

Wednesday  
January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## PURSUE WISDOM AT ALL COST



### Proverbs 4:1-8

"Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain understanding. <sup>2</sup>I give you sound learning, so do not forsake my teaching. <sup>3</sup>For I too was a son to my father, still tender, and cherished by my mother. <sup>4</sup>Then he taught me, and he said to me, "Take hold of my words with all your heart; keep my commands, and you will live. <sup>5</sup>Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them. <sup>6</sup>Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. <sup>7</sup>The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. <sup>8</sup>Cherish her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you."



If you have been looking for a sign from God, then here it is! God the Creator of the Universe is calling on you to pursue WISDOM. *Proverbs 1:7* reads, **"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction."** I am confident that no one wants to be a fool before God and others, so it is imperative we decide now to accept the challenge described in Proverbs.

**1. Listen and Pay Attention (v.1)** – The Hebrew translated "listen" means "to use the perception of hearing with the ears to process information." Suffice to say this is not a mere listening to the Word and forgetting it (see *James 1:22*), but using all your faculties to comprehend the Word. This takes deliberate and structured effort on our part if we are indeed a disciple of Jesus Christ. "Pay attention" means to accept information as true and respond to it, while "understanding" can be translated as discernment and in context is explained as good sense or wisdom to respond properly to the Lord and His Law. It is noted that this entire passage illustrates how wisdom is an inheritance that may be passed from generation to generation. It can preserve a whole family line through the passing of years. It is, however, an inheritance that each generation must choose to receive. ➡ **Today, you must also choose to receive the wisdom of God!** Consider the following in *James 3:17*, **"But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere."** I believe this is one of the most loaded verses on wisdom that we find in the N.T. Simply stated, wisdom (Gr. *sophia*) is the capacity to understand, and hence act wisely. Stated another way, **"Wisdom is the correct application of truth and knowledge"**. Wisdom is an essential day to day necessity at the Capitol as you navigate all the information that crosses your desk, in all the conversations you have and the countless deliberations on how to support and vote on a bill. That said, wisdom has its origin in God and for one to walk in wisdom that comes from Heaven one must first walk in the knowledge of God's salvation in Jesus Christ; His Cross and Resurrection. *1 Cor. 1:22-24*, **"Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."** Two nuggets to illuminate. First, those called know that the crucified Christ means power. Before the call we were defeated by sin (*Rom. 3:23, 6:23*) but now there is a new power at work in all believers, the power of God (*Eph. 1:19-20, 3:20, Acts 1:8*). Second, Christ is also the wisdom of God. **"The idea of wisdom runs through this passage; clearly the Corinthians had emphasized it. But to Greek intellectuals the Cross was utter folly; it made no sense; there was no wisdom in it. Paul's conjunction of power and wisdom is important. Had the way to God been through 'wisdom', Christianity would have opened the way to salvation only to the intellectually gifted. The power in the cross opens the way for the humblest to know God and to overcome evil, and that is a wisdom superior by far to anything the philosophers could produce. On the level of the search for wisdom the foolishness of God proved to be the true wisdom."** (Morris, L. (1985). *1 Cor. An introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 7, p.52). Intervarsity Press.) *1 Cor. 1:25* states, **"For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength."** ➡ **To know Jesus Christ as Lord is to know the true wisdom from Heaven!**

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### Advanced Notice Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>



A Gospel outreach event has been planned for Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> on the first floor of the Rotunda during the noon hour. The program is simple, music to sing along with followed by Evangelist Sam Moore proclaiming the Gospel and giving an invitation to accept Jesus. Open invite to all including area churches. Many are praying for another Great Awakening in our nation. I am praying that souls will be saved on this day and that lives will be changed forever. More details to follow, but for now consider placing this event on your calendar.

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2. A Father's Influence (v.2-5) – The father (and mother/see Paul's comment to Timothy regarding the influence of his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice in 2 Tim. 1:5), not the professional teacher, pastor or government official has the most profound responsibility and opportunity to lead a young man in the right way. Only a parent can implore the young man to do what is right with the depth of love and concern displayed here. This text more than any other brings out this urgency of parental love. In addition, this passage illustrates how wisdom is an inheritance that may be passed from generation to generation, ***"for I too was a son to my father"*** (v.3a). Psalm 145:4a, ***"One generation shall praise thy works to another"***. Psalm 78:4, ***"We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done."*** Individually as parents and collectively as the universal church body we have this charge to teach the next generation the profound truths of Old and New Testament Scripture, but most importantly that we share the Good News that Jesus died for our sins to save us. (Consider reading John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Titus 3:5, Eph. 2:8-9, Heb. 2:14-15, 1 Pet. 2:24, Col. 1:13)

In v.2 the parents vital charge to the minor, is to ***"not forsake my teaching"***. Why? Because it is ***"sound learning"***. The parent gives sound instruction (KJV doctrine) and the child must not abandon or reject it. There is definitely a percentage of believers that take the wrong path early in life, but please be inspired by God's Word in Proverbs 22:6 which reads, ***"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."*** Maybe this describes someone you know or may even describe yourself. Be judgment day honest... does this describe your life? Have you walked away from God & forsaken earlier instruction?

➡ ***It's never too late this side of glory to return to the narrow path!*** (Matthew 7:13-14) One of my all time favorite O.T. passage is Lamentations 3:22-23 which reads, ***"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."*** ***Today is a new day!***

3. Wisdom is Personified as a Women – The short discourse in praise of wisdom (vs. 5-9) maintains the personification of wisdom as a lady who rewards those who embrace her. We should not just accept wisdom but love wisdom, for wisdom will keep us from evil, and evil from us. Wisdom was to be pursued (three times Solomon said ***"get"***; Prov. 4:5 [twice], 7) and valued because she protects (cf. 2:7-8, 11; 3:21-23) and guards. Solomon son of David (1:1) recorded these words that were spoken to him in his boyhood by his parents David and Bathsheba. He was then their only child though later he had three brothers (1 Chron. 3:5). By quoting these words (4:4b-9) from his father David, Solomon was passing the instruction on to his sons. The three generations involved here illustrate Deut. 6:2, ***"so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God."*** David had urged young Solomon to obey his words wholeheartedly (3:5) so that he would live; ***"for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity"*** (3:2). ***This is true in an individual life and true as a nation!***

➡ Be like Solomon who asked for wisdom to lead the people (1 Kings 3:9).

4. Pursue Wisdom at All Cost (v.7) – Job said it this way, ***"The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding."*** There is a very practical reason to give all we have for wisdom and that pivots on obedience to Almighty God. As a political leader may you fear the Lord and pursue wisdom with all your strength for the sake of Missouri. James 1:5, ***"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."***