

## LXXVII. ALL CHRISTIANS MUST SEEK WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, AND FAITH: 1 Corinthians 12:8-9a

**INTRODUCTION/CON(TEXT).** Brothers and sisters in Christ, friends, visitors:

In 1 Corinthians 12:8-9 we learn that *Some Christians are given the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith.* **1 Corinthians 12:8-9a** "8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit. . ."

I) SOME CHRISTIANS ARE GIVEN THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF **WISDOM** (1 Corinthians 12:8a). **The spiritual gift of wisdom looks like someone who can say "Therefore," and what comes after is faithful application of God's Word to a present circumstance.** **ILLUSTRATION:** The spiritual gift of wisdom looks like someone being supernaturally gifted by God to see the entire chess board, rather than just a pawn or a rook or a knight. They see the whole board and can help make decisions that will most help win the game, if the game is to glorify and enjoy God. **BOYS AND GIRLS. Q2. What does it do? A.** *Guides.* The spiritual gift of wisdom is used to guide believers in how to best glorify God in the many duties and circumstances we have in this life. **Q3. What effect does it have in building up the body of Christ? A.** *Helps other believers love God with their will.*

II. SOME CHRISTIANS ARE GIVEN THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF **KNOWLEDGE** (1 Corinthians 12:8b). **The spiritual gift of knowledge looks like someone who is able to read or listen to things and both comprehend what they are reading or hearing and commit them to memory.** **ILLUSTRATION:** The spiritual gift of knowledge looks like someone who has been supernaturally gifted by God with either a fast processor or a massive hard drive, sometimes both. **BOYS AND GIRLS. Q2. What does it do? A.** *Equips other believers to think rightly about, God's essence and attributes, God's promises, God's commands, and God's world.* This includes theology, but not only theology. Also science or history or philosophy or economics or politics or technology or physical health or any other thing that exists to be used for God's glory. **Q3. What effect does it have in building up the body of Christ? A.** *Helps other believers love God with their mind.*

III. SOME CHRISTIANS ARE GIVEN THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF **FAITH** (1 Corinthians 12:9a). **HENRY:** "A faith in the divine power and promise, whereby they were enabled to trust God in any emergency, and go on in the way of their duty, and own and profess the truths of Christ, whatever was the difficulty or danger." — **Henry, Matthew. Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (best navigation) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.** **ILLUSTRATION:** The spiritual gift of faith looks like someone walking through the Red Sea with their head up and shoulders back. Imagine someone confidently trusting the Lord to hold the walls of water, and get you safely to the other side, even destroying Pharaoh's army who is savagely chasing you down to return you to your former slavery. **Q2. What does it**

do? **A.** Encourages. **Q3.** What effect does it have in building up the body of Christ? **A.** Helps other believers love God with their affections.

So, there it is: Some Christians are given the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith.

And all spiritual gifts are given by God the Holy Spirit to individual Christians for the benefits of other Christians! So if you have the Spiritual gift of Wisdom, Knowledge, or Faith, use them to build up the body of Christ!

Now,

**You may not have the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith but that does not mean you need to be foolish, ignorant, or unbelieving.**

In fact,

**DOCTRINE.** Though not every Christian has the spiritual gift of wisdom, knowledge, and faith, all Christians must seek after wisdom, knowledge, and faith.

**OUTLINE.** There are three main points I wish to make for your benefit and God's glory, and the first is...

## **I) YOU MAY NOT HAVE THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF WISDOM, BUT YOU MUST SEEK AFTER WISDOM NONETHELESS (Selected Scriptures).**

### **BOYS AND GIRLS**

**WISDOM:** How to live righteousness for God's glory in varying or even complicated circumstances.

The opposite of wisdom is foolishness.

### **I) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).**

– **Proverbs 9:10** "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."  
You need to be a Christian.

### **II) Wisdom requires humility (Proverbs 11:2).**

– **Proverbs 11:2** "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom."

### **III) Wisdom is more valuable than jewels, gold, and pearls (Proverbs**

8:11; Proverbs 16:16; Job 28:18).

- **Proverbs 8:11** "Wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her."
- **Proverbs 16:16** "How much better to get wisdom than gold!"
- **Job 28:18** "No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal; the price of wisdom is above pearls."

#### **IV) Christians should pursue all lawful means of getting wisdom**

(Proverbs 4:5; Proverbs 23:23).

- **Proverbs 4:5** "Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth."
- **Proverbs 23:23** "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding."

#### **V) Wisdom is pleasurable to Christians** (Proverbs 10:23).

- **Proverbs 10:23** "Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool, but wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding."

#### **VI) Those who walk in wisdom will be delivered from greater troubles** (Proverbs 28:26).

- **Proverbs 28:26** "Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered."

#### **VII) Loving wisdom honors your father** (Proverbs 29:3).

- **Proverbs 29:3** "He who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth."

#### **VIII) Christians should ask for wisdom** (James 1:5).

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

#### **IX) Ultimately seeking after wisdom is seeking after Christ** (Proverbs 8:35).

- **Proverbs 8:35** "For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord,"

*True wisdom cannot be divorced from Christ and Christ cannot be found without resulting in wisdom.*

## **II) YOU MAY NOT HAVE THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF**

# KNOWLEDGE, BUT YOU MUST SEEK AFTER KNOWLEDGE NONETHELESS (Selected Scriptures).

## BOYS AND GIRLS

### KNOWLEDGE:

- I) God's Essence and Attributes (Theology Proper, Christology, Pneumatology).
- II) God's Promises (the gospel).
- III) God's Commands (the moral law).
- IV) God's works of Creation (not only creator but designer).
- V) God's works of Providence (He upholds the universe by the word of His power).

*Creation and Providence would include all knowledge in God's world—science, history, philosophy, economics, physical health, farming, political theory, or any other thing that exists to be used for God's glory and our good.*

- VI) God's works of Restoration (ecclesiology, discipleship, missions, evangelism, eschatology, etc.).

The opposite of knowledge is ignorance.

### I) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge (1:7).

- **Proverbs 1:7** "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"

### II) Scoffers and fools hate knowledge (Proverbs 1:22).

- **Proverbs 1:22** "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?"

### III) Knowledge is to be preferred before silver and gold (Proverbs 8:10, 20:15).

- **Proverbs 8:10** "Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold,"
  - **Proverbs 20:15** "There is gold and abundance of costly stones, but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel."

### IV) Knowledge will deliver you from greater troubles (Proverbs 11:9).

- **Proverbs 11:9** "By knowledge the righteous are delivered."

### V) The more knowledge you get, the easier it is to get more (Proverbs 15:14, 18:15).

- **Proverbs 15:14** "The heart of him who has understanding seeks

knowledge, but the mouths of fools feed on folly."

- **Proverbs 18:15** "An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge."

#### **VI) You need knowledge or your emotions will control you in a detrimental way (Proverbs 19:2).**

- **Proverbs 19:2** "Desire without knowledge is not good, and whoever makes haste with his feet misses his way."

#### **VII) You need to hear constant instruction in order to not stray away from knowledge (Proverbs 19:27).**

- **Proverbs 19:27** "Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge."

#### **VIII) You need to both understand and apply the knowledge you receive (Proverbs 23:12).**

- **Proverbs 23:12** "Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge."

#### **IX) Knowledge comes from the mouth of the LORD (Proverbs 2:6).**

- **Proverbs 2:6** "For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."
  - This includes both General and Special revelation. The world He created by speaking and all Scriptures are breathed out by God. All knowledge is Christ's knowledge, all truth is Christ's truth; all truth both generally and specially revealed proceeds from His mouth.

