow down and be still so we can

hear His answer. However, even when we make a mistake and respond the wrong way, the Lord lovingly draws us back, showing us a better way. His goal is to use these difficult experiences to strengthen and mature us.

- **We acquire wisdom by observing how God works in the world** (Prov. 6:6). The Lord's attributes, power, and creativity are vividly displayed throughout creation. His wisdom is seen in the design of mountains, oceans, seasons, vegetation, and animal life. That's why He tells us to observe the ant's ways and learn wisdom. Ants have a sense of direction and never wander around aimlessly. They're organized, energetic, and persistent in accomplishing their goals—all of which are examples of wisdom. The animals come pre-programmed with the abilities and characteristics God designed for them, but He gave mankind a choice. We can either learn wisdom by observing how He works, or focus on our own self-destructive desires and behave foolishly in front of others.
- **We acquire wisdom by heeding godly counsel** (Prov. 12:15). No one is ever so smart that he has all the answers—only God does. And sometimes He may use someone else to give us a bit of His wisdom. But we must be open to counsel, or we'll miss the instruction and end up on the pathway of fools. If we habitually reject messages we don't want to hear, we could very well be turning a deaf ear to God Himself. Whenever someone offers us counsel, we should immediately ask the Holy Spirit for discernment. His job is to guide us carefully into truth so we can recognize what's right and wrong.
- **We acquire wisdom by associating with the wise** (Prov. 13:20). Our choice of friends is critical because they have the power to influence how we live. Godly associates will help us become wise, but those who have no interest in discovering and following God's plan will lead us into foolishness. This doesn't mean we are to avoid everyone who has no interest in the Lord. In fact, we need to have some association with them so we can tell them

about Jesus. However, if we allow them to become our close companions, not only does our choice reflect on our character, but we also run the risk of becoming like them and adopting their ways that go against the Lord.

- **We acquire wisdom as a gift from God** (Eccl. 2:26). The Lord gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to those who are good in His sight. They have a sense of happiness, peace, and success that is not due to an impressive job, wealth, or fame. Their success, contentment, and wisdom are simply the result of being on good terms with God and following His will for their lives. What the Lord has planned for us is beyond our comprehension, but if we'll follow Him one step at a time, one of these days we'll look back and realize we've lived wisely.

RESPONSE

- Do you routinely live without giving much thought to what God wants to do in your life?
- What is keeping you from discovering and following the plan God has specifically designed for you?
- Are you actively seeking wisdom from the Lord or just hoping you'll acquire it by doing traditional Christian things—like going to church, reading your Bible now and then, and praying when you need help?
- How can you become more intentional in your pursuit of God's wisdom?
- Are your friends hindering or helping you live wisely? Likewise, are you modeling a godly influence through your lifestyle?

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