

THE POWER OF WISDOM (Part 1) (James 1:5-6)

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~"I will walk into the EXPECTED END of God—by the power of Wisdom."

~We have been talking about GROWING toward maturity.

~"Maturity is necessary for Destiny."

~If we want to walk in our purpose we must be willing to go through the **process** of maturity.

~Discipleship is the process of maturity—if we are to mature, it will be because we become submitted to the Discipleship process and become willing learners.

~WISDOM is what enables us to take knowledge to the market place—its what empowers us to make Godly decisions where we live, work, and play.

~Knowledge is Power—and Power brings about CHANGE!

1. Is lasting change really possible?

~Many desire to change but find changing difficult, and find permanent, lasting change beyond their ability.

~We must **equip** ourselves to ensure that change lasts long enough for transformation to take place.

A. The key elements to change?

~KNOWLEDGE and FOCUS are two significant keys to change.

~Right focus leads us to the right kind of information. And having right information leads us to the right kind of knowledge, which in turn, leads us to the right kind of wisdom...Godly wisdom!

~Right focus allows us to change and achieve more.

~Wrong focus and wrong knowledge lead us to live foolish, wasted lives.

~Broken focus leads us to distraction, instability, and the non-fulfillment of God's dream for our lives.

~We don't need many keys—we only need the right key to make life work, and that key is Godly Wisdom.

~Godly wisdom is the key to making permanent and lasting change that leads to total life-transformation.

~King Solomon achieved many good things in his life and none in history can equal his works or accomplishments. He was the wisest man to have ever lived, and because God gave him more wisdom than any other, he possessed the keys to great success and riches.

~Little keys unlock big doors.

~By studying Proverbs and Godly wisdom you can make small changes that will provide big breakthroughs in your life.

~Wisdom will influence your daily habits, and your daily habits influence your character, your integrity, and your ability to overcome.

B. Is complete transformation possible?

(Rom. 12:2) “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

~Transformation is possible, but ONLY by transforming our minds first.

This is our assignment and no one else can do it for us. After our mind and thinking is permanently changed, all else will follow.

C. A glimpse of God's plan for mankind in Ezekiel 36:24-27.

“For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”

~This explains how complete transformation takes place.

~Our lives require a God intervention! Without it, we're doomed!

~If we'll accept God and allow Him to come into our heart, He'll give us a new and improved heart—one that has the capacity to love as He loves, and sees as He sees.

~This results in our being renewed, and we become a new person. When God puts His Spirit in us, we have the ability to live rightly for we're made righteous in Him.

~We receive this newness of life by asking Him to come into our heart and allowing Him to change us from within. The results are: wholeness for brokenness, fruitfulness for barrenness, abundance for poverty and lack, and the wisdom to know what to do where there was once indecision and confusion.

D. Proverbs aims to help us improve our lives with simple, yet powerful spiritual truths.

~Solomon taught, almost three thousand years ago, what we now know as personal development and success principles.

2. Solomon's dream.

~According to the accounts found in the Bible, God appeared to the newly crowned Solomon in a dream and offered him his heart's desire.

~Unlike the fabled King Midas, who asked that all he touch be turned to gold, the young Solomon asked not for fame or fortune, but for wisdom to rule his people well.

~Pleased with this request, God replied:

(1 Kings 3:12) "I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be".

~From then on Solomon began an inspired study of the principles of wisdom and wrote them in the book of Proverbs.

~The Hebrew word translated "proverb" more nearly means parable or parallel.

A. The law of cause and effect shapes our lives and there are things to do, and things to avoid doing, that make a difference in our quality of life.

~These are acts of **omission and commission**.

~Solomon suggests that there are two kinds of proverbs, **Goads and Nails**.

~Goads, which are designed to pierce our thick skin of complacency and stir us to positive, productive action, and....

~Nails, solid and reliable values or truths that help us avoid making disastrous mistakes.

B. If we will be HEARERS and DOERS this leads to Life-changing wisdom.

~All of us to some degree already possess a type of wisdom.

~Unfortunately, our human weaknesses cancel out and work against that wisdom.

~An example would be of good seeds being planted in a garden. Although the seed contains everything needed to produce an abundant harvest, an unaware gardener can frustrate that potential by not tilling the soil properly, by depriving the seedlings of water and nutrients, and by allowing weeds and pests to attack the plants and choke off future growth.

~Likewise in our lives, the success that should be readily available to us is all too often self-sabotaged by unawareness, wrong thinking, and negative emotions, such as greed, lust, selfishness, anger, malice, envy, anxiety, fear, pride, laziness, and ignorance.