### **III) YOU MAY NOT HAVE THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF FAITH, BUT YOU MUST SEEK AFTER FAITH NONETHELESS (Selected Scriptures).**

#### **BOYS AND GIRLS**

**FAITH:** Trust in the power, promises, and providence of God.

The opposite of faith is faithlessness.

#### **I) Your faith can increase (2 Corinthians 10:15).**

- **2 Corinthians 10:15** "Our hope is that as your faith increases..."
- **2 Thessalonians 1:3** "We ought always to give thanks to God for

you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing."

## **II) Christians must flee youthful passions and pursue faith (2 Timothy 2:22).**

- **2 Timothy 2:22** "So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."

## **III) You should want an increase of faith so that you can accomplish great things for the Lord's glory (Hebrews 11:29-35).**

- **Hebrews 11:29-35** "29 By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. 31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.  
32 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life."

## **IV) Faith is how you resist the schemes of the devil, who prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:9).**

- **1 Peter 5:9** "Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world."

## **V) Faith overcomes the world (1 John 5:4).**

- **1 John 5:4** "For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith."

## **VI) You should ask the Lord to increase your faith (Luke 17:15).**

- **Luke 17:15** 'The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!'"

## CONCLUSION.

**Let me remind you that All wisdom, knowledge, and faith must have Christ Jesus as its focus and center.**

- I) There is no true wisdom without Christ, who is wisdom personified!
- II) There is no true knowledge without Christ, who is the Creator, Sustainer, and Savior of the world!
- III) There is no saving faith without Christ, who is the object, author, and finisher of our faith!

**Colossians 2:3** "In [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

**NOW TURN WITH ME TO 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, and let's finish this sermon there:**

### **1 Corinthians 12:18-31**

"18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

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## PURITAN QUOTES

### Thomas Watson (c. 1620–1686)

- THOMAS WATSON: "Wisdom is the power to put our time and our knowledge to the proper use." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "Wisdom and knowledge are happy instruments of salvation when they are guided by truth." — Watson, Thomas. *All Things for Good*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1986.
- THOMAS WATSON: "The Word written is not only a rule of knowledge, but a rule of obedience; it is not only to mend our sight, but to mend our pace." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "A man may as well fill a bag with wisdom, as the soul with the world." — Watson, Thomas. *Puritan Gems; or, Wise and Holy Sayings of the Rev. Thomas Watson*. London: J. Snow, 1850.

### Richard Sibbes (1577–1635)

- RICHARD SIBBES: "It is not knowledge that will bring to heaven, for the devil has that, but it is knowledge sanctified, seizing upon the affections." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973.
- RICHARD SIBBES: "It is meditation that makes you master of the truths that you read or hear; otherwise, the wisdom remains in the book." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Bruised Reed*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998.
- RICHARD SIBBES: "Knowledge and affection mutually help one another; it is good to keep up our affections of love and delight by all sweet inducements and divine encouragements." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Bruised Reed*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998.

### John Owen (1616–1683)

- JOHN OWEN: "Spiritual wisdom consists in finding out the subtleties, policies, and depths of any indwelling sin... to trace this serpent in all its turnings and windings; be able to say, at its most secret actings, 'This is your old way and course; I know what you aim at.'" — Owen, John. *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*. Edited by Kelly M. Kapic and Justin Taylor. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006.
- JOHN OWEN: "All the treasures of divine wisdom are laid up in Christ, and laid out about him, as to be manifested unto faith in and by the gospel." —

Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.

- JOHN OWEN: "That wisdom which cannot teach me that God is love, shall ever pass for folly." — Owen, John. *Spiritual-Mindedness*. 1681. (Quoted in standard Puritan collections.)

### **Matthew Henry (1662–1714)**

- MATTHEW HENRY: "It is better to get wisdom than gold. Gold is another's, wisdom is our own; gold is for the body and time, wisdom for the soul and eternity." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Vol. 3 (Proverbs). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "The treasures of wisdom are hidden not from us, but for us, in Christ." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. On Proverbs 2:1–6. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "To a godly man, God gives not only wisdom and knowledge—but joy." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. On Proverbs 3:13–18. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "Knowledge is vain and fruitless which is not reduced to practice." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. On Proverbs 1–9 themes. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "Divine revelation is wisdom; all its dictates, all its laws, are wise as wisdom itself." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Introduction to Proverbs. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "If we are wiser than others, this should be evidenced by the goodness of our conversation, not by the roughness or vanity of it." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. On James 3:13 (cross-referenced in Proverbs contexts). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.

### **Thomas Watson (c. 1620–1686)**

- THOMAS WATSON: "Knowledge is the eye that must direct the foot of obedience." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "Knowledge without repentance will be but a torch to light men to hell." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "The Word written is not only a rule of knowledge, but a rule of obedience; it is not only to mend our sight, but to mend our pace." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "We may have excellent notions in divinity, but the

Holy Ghost must enable us to know them after a spiritual manner; a man may see the figures upon a dial, but he cannot tell how the day goes unless the sun shine." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.

- THOMAS WATSON: "True knowledge brings a man out of love with himself; the more he knows, the more he blushes at his own ignorance." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "The knowledge of a godly man is growing. True knowledge is like the light of the morning, which increases in the horizon till it comes to the full meridian." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.

### **John Owen (1616–1683)**

- JOHN OWEN: "All the treasures of divine wisdom are laid up in Christ, and laid out about him, as to be manifested unto faith in and by the gospel." — Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.

### **Other Puritans**

- EDWARD CORBET, WILLIAM PEMBLE, WILLIAM GOUGE: "The natural man, even when that man is endowed with all the excellencies of which the soul is naturally capable, cannot perceive the things of the spirit of God. For he has neither wisdom to make a right choice of the best end, nor understanding to find out the true means." — Corbet, Edward, et al. *The Puritans on the Providence of God*. (Collective Puritan statement on natural knowledge.)
- THOMAS BROOKS: "There is no fear of knowing too much of the Bible, but there is a great amount of fear that goes into practicing too little." — Brooks, Thomas. *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1984.
- JEREMIAH BURROUGHS: "It is not enough to receive the truth that we might be saved, but we must receive the love of the truth if ever we would be saved." — Burroughs, Jeremiah. *Gospel Worship*. (1648 edition, in Puritan collections.)

### **Thomas Watson (c. 1620–1686)**

- THOMAS WATSON: "A weak faith can lay hold on a strong Christ." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.

- THOMAS WATSON: "Faith is seated in the understanding, as well as the will. It has an eye to see Christ, as well as a wing to fly to Christ." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "Get faith; all our impatience proceeds from unbelief. Faith is the breeder of patience." — Watson, Thomas. *The Godly Man's Picture*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998.
- THOMAS WATSON: "True faith will trust God's heart when it cannot trace His hand." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- THOMAS WATSON: "Faith sucks the honey of contentment out of the hive of the promises." — Watson, Thomas. *The Art of Divine Contentment*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2001.

### **Richard Sibbes (1577–1635)**

- RICHARD SIBBES: "Faith makes us kings, because thereby we marry the King of heaven. The church is the queen of heaven, and Christ is the king of heaven." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973.
- RICHARD SIBBES: "What a support to our faith is this, that God the Father, the party offended by our sins, is so well pleased with the work of redemption!" — Sibbes, Richard. *The Bruised Reed*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998.
- RICHARD SIBBES: "As the strongest faith may be shaken, so the weakest, where truth is, is so far rooted that it will prevail. Weakness with watchfulness will stand, when strength with too much confidence fails." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Vol. 5. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973.
- RICHARD SIBBES: "Christ chiefly manifests Himself in times of affliction, because then the soul clings most closely by faith to Christ." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Vol. 4. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973.

