

**ETHAN TEMPLE MINISTRIES TOOLS FOR
LIFE
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Appreciating Wisdom

Scripture: Romans 12:16 - Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. (NRSV)

SUMMARY

While there are many virtues which are often discussed in church circles, (love, faith, joy, etc.), there is one key virtue that is often underappreciated, especially considering its key role in living a Christ-like life. Wisdom is entwined throughout the entire story of Salvation, and it is frequently urged that believers acquire wisdom in order to honor God and have healthy relationships with others in their daily lives.

A VALUABLE GIFT

Scripture states that, “Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding, for her income is better than silver, and her revenue better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her” (Proverbs 3:13-15). Wisdom is clearly something to be highly prized yet there are many people who seem to lack any measure of wisdom. As the saying goes, ‘common sense isn’t common’.

Part of the reason wisdom may be lacking in our world, is the extreme individualism and self-centeredness promoted in our western culture. “Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to advice’ (Prov 12:15) and “Indeed A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing personal opinion” (Prov 18:2). This arrogance often produces nothing but frustration for everyone, including the foolish person themselves.

This egoism might partially be caused by a misunderstanding of what counts as wisdom. While there are many intelligent people, it is possible to be an intelligent

fool. Knowledge and Intelligence are the cumulation of everything you've learned through education and experience, but wisdom is the ability to use what you know to live right.

NECESSARY FOR LIFE

Living right is the principal challenge of the Christian Journey. Therefore, Paul throughout his various letters would urge believers to live their lives wisely, "Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise making the most of the time, because the days are evil." (Eph 5:15,16). Paul understood that it was necessary to have wisdom in order to handle this difficult world.

In fact Paul would write that part of the reason that this world grew so corrupt is because of a perversion of wisdom, "though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools; (Rom 1:21,22). Imagine being caught in such a trap, being so misguided that you think you're living right when in truth you've got it all wrong. Yet, this is a common trap many find themselves in.

Christ himself knew that the difficulties of living a committed life would require wisdom in order to handle the challenges that often appear, "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matt 10:16).

ACQUIRING WISDOM

Consequently, appreciating just how serious it is to have wisdom, one might wonder how they should begin growing in wisdom. In all honesty it might seem like an impossible task, especially when you don't know where to begin. Well first off let us be clear that, "The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever else you get, get insight" (Prov 4:7). This may seem like a circular

argument; but it is simply saying that, recognizing your need for wisdom is the first step of wisdom.

Yet the Word of God takes us much deeper. Wisdom is relational, and as Paul indicates in Romans 12:16, wisdom requires a level of humility in each person allowing us to live in harmony with one another. Scripture tells us that “Humility is the fear of the Lord...” (Prov 22:4 NIV) and that “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight” (Prov 9:10). So, in short a relationship with God is the path towards growing in Wisdom.

The bible can't be much clearer than 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.