### **John Owen (1616–1683)**

- JOHN OWEN: "Set faith at work on Christ for the killing of thy sin. His blood is the great sovereign remedy for sin-sick souls. Live in this, and thou wilt die a conqueror." — Owen, John. *The Mortification of Sin*. In *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*. Edited by Kelly M. Kapic and Justin Taylor. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006.
- JOHN OWEN: "Faith will never be able to live upon the last expression 'gave Himself for me' unless it can rise up to the first, 'who loved me.'" —

Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 2. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.

- JOHN OWEN: "No repentance is acceptable with God but what is built on the faith of forgiveness." — Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 7. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.
- JOHN OWEN: "Faith keeps the soul at a holy distance from these infinite depths of the divine wisdom, where it profits more by reverence and holy fear than any can do by their utmost attempt to draw nigh unto that inaccessible light wherein these glories of the divine nature do dwell." — Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.

### **Matthew Henry (1662–1714)**

- MATTHEW HENRY: "An active faith can give thanks for a promise, though it be not as yet performed; knowing that God's bonds are as good as ready money." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "We may be in the way of our duty, and yet may meet with troubles, which Providence brings us into for the trial of our faith, and that God may be glorified in our relief." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- MATTHEW HENRY: "Faith in the promise quickens prayer; and prayer is the appointed means for the fulfilling of the promise." — Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. On James 5. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.

### **Thomas Brooks (1608–1680)**

- THOMAS BROOKS: "Till men have faith in Christ, their best services are but glorious sins." — Brooks, Thomas. *Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Brooks*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1997.
- THOMAS BROOKS: "Sin always dies most where faith lives most. The most believing soul is the most mortified soul." — Brooks, Thomas. *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1984.
- THOMAS BROOKS: "Faith has an influence upon all other graces." — Brooks, Thomas. *Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Brooks*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1997.
- THOMAS BROOKS: "Faith cannot be lost, but assurance may; therefore, assurance is not faith." — Brooks, Thomas. *Heaven on Earth*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2000.

## **Jeremiah Burroughs (1599–1646)**

- JEREMIAH BURROUGHS: "Faith has this excellency, that it is able to bring life out of death, light out of darkness. It has a kind of creating virtue." — Burroughs, Jeremiah. *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964.
  - JEREMIAH BURROUGHS: "I am discontented because I have not these things which God never yet promised me, and therefore I sin much against the Gospel, and against the grace of faith." — Burroughs, Jeremiah. *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964.
  - JEREMIAH BURROUGHS: "A Christian finds satisfaction in every circumstance by getting strength from another, by going out of himself to Jesus Christ, by his faith acting upon Christ and bringing the strength of Jesus Christ into his own soul." — Burroughs, Jeremiah. *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964.
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## **STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

### **General/Introductory Questions (on the Text and Sermon Overview)**

1. Read **1 Corinthians 12:1-11** (especially verses 8-9). What does Paul emphasize about the source, purpose, and distribution of spiritual gifts? How does the sermon define the key difference between "ordinary" wisdom/knowledge/faith (which all believers have or should pursue) and these as special spiritual gifts?
2. The sermon stresses that spiritual gifts are "for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7). How does this challenge selfish views of gifts? Share an example of how a gift might edify the church rather than just benefit the individual.
3. The preacher warns against concluding "I do not have these gifts, so I can be foolish/ignorant/unbelieving." What "bad applications" does he fear people might make? Why is the central doctrine—"Though not every Christian has the spiritual gift of wisdom, knowledge, and faith, all Christians must seek after wisdom, knowledge, and faith"—so important?

### **Questions on Wisdom (Main Point 1)**

4. According to the sermon, what is the biblical definition of (true spiritual/Christian) wisdom? How does it differ from "worldly wisdom" (cf. 1 Cor.

1)?

5. The sermon repeatedly cites **Proverbs 9:10** ("The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"). What is "filial fear" (fatherly respect/reverence), and why is it essential for true wisdom? How does the sermon connect this to being a Christian first (trusting Christ for salvation)?
6. Discuss the sub-points on wisdom: It requires humility (Prov. 11:2; quote from J.I. Packer), is more valuable than gold/jewels (Prov. 8:11; 16:16; Job 28:18), should be pursued by all lawful means (Prov. 4:5; 23:23), is pleasurable (Prov. 10:23), delivers from greater troubles (Prov. 28:26), honors parents/God the Father (Prov. 29:3), should be asked for in prayer (James 1:5), and ultimately is found in Christ (Prov. 8 personified). Which of these points most convicts or encourages you, and why?
7. The sermon asks: "What do you need to change today to seek after wisdom?" Reflect personally: Have you made peace with being "foolish" in some area? How can you "buy" or pursue wisdom lawfully this week?

### **Questions on Knowledge (Main Point 2)**

8. How does the sermon distinguish the spiritual gift of knowledge from common misconceptions (e.g., "secret revelation" like Gnosticism)? What does the gift actually look like (comprehending, remembering, and sharing truth for others' edification)?
9. The sermon lists broad areas of knowledge all Christians should pursue: theology proper (God's attributes/Trinity), Christology, pneumatology, God's promises/commands/works in creation/providence/restoration (including ecclesiology, discipleship, missions, evangelism, eschatology). Why is ignorance in these areas unacceptable? How does the sermon critique "panmillennialism" jokes or saying "I don't know—ask my pastor"?
10. Key scriptural points on knowledge: The fear of the Lord is its beginning (Prov. 1:7; unbelievers can't truly "account" for truth); scoffers/fools hate it (Prov. 1:22); it is preferable to gold (Prov. 8:10; 20:15); delivers from troubles (Prov. 11:9); accumulates more easily over time (Prov. 15:14; 18:15); prevents emotions/desires from controlling us (Prov. 19:2); requires constant instruction (Prov. 19:27); must be applied (Prov. 23:12); and comes from God's mouth (general + special revelation, Prov. 2:6). Which point challenges modern Christian attitudes toward learning most?
11. Application: How can you combat being "at peace with ignorance" in one area (e.g., theology, church history, science under providence)? What practical step will you take to grow in knowledge for God's glory and others' good?

## Questions on Faith (Closing Section)

12. The sermon distinguishes the spiritual gift of faith (unshakable trust in God's promises/power/providence to encourage others in trials) from saving faith (which all Christians have). How does this gift function to stabilize "teetering" believers?
13. Why must all Christians seek growth in (non-saving, experiential) faith, even without the special gift? What verses does the sermon cite showing faith can increase (2 Cor. 10:15; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 11:29-35; 1 Pet. 5:9; 1 John 5:4; Luke 17:5)?
14. The sermon warns against contentment with doubting, instability, or "freaking out" in suffering. How does pursuing stronger faith help resist the devil, overcome the world, and accomplish great things for God's glory?
15. Personal reflection: On a scale of 1-10, how strong is your day-to-day faith in God's promises/providence? What would "pursuing faith" look like for you (e.g., meditating on Heb. 11, praying Luke 17:5)?

## Application and Wrap-Up Questions (for the Whole Sermon)

16. How does the sermon's emphasis on pursuing wisdom/knowledge/faith (even without the gifts) balance **1 Corinthians 12** (diversity of gifts) with the universal call to grow in Christlikeness?
17. In what ways can these pursuits better equip you to love and edify fellow believers (the sermon's closing prayer focus)?
18. Group sharing: Share one insight from the sermon that challenged you and one practical change you're committing to (e.g., daily Proverbs reading, asking God for wisdom, studying a doctrine).
19. Pray together using the sermon's closing prayer: Ask God to increase your knowledge, wisdom, and faith for His glory and the good of others.

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## SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Brothers and sisters in Christ, friends and visitors, as we come again to first Corinthians chapter 12, verses 8 and 9, let me remind you that what we learn in these verses is that some Christians are given the spiritual gift of wisdom, some are given the spiritual gift of knowledge, and some are given the spiritual gift of faith. Now these spiritual gifts are above and beyond the ordinary wisdom that someone may have, the ordinary knowledge someone may have, and the ordinary faith. It is above and beyond a saving faith, receiving and resting in Christ alone for

salvation. These are individual spiritual gifts that God, the Holy Spirit, gives to Christians according to his providence. He gives some, he does not give some, but he has given each Christian at least one gift. And here are three of them. One of which you might have or you might have multiples. Look again at verses 8 and the first part of verse 9. You can see that he is not just talking about general wisdom, knowledge, and faith, but a spiritual gift of wisdom, of knowledge, and of faith. He says, 'For to one is given through the spirit the utterance or the word of wisdom, to another the utterance or the word of knowledge according to the same spirit, and to another faith by the same spirit.' So, some Christians are given the spiritual gift of wisdom. And it looks like they are able to say God's word says this, therefore. And then what follows after the therefore is a faithful application of God's word to a present circumstance in order to make the right decision for God's glory and for other people's good. And some people are given the spiritual gift of knowledge. And keep in mind that all spiritual gifts are not for the benefit of the person who has the gift. But it is for, as he had just said previously in 1 Corinthians 12, for the common good. So if you have the spiritual gift of wisdom, it is not just for your benefit. It is actually for the benefit of others. So that is why he calls it the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge because he is talking about you being able to actually impart wisdom to others and help them or to impart knowledge to others and help them. So the second one is knowledge. And this really simply I was talking to one of our members last Sunday after we went through this in detail and they said it was helpful and enlightening because they had heard people say the spiritual gift of the word of knowledge is often taught or assumed that it means all of a sudden God has given me some kind of revelation that I am going to come and give to you. It is like I have got a word of knowledge for you that God has just given to me. And it is more like Gnosticism, which means there is some secret knowledge out there that only a few can attain to, and I have got this secret knowledge that I am going to clue you in on. That is not what Paul means by the spiritual gift of the word of knowledge. He says word because the whole point is to edify others, to help other people. But the spiritual gift of knowledge looks like someone who can adequately comprehend what they are reading or what they are hearing. And they are able to commit it to memory so that they are able to accumulate knowledge, truth through reading or hearing. And then they are able to store that so that they can communicate it to other people when they need to understand something of knowledge, when they need to understand something of the truth. You have met people like this that seem to be very good at comprehending what they read or disseminating information. They are able to store it even in their memory. They have got a great memory. And so, you go to certain people, you know this by your experience. There are certain people you will go to and you are like, I am not really going to ask them because they are probably not going to remember. But there are other people you will go to and be like, he is going to remember. she is going to remember. They are able to comprehend, understand, and then store it so that they can then speak that truth when it would help and edify other people. That is a spiritual gift of knowledge. It is a

supernatural gift by God, the Holy Spirit, to be able to comprehend through reading or listening and then be able to commit it to memory so that it can be used at the proper time to edify other believers.

Then he says thirdly, the spiritual gift of faith and this is not saving faith. This is not the faith by which every Christian just trusts in Christ and receives him alone for salvation. This is above and beyond that. This is a supernatural gift of faith given by God the Holy Spirit so that that individual Christian just is unshakable, stable. They trust in the promises, the power, the providence of God and they are able then to speak that to other people and to encourage other people especially when they are teetering, when they are wobbling. The person with the spiritual gift of faith has that in order to encourage other believers in the promises in the power of God in the providence of God and encourage them to keep trusting the Lord and remain stable. So there it is. Some Christians are given the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge and faith. And all spiritual gifts are given by God the Holy Spirit to individual Christians but for the benefit of multiple Christians. So if you have the spiritual gift of wisdom, knowledge, or faith, make sure that you use them for the glory of God and the good of your fellow Christians. That is why you have got the gift. Now, we are going to spend an entire week today looking beyond just that because what I fear may happen to many is you see these spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith. And you may conclude, and you may be right, I do not have those spiritual gifts. I do not have the spiritual gift of wisdom. Maybe I do not have the spiritual gift of knowledge. Maybe I do not have the spiritual gift of faith. You may be right. You may be wrong. But what you need to know is you may not have the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith. You may not. You may. But that does not mean even if you do not have them, that does not mean you need to be foolish, ignorant, or unbelieving. Just because you might conclude I do not have the spiritual gift of wisdom does not therefore then mean well I am just probably just going to be a fool. I am going to be foolish. You may conclude I do not have the spiritual gift of knowledge and conclude well I am just kind of going to go through life being ignorant. Oh well I do not have the spiritual gift of knowledge. You may conclude, well, when trials, when temptations come upon me, I am just going to always fall. I am always going to crumble. When I am suffering, I am always going to doubt because I do not have the spiritual gift of faith. If I had the spiritual gift of faith, I would not be doing this. I am wanting to preach this entire sermon to you to save you from thinking those bad thoughts and from acting unfaithfully. So, you may not have those gifts, but that does not mean you need to be foolish, ignorant, or unbelieving. In fact, here is the doctrine for today. And this is really just an application springing off of what we learn in verses 8 and 9. Lest we conclude, I do not have these gifts, so make bad uh bad applications of it. Here is the doctrine for today. Though not every Christian has the spiritual gift of wisdom, knowledge and faith, all Christians must seek after wisdom, knowledge and faith. Though not every Christian has the spiritual gift of wisdom or knowledge or faith, all Christians must seek after wisdom, knowledge and faith. So that is our

duty. That is my duty. even if I do not have the spiritual gift of knowledge. That can never be a reason to say, 'Well, I am going to be ignorant.' And that cannot be an excuse that I think many Christians use that—"I am okay with being ignorant." I do not know a whole lot. And it is almost like people make peace with that. It is like, I do not know a whole lot about God's word and God's uh essence and attributes, his commands, his promises, his world. I do not know a whole lot because you may have heard the sermon last Lord's day and think oh that is why I do not know very much because I do not have the spiritual gift of knowledge like nope cannot do that you must seek after knowledge and wisdom and faith so there are three main points that I wish to draw your attention to and there are many sub-points with each and the first is this you may not have the spiritual gift of wisdom but you must seek after wisdom nonetheless. Everybody look at me. You must labor to be wise. You, every one of you, let us just assume for this entire sermon, I want you to assume you do not have any of these gifts. Some of you do. I know you do. You have wisdom or knowledge or faith. I know some of you personally and individually that I would go absolutely this person has the spiritual gift of wisdom or knowledge or faith. But let us just assume that every one of us in this room does not have any of these three that we examined last week and that are before us in verses 8 and nine. Let us all start there. Assume you do not have it. You still must seek after wisdom nonetheless. Now again, wisdom is how to live righteously for God's glory in varying circumstances or even in really complicated circumstances. That is wisdom. Knowing the right decision, what is right, what is good, what will most lead to God's glory and other people's good. Even in really complicated circumstances, you need to be able to think rightly even in those complicated circumstances. The opposite of wisdom, to put it clearly, the opposite of wisdom is foolishness. The opposite of wisdom is foolishness. And you can go through read through the entire book of Proverbs and see how many times the fool is brought up. And every time the fool is brought up, well, the opposite of the fool is the wise. And you and I have to seek after wisdom. But look or listen to these varying points from various scriptures in God's word about wisdom. I want you to be properly instructed in all of your duty to seek after wisdom and be wise. First of all, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Proverbs 9:10 says literally that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And the fear of the Lord, hear me, this is not a fear that the Lord is going to kill you. It is not a fear that the Lord is going to judge you. Though if you are outside of Christ, that is a proper fear you should have. But the fear of the Lord being the beginning of wisdom is the what is called a filial fear. Meaning it is the word that comes from like a fatherly a fear, a respect, a reverence, an honor of your father. So you have to know the fear of the Lord is I know who I am. I respect, I revere, I honor, I submit to God as my father just like a good child does to his good father. So this is the kind of fear it is knowing your proper place. I am created. I am a son of God through faith in Jesus Christ. God is my father and I respect him. I honor him. I know who he is. I know he makes the rules. I know he commands. He is the one who gives the promises. He is the one who saves me

from my sin. A submission to the Lord as king and savior. That is what the fear of the Lord is. If you do not fear the Lord, you will never have wisdom. If you do not fear the Lord, you will never have wisdom. Because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. If you do not trust in and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, you do not have any wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of it. This means if you are actually going to have wisdom simply, you need to be a Christian. You need to be trusting in Jesus alone for your salvation. That he lived without sin. He died in our place for our sins. and he arose from the dead as savior and king of all who will trust in him through faith. You have got to be a Christian. You cannot properly fear the Lord without being a Christian. You need to have your sins forgiven if you are going to have true wisdom. and wisdom. Remember the the reason the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom is because true wisdom is thinking and acting rightly in varying circumstances in such a way that will lead to glorifying God and doing good for other people. Does an unbeliever who you may even look out at an unbeliever and say they seem they are very wise. They have wisdom. They are not a Christian, but they have wisdom. Like, have you ever done that? Have you thought that? Have you heard other people say that? How could you possibly think that was the case? True wisdom is making the decisions necessary derived from God's word applied to real life in such a way that will most glorify God. An unbeliever does not want to glorify God. An unbeliever has zero true wisdom. They have what God says in 1 Corinthians 1 is what we would classify as worldly wisdom. The wisdom of this world, the wisdom of this age. But they do not have true wisdom. Because if you have true wisdom, it begins with a proper relationship to the Lord, being saved through the Lord Jesus Christ. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Boys and girls, look up here at me. Children, find my eyes. Look at me. You need to have wisdom. You need to seek after wisdom. You need to gain wisdom. Wisdom means knowing how to act in any circumstance in your life. whatever is going on, you know the right thing to do that will most glorify God and do good to other people. That is wisdom. You know what to do or say or not say or not do in a bunch of different circumstances in your life. You know what to do so that God will be glorified and actually good things will happen to the other people around you. You need that wisdom. And you cannot have that wisdom unless you are trusting in and submitting to Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. You need to have your sins forgiven. Boys and girls, you do not just need wisdom. Well, you cannot get wisdom unless you are a Christian. You need to trust in and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ and then labor to get wisdom so that you can glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in this life that he has purchased by his own blood that he has given you by his grace. You need wisdom and to get wisdom you have got to be a Christian. So all of you, any of you unbelievers, the first summons is not get wisdom, it is fear the Lord. Turn from your sin to the Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to him. Be delivered from your fear that God is going to crush you for your sin as you deserve. Be forgiven of your sins. Counted righteous in Christ Jesus through faith alone in him alone. And then you can have that filial or fatherly fear and respect and honor of the Lord. And then you are on the path to wisdom. what

will most glorify God? That is that is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Second, in just properly understanding wisdom and that you have to seek after wisdom as a Christian, you need to know that wisdom requires humility. Wisdom requires humility. If you are not humble, you are not wise. If you do not know that I am on my own simple and sinful and start there, you will never be wise. You will be wise in your own eyes, but not wise according to God's standard. Wisdom requires humility. Humility knows who God is, creator, sustainer, savior, and who I am. created, rebellious, though redeemed by Christ's blood. That is all I am. Still have I still have indwelling sin. So I cannot trust myself too much. In fact, I love bringing this up as often as I can remember it that Ji Packer, one of the greatest theologians of the 20th century, said, 'You can never distrust yourself too much. You can never distrust yourself too much. Trust the Lord. Do not trust your own understanding, your own wisdom, your worldly wisdom. So wisdom requires humility. Listen to Proverbs 11:2. Proverbs 11:2. When pride comes, then comes disgrace. When pride comes, then comes disgrace. But with the humble is wisdom. With the humble is wisdom. The humble always says in responding to any circumstance, the humble says, 'What does God say? I need to watch out for my own bad motives because of indwelling sin. What does God say? get my flesh totally out of it and realize that my flesh can easily be in these decisions like my sinful flesh can easily influence this. Got to get that out. What does God say? Because he says this. Therefore, this is the right response.' That takes humility. With the humble is wisdom. Wisdom requires humility. Thirdly, you need to know that wisdom is more valuable than jewels, gold, and pearls.

Wisdom is more valuable than jewels, gold, and pearls. This is how important it is to seek after wisdom. It is more why would wisdom be more valuable than all costly things in our world? Because knowing how to glorify and enjoy God in all the v varying complicated circumstances of our life, is that not the most important thing? Is not that what you want in your life? I want to know how I can best enjoy God and glorify God in the millions of different decisions that I have got to make. Well, yes, that is living a life that is solely focused with a single eye on glorifying the Lord. Of course, that is more valuable than jewels, gold, and pearls. Listen to Proverbs 8:11. Wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her. Wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her. Proverbs 16:16, 'How much better to get wisdom than gold?' How much better to get wisdom than gold? And then listen to Job 28:18. No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal. The price of wisdom is above pearls. The price of wisdom is above pearls. Wisdom is more valuable than jewels, gold and pearls. Fourthly, Christians should pursue all lawful means of getting wisdom. Christian, you should pursue every lawful means of gaining wisdom. By lawful means I mean that you cannot shirk one of your duties. You cannot throw your family to the side or quit your vocation in order to get wisdom. You have to use all lawful means to get wisdom. You do not neglect family worship in order. But the Proverbs said, 'I should buy wisdom and get wisdom.' You do not quit your job

because then I can read the Bible more and read books more to help me gain more wisdom. No, that is not a lawful means to get wisdom. You cannot obey one duty by disobeying other duties. So, you have to pursue all lawful means of getting wisdom. Listen to Proverbs 4:5. Get wisdom. That is pretty clear, is it not? Get wisdom. Get insight. Do not forget. And do not turn away from the words of my mouth. So there it is just simply Solomon says to his son and God speaking to him even to us today get wisdom. Proverbs 23:23 says buy truth and do not sell it. Buy wisdom instruction and understanding. In Proverbs 4 God says get wisdom. In Proverbs 23, God says, 'Buy wisdom.' Meaning, pay whatever you have got to pay. Sacrifice whatever you have got to sacrifice lawfully to get wisdom. Christians should pursue all lawful means of getting wisdom. And so, I just ask you to examine yourself. Have you fallen into the pit of well I I am not very wise and that is okay because I do not have the spiritual gift of wisdom or whatever other means like I do not know I am I do not know really what to do. I do not know how to think about stuff. I And have you fallen into that pit to where you just have made peace with frankly being foolish?

Well, God says, 'Get wisdom. Buy wisdom.' So, use all lawful means of getting wisdom, believers. You may not have the spiritual gift, but you have got the Proverbs. Fifthly, wisdom is pleasurable to Christians. Wisdom is pleasurable. You know this is true in your own experience. When you have gotten counsel from someone or something happens and you actually made a decision and then it turns out that was a wise decision. Is not that enjoyable? Is not that pleasurable? God was actually glorified. Thank you, Lord. I cannot believe I made the right decision there. God was glorified in this. And good was done to other people. Wisdom is pleasurable to Christians. Listen to Proverbs 10:23. Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool. Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool. But wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding. Wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding. Wisdom is pleasurable to Christians. And so maybe you maybe that is part of your problem if you are not wise according to the scriptures and according to how to live your life for God's glory. Maybe you just need to read Proverbs 10:23 and ask God to make wisdom pleasurable to you, desirous to you, so that you would seek after it by all lawful means, and your affections would be so that you would say, 'Wisdom really is more desirable or more valuable to me than jewels, than gold, than pearls.' Maybe it is a heart issue that you do not desire it after it after it because it is not pleasurable to you and you need God to change your desires to change your affections so that you would be able to agree with Proverbs 10:23. Wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding. Sixthly, concerning wisdom and our duty to seek after it, you need to know that those who walk in wisdom will be delivered from great troubles. Those who walk in wisdom will be delivered from great troubles. We could possibly say those who walk in wisdom will be delivered from greater troubles. Because if you are wise, you are not going to be delivered from all trials, from all suffering, from sickness. But the proverb says this, 'Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool.' Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool. But he

who walks in wisdom will be delivered, will be delivered, will be rescued, will be saved. It is not talking about salvation from sin, death, hell, and the wrath of God. But it is talking about salvation uh not capital S salvation, but lowercase s salvation delivered from greater troubles and trials and sufferings. You know, you know that by experience as well. those who do not live according to God's wisdom revealed in his word and labor to make right decisions. But those who are wise in their own eyes and make decisions based on even as this text says trusting in their own mind, their own reasoning, their life often is destroyed. But he who walks in wisdom will be delivered. Those who walk in wisdom will be delivered from greater troubles. You will not escape sickness, suffering, persecution. You are not going to escape any of that. But believers, if you walk according to wisdom, you will escape greater sufferings, greater trials, greater troubles. You cannot escape all of them by God's providence. But the proverb here is you will be delivered if you walk in wisdom. Many people's lives are absolute messes not because they are being faithful to Jesus and all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. Many Christians lives are messes because they do what is right in their own eyes and they do the opposite of what this proverb 28:26 says. They trust in their own mind. It means you trust in your own reasoning capabilities. I trust that I have thought this out. I have reasoned this out and this is what is right to do. And God says in Proverbs 28, well, you are a fool. So, the opposite of wisdom, what it looks like to truly be a fool is to trust in your own mind. And that is perhaps why J I Packer said, 'You can never distrust yourself too much.' Walking in wisdom looks like God says this. Let us apply it to this situation. And those who walk in wisdom will be delivered from greater troubles.

Seventh, concerning wisdom, when you love wisdom, you honor your father. When you love wisdom, you honor your father. Boys and girls, look up here at me. Do you want to live in such a way that your father and your mother would be proud of you and would be honored by the way that you live? Do you want to grow up and your parents be like, 'That is my son. That is my daughter.' You want that? You should want that. I am 39 years old and I still want that. I want my dad to be proud of me. I want my mom to be proud of me. I want to honor them. And that is what all of us should truly want. And this is what the proverb, God's word says. He who loves wisdom makes his father glad. He who loves wisdom makes his father glad.

So in applying this, adults, parents, you want to have children that honor you and that you are proud of. Well, you need to make sure that as you are training them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, that you are teaching them biblical wisdom and how not to trust in our own mind, but to trust in what God's word says and then apply it to life. You need to teach your children to seek after wisdom because those who love wisdom honor their father. That is what all of us should desire. and ultimately applying it more spiritually rather than physical family. Christians, I just ask all of you, do you want to live a life and we could speak simply that God the Father would be proud that you are his child? That Jesus would say,

'Look at what I have done in redeeming that person. They are one of mine.' Well, then love wisdom. Love wisdom. He who loves wisdom makes his father glad. Proverbs 29:3. Eighth. Christians should ask for wisdom. It is not just that we seek after it. And it is not just that we ask for it. Do not pit those against one another. It is like, well, I am asking God to give me wisdom, but you are doing that. That is great, but you should also be buying wisdom, getting wisdom, as the proverbs say. So, it is not either or, but it is both. You are seeking after it with everything within you, and at the same time, you are doing what James 1:5 tells you to do. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. If any of you lacks wisdom, ask God, and he will give it to you. Is not that a great promise? So, what excuses do you and I have to not be wise according to the scriptures? You cannot use the excuse, I do not have the spiritual gift of wisdom. Especially when God says, if you do not have wisdom, just ask and I will give it to you. So, Christians should ask for wisdom. And remember that ninthly, remember this truth. Ultimately, seeking after wisdom is seeking after Christ Jesus. Seeking after wisdom is seeking after Christ Jesus. Proverbs 8:35 is wisdom like capital Wisdom personified as the second person of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the embodiment of wisdom. He is wisdom. And at the end of Proverbs 8:35, it says, 'Whoever finds me,' meaning Christ, 'finds life.' Whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord. So ultimately, seeking after wisdom is seeking after the Lord Jesus Christ himself. True wisdom cannot be divorced from Christ and Christ cannot be found without resulting in wisdom. Whoever finds me, the personification of wisdom, wisdom incarnate, the Lord Jesus. Whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord. What do you need to change today in your life to seek after wisdom?

What do you need to change? Whatever you are thinking, I need to seek after wisdom. I need to get wisdom. I need to buy wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Understanding all of those things. Think what do I need? Do I need to change anything today to seek after, to buy, to get wisdom, to ask God to give me wisdom? Whatever the answer is, start today. Start today. Though you may not have the spiritual gift, you must seek after wisdom nonetheless. Now the second main point I want to draw your attention to is the same basic thing but replace wisdom with knowledge. You may not have the spiritual gift of knowledge but you must seek after knowledge nonetheless. You may not have the spiritual gift of knowledge but you must seek after knowledge nonetheless. Boys and girls look up here at me again. Wisdom is God's word says this. So this is how I should act in this situation in order to glorify him. Knowledge is really just this is what God says. Wisdom is taking knowledge and then applying it. But knowledge is just knowing what is true. So knowledge is knowing who God is and what he is like. Adults, you need to know God's essence and attributes. What he is like. This is the what we call in theological terms, you need to understand theology proper. Who God is, what he is like, his attributes, that he is a trinity. You need to know christology. That is a theological term for the doctrine of Christ. That he is truly

God and truly man. You need to know what is called pneumatology. Pneuma is the Greek word for spirit. So when we say pneumatology, we are talking about the doctrine of God, the Holy Spirit, who he is, how he works. Frankly, in our day, because in the last 120 or so years, the charismatic movement has so distorted a proper understanding of God, the Holy Spirit, in our day, you will have to unlearn a lot of things you have probably learned growing up where you have. You are probably going to have to unlearn a lot of pneumatology and learn rightly what God says concerning the Holy Spirit and how he works and how he gifts and what he does, what he does not do. But you need to understand this is knowledge. You need to understand theology proper Christology, pneumatology. You need to understand God's promises. That is the gospel is the promise. God's promise. You need to understand God's commands. The moral law summarized in the ten commandments. Summarized even more simply in love God and love neighbor. Love God, love neighbor. Then bigger is the ten commandments. And then bigger than that is all of the moral commands of God in all of scripture. You need to know what God commands. You need to know and have a knowledge of God's works of and in creation. how God created the world. Not only that he did create the world, but even a specific eye and interest into his intricate design of the world, how he designed the world. You need to know God's works of providence, how he upholds the universe by the word of his power. and properly understanding God's creation and his providence. That is kind of like the banner over all of the sciences. So creation and providence would include all knowledge of God's world, all truth that is out there, all sciences, history, philosophy, economics, physical health, farming, political theory, or any other thing that exists to be used for God's glory and our good. All of that is under creation and providence. how God has created and designed everything, how he upholds the world, how he upholds the universe by the word of his power. All of those things God's that are revealed in God's word and God's world have to do with knowledge and getting knowledge. You also need to know about God's works of restoration. Not just redemption but how God is restoring and building his kingdom, restoring this fallen world. So you that includes you need to understand ecclesiology. That is the function of the church. Why does the local church exist? Why do we do what we do? Why do we not do certain things? Why do we do certain things? Why do we have certain leaders? Why do we have members? Why do we have deacons? Why do we have pastors? Why do we give? Why do we sing? Why do we preach? Why do we disciple? Why are we in fellowship? Why do we share meals together? All of that. You need to understand ecclesiology. You need to understand discipleship and what it looks like to grow in obedience and love for Christ. You need to understand missions, why we send missionaries out. This is all part of God's restoration through Christ and his church. You need to understand evangelism, why and how we should evangelize. You need to understand eschatology, what God is doing and promised to do before Jesus comes back. You need to understand what God reveals about the final state of restoration when his kingdom is consummated and the eternal state is ushered in and we receive new glorified bodies and live with Christ forever. All of these

things I have mentioned, this is all knowledge. And you may not have the spiritual gift of knowledge, but all of those things I have just mentioned, you need to know them.

The opposite of knowledge is ignorance.

None of us should be at peace with being ignorant about any of those things that I just mentioned. And many of those things are going to be a lifelong pursuit.

And it is time for Christians to really stand up, especially in the Western church, and not just be like, 'Well, I do not really know. Let me ask my pastor what I think.' That seems like a joke, but like people really talk like that. It is like, 'I do not know. I am a we talk about eschatology. I am not saying it is easy. I am not saying any of this is easy to comprehend, to understand. But many people when you ask them about eschatology, they jokingly say, 'Well, you know, I am not a premillennialist or an amillennialist or a postmillennialist. I am a panmillennialist. I think it is all going to pan out in the end.' It is like, yes, that sort of sounds like I am kind of ignorant about it and I do not really know. kind of sounds like I do not really want that knowledge. We need to be careful of acting or thinking like that with like I am okay with being ignorant about all these things. But we have to seek after knowledge. So let me give you a few points from scripture about knowledge. Just as with wisdom, so it is with knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. I do not mean that those who do not fear the Lord do not understand any truth. But what I do mean is they will say truth, but they cannot account for it. They do not understand how it is true. They do not submit to how it is true. It does not mean that if you are not a Christian, you never say anything true. No. But if if you are not a Christian and you do not fear the Lord, you cannot account for why that is true. you are hitting a target, but it is like you are blindfolded and you are just shooting the gun and you are like, 'Well, you hit the target, but you cannot account for how you actually hit it because you did not aim properly, but you happen to hit it.' So, there are a lot of unbelievers who say true things, but they cannot account for that truth. And you ask them, 'Could you be wrong about that?' And they have to say, 'Yes, I could be.' The Christian does not say that. You make a truth claim and you ask a Christian, could you be wrong about that? No. What? Like, yes, because God says this. Jesus is God. You ask me, could you be wrong about that? My answer is no. I could not because God says it. And with many other things, I can actually account for the knowledge. Christians can account for the knowledge they have and unbelievers cannot because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. You have to fear the Lord if you really want to grow in true knowledge because all knowledge is based on God's creation, God's providence, his general and special revelation. You want to have knowledge, you need to start. What this means for you as a Christian is you need to start with I want to know what is true and I am trusting in and submitting to the Lord and his general through creation and special through the

scriptures revelation is how I know what is true. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. So posture yourself with a fear of the Lord, submitting to him and knowing that he reveals knowledge through general and special revelation. You need to know also that scoffers and fools hate knowledge. Scoffers and fools hate knowledge. And this is the problem or this is the problem I want you to avoid and not be like multiple Christians that I have even talked to that do not really want to grow in their understanding or knowledge and are just okay with being ignorant. It is like, yes, but you sound like what the Proverbs says are scoffers and fools. Like you do not want to grow in knowledge. It is like that is not a good thing. Proverbs 1:22. How long, oh simple ones, will you love being simple?

Just so you know, that is a rhetorical device that should shame the one reading it. How long, oh simple ones, will you love being simple?

May that never be true of you? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?

Scoffers and fools hate knowledge. How long, oh simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge? If you do not want to grow in knowledge, it seems like Proverbs 1:22 is saying you have a lot more in common with a fool and a scoffer.

Thirdly, concerning knowledge, just as it is with wisdom, the same type things are said. Knowledge is to be preferred before silver and gold. Knowledge is to be preferred before silver and gold. Proverbs 8:10, 'Take my instruction instead of silver and knowledge rather than choice gold.' So if you ever have to choose between money and knowledge, Solomon is saying, 'Oh, money.' I mean, oh, knowledge, not money, knowledge. Take my instruction instead of silver and knowledge rather than choice gold. I do not mean quit your job to get knowledge. I am talking about lawful means. But Proverbs 20:15 says, 'There is gold and abundance of costly stones, but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.' The lips of knowledge are a precious jewel. Knowledge is to be preferred before silver and gold. Fourthly, knowledge will deliver you from greater troubles. Just like wisdom, wisdom delivers you from greater troubles and so does knowledge. By knowledge the righteous are delivered. Proverbs 11:9. By knowledge the righteous are delivered. You want to be delivered from greater troubles and then get wisdom and get knowledge. Fifthly, the more knowledge you get, the easier it is to get more. Now, some of you may have heard when I am reading Proverbs 1:22, 'How long those simple ones will you love being simple?' And you just kind of start looking at the ground. You are like, 'Uh oh, that one almost speaks directly to me.' Well, you need to know when you start out and children, boys and girls, when you are starting to gain knowledge of the scriptures, of God's word and God's world, it is more difficult. But the more knowledge you get, the easier it is to get more. And adults, you know that. You know that, too. The more you get, the more you can get

more or the easier it is to get more and more and more. It is just like anything else. The more you do it, the easier it is to progress. Listen to Proverbs 15:14. The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge. The heart of him who has understanding. So he is already got some. He seeks after knowledge. So it makes it easier to seek. It makes it easier to get. But the mouths of fools feed on folly. The mouths of fools feed on folly. Now listen to Proverbs 18:15. Remember the whole principle is the more knowledge you get, the easier it is to get more. Proverbs 18:15, an intelligent heart acquires knowledge. He is already intelligent and it is easy for him to acquire knowledge. An intelligent heart acquires knowledge and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge. So the more you get, the easier it is to get more. You know, you know how it is with most things that you start. At the beginning, the learning curve is very difficult. It takes a while for certain things to click, but then they start clicking and then it just it does get easier and easier and easier and easier. It is the same with growing in your knowledge of God's word and his world.

When I—*here is one simple example*—when I started preaching and teaching God's word on a weekly basis, I mean, it would take me like 20 hours to write a sermon. It was like I did not have as much knowledge and I did not I could not get it very quickly either. But the further I go, it is like sermon prep gets easier and easier every single week because once you get knowledge, it is easier to get more. And once you have got that knowledge, you have got a bunch of it stored and then you can just keep building and keep building and keep building. So it is in general with study. You are going to come upon things in the Bible as you are studying. When you are first starting out, you are going to be like, I do not know if I understood anything. And then you start to piece things together and understand certain phrases or certain doctrines. You are like, 'Oh, he is talking about the doctrine of justification there or something like that.' And you really easily, I got that. And then you something else falls into place and that makes sense. And then the next time you come back and read it, like all that already fills in and you learn more and more and more and more and more and you gain more knowledge. The more you get, easier it is to get more. Sixthly, concerning knowledge, you need knowledge or your emotions will control you in a detrimental way. You need knowledge or your emotions will control you in a detrimental way. I am saying emotions. The proverb, it is translated desire, but those would be the way that emotions are used in our day. and that word those would be synonymous. Desire, this is Proverbs 19:2. Desire without knowledge is not good. Desire without knowledge is not good. And whoever makes haste with his feet misses his way. Desire without knowledge is not good. And whoever makes haste with his feet misses his way. You need knowledge or your emotions will control you in a detrimental way and your feet will miss his way. Seventhly, you need to hear constant instruction in order to not stray away from knowledge. You need to hear constant instruction in order not to stray away from knowledge. Listen to Proverbs 19:27. Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Stop listening to instruction, and you are easily going to wander away from knowledge. You and I need to constantly hear instruction in order to not stray away from knowledge. And this is why one of the fundamental ordinary means of grace is the preaching of God's word that you will hear instruction from God's word from the full counsel of God that the application will be brought to you and the understanding will be explained to you. You need to constantly hear instruction in order to not stray away from knowledge. Eighthly, concerning knowledge, you need to both understand and apply the knowledge you receive. It cannot just stop with I know things. It has got to be I know and then it has got to get into application. This is why even frequently in the proverbs, knowledge and wisdom are right there together. You cannot really have wisdom without knowing. You have to have knowledge in order to rightly apply. And you should not get knowledge without trying to put it into practice and apply it to act and think and speak wisely. Well, listen to this. Proverbs 23:12. Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge. Apply your heart to the instruction and your ear to words of knowledge. It is like apply your heart to it. It is not just get it in your mind. Fill up your mind with true things, but get it worked into your mind, your will, your affections. That is the heart. Your mind, your will, your affections need to all be influenced by this knowledge. You need to understand and apply the knowledge you receive. Ninthly, you need to know clearly knowledge comes from the mouth of the Lord. Knowledge comes from the mouth of the Lord. Proverbs 2:6, for the Lord gives wisdom. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. And I do not think you should take that only as the only kind of truth that we can ever get is only from the scriptures.

Stay with me. There are plenty of truths that are revealed by God in general revelation that are not revealed explicitly in the scriptures. Now, all saving truth, all truth of us knowing how to glorify God, how to be saved through Jesus Christ, that is only revealed in the scriptures and not in general revelation. But there are many sciences that we discover truth that you go, well, I do not see that written in the Bible about what happens in this chemistry experiment. And we go, well, that is not true then. This does not happen when you do this because God's word does not say it. Do not do that. That is God's general revelation. And God has his special revelation revealed in the scriptures. And both of those come from the mouth of God. God created the world and gave us general revelation through what has been made and how the world functions by speaking the world into existence. And he gives us his special revelation by speaking his word through men that is penned down in the pages of scripture. So all knowledge does indeed come from the mouth of God through creation, general revelation and through the special revelation of the scriptures. The world he created by speaking and all scriptures are breathed out by God. You need to know that all truth, all knowledge is Christ's knowledge. All truth is Christ's truth. All truth both generally and specially revealed proceeds from his mouth. Knowledge comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Now to close more quickly about faith, let me give you a few things about faith as time is getting away from me. You may not have the spiritual gift of faith, but you must seek after faith nonetheless. You cannot be content with always doubting. You cannot be content with suffering coming upon you and you are always freaking out like your world is crashing down and everything is and the Lord is maybe not going to fulfill his promise to me. You cannot be content with that. You need to have a holy discontentment with those kind of things. You need to be content in the Lord but not content with a weak faith. This faith is a trust in the power, promises, and providence of God. And the opposite of faith is faithlessness. It leads to being unstable. It leads to doubting the Lord's goodness, doubting his power, doubting his promises, doubting his providence. And you and I cannot be content with a weak faith. You need to know first of all your faith. I am not talking about saving faith by which you are justified. Again, all of us Christians, even if you have weak faith, a weak faith is enough to lay hold on a strong Christ. It is not the strength of your faith that makes you acceptable to God. It is the strength of Christ by which you, even with a weak faith, cling to him for salvation. We are talking about faith in a different sense. and the living of your Christian life and not whether or not you are going to heaven, but you need to know that faith by which you live your Christian life. You may not have the spiritual gift, but your faith can increase. You may have weak faith right now, but it can increase. And you need to not make peace with a weak faith, but listen to these verses. 2 Corinthians 10:15. Paul writes, 'Our hope is that as your faith increases,' stop there. He is not talking about saving faith. He is talking about faith every day and the promises, power, and the providence of God. Your faith is increasing. Corinthians, so you need to know, Christians, the inference from that is my faith can get stronger. That is good. 2 Thessalonians 1:3, 'We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly. And the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Your faith is growing abundantly.' What does that mean for you? You with weak faith, it can get stronger. Praise God for that. You with strong faith, it can get even stronger. But you need to know also that we as believers must flee youthful passions and pursue faith. Chase after faith just as we chase after knowledge and wisdom. This is what Paul tells Timothy to do. Flee youthful passions and pursue faith, not saving faith. Trust and reliance and steadfastness on the promises, providence, and power of God. He tells Timothy, 'Chase after faith.' In 2 Timothy 2:22, you should want an increase of faith so that you can accomplish great things for the Lord's glory. Not just so you are better, but so that you can be confident. And go forward and risk great things that may cost you, but God will be glorified through it. Write down in your notes Hebrews 11:29-35.

Hebrews 11:29-35 and go read that and meditate on that later today. Look at all the things, meditate on all of the things that God says these people accomplished through faith. By faith, the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, dry ground. But the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. By faith,

the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith, Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, and David, and Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release so that they might rise again to a better life by faith. Do not you want an increase of faith? Faith is also how you resist the schemes of the devil who prowls around like a roaring lion. You should want faith because you can accomplish great things for God, for his glory. But also, faith is how you are going to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 1 Peter 5:9, resist the devil, firm in your faith. Not firm in the faith. I understand all the doctrines. Firm in your faith, trusting in, submitting to God. Faith overcomes the world. 1 John 5:4, everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, our faith. Faith overcomes the world. So therefore, I say in conclusion, you should ask the Lord to increase your faith. Ask the Lord to increase your faith. We have biblical warrant for that. Luke 17:5, the apostles said to Jesus, 'Increase our faith. Make our faith stronger. We want to trust you more. We want to be confident and fearless in the face of our adversaries. We want to glorify you.' So believers, ask God to increase your faith and seek after it. Ask God to increase your wisdom and seek after it. Ask God to increase your knowledge and seek after it for his glory for your benefit and so that you can be best equipped to love your brothers and sisters. Let us pray. Our father, we thank you for your word. We ask you to help us comprehend it. Help us to understand, to remember, to put it into practice and live wisely and to trust you. Be confident in the face of many trials. We ask you to increase our knowledge, our wisdom, and our faith for your glory in Christ's name. Amen.