~Our own carnal nature, coupled with incomplete or wrong information about God, negative emotions, and ignorance of the laws that govern the world, lock millions into mediocrity, poverty, ill-health, and death.

~Through the inspired writings of Solomon, the foolish can attain wisdom and become more effective and productive than they ever thought possible. God called us to be fruitful, and wisdom shows us the way to live just that way.

C. Solomon enjoyed unparalleled wisdom. (See 1 Kings 10:1, 6, 23-24). Verse 24 of this scripture portion tells us...

“The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.”

~Fans from around the world gathered to behold Solomon in all his splendor. Yet for all his fortune, fame, and fulfilled fantasies, he could not find lasting satisfaction.

~He had to find out **“What really lasts in life?”**

(Is. 40:6, 8) “All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers, the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever.”

~Only God’s Word will last!

~Each of us should ask ourselves, am I investing my time and life in what will last? Much of what we put our passion into will fade away. It will not count for anything, especially after we’re gone.

~If we want our life to matter, we’ll need to take another look at how we’re spending our days and what we give our time and attention to.

D. Solomon found out that great success has an emptiness to it.

~Unless God builds your successes, they’re likely to distract you from what really matters most.

~A lot of what busies us will eventually waste away. Only His Word really lasts. Only His Word keeps our character and our lives from eroding away

(Psalm 119:9, 11) “How shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed to thy Word. Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

3. WHY SEEK WISDOM?

~The Book of Proverbs is unique in the whole Bible—It’s a handbook solely devoted to detailed instructions in day-to-day godly living.

~This handy guidebook prepares us for everything Jesus later taught his disciples about worshiping God in spirit and in truth, through prayer, faith, and love.

A. God isn't interested in our rituals or lip service.

~He sees deeply into our heart and wants our motivation for service to spring from the same deep well.

~If we simply worship Him, instead of other things, we've captured the essence both of the book of Proverbs and of living with wisdom.

~Solomon was inspired by God to interpret His Law and to translate it into practical, detailed instructions or formulas for successful daily living.

~Similarly, Jesus made it clear that He hadn't come to rescind the Law of God, but to fulfill it.

~He did this through his teachings and by demonstrating and then translating for us through parables.

~The parables were His chosen means of instilling within our heart the true intent of God's message of love for us.

~God loved us first, and we're not only to love Him back as a reflection of our gratitude, but to take it a step further, loving our neighbors as much as we love ourselves.

B. Solomon instructs us on how to live with wisdom. And wisdom, personified in Proverbs, tells us that if we're rightly motivated we'll live right, love right, be right, and end right.

~Knowing God personally is the vital first step in being able to live rightly.

~Solomon implored us to seek wisdom first, because it's the principal thing. Principal in this context means main, chief, major, most important, prime.

(Proverbs 4:7) "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding."

(Proverbs 4:7) "Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do! And whatever else you do, develop good judgment."

~Why is wisdom the principal thing?

Wisdom, the principal attribute of the Almighty, has seven key aspects as seen in:

(Proverbs 9:1-11) “Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table. She has sent out her maids, and she calls from the highest point of the city. Let all who are simple come in here! she says to those who lack judgment. Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding. Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse. Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One, is understanding. For through me your days will be many, and years will be added to your life.”

C. Why is wisdom necessary?

~Wisdom is important because it was there in the beginning with God and GOD IS WISDOM!

~If Wisdom was with God, then it's important, and since it's important to God, it must become important to us!

D. What are wisdom principles?

A wisdom principle is a fundamental truth about human nature and behavior that challenges a person's belief system.

~The definition of wisdom is knowledge that is rightly and appropriately applied.

~If wisdom principles are accepted and diligently applied to one's life, they'll change a person from the inside out.

~As they become that person's truth, they come to constitute his or her belief system.

~Our beliefs reveal what we think—and what we think in turn reflects our beliefs.

E. The wisdom of the world is foolishness to God.

~At best, the good examples of the wisdom of this world represent damage control or behavior modification.

(1 Cor. 3:19) “The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He takes the wise in their own craftiness.”

(Prov. 4:5-9) “Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget My words or swerve from them. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you. She will set a garland of grace on your head and present you with a crown of splendor.”

F. How do I develop wisdom in my life?

(Mark 4:26-29) provides us with an example of this spiritual concept in the parable of the growing seed: “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself, the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

~In this parable Jesus used an example that incorporated seed, time, and harvest—all of which everyone understood to illustrate truths about how God’s Word works—which very few understood.

~First, He taught that God’s Word has to be planted like a seed within our heart.

~Just as a seed doesn’t release its life until it’s planted in the ground, God’s Word won’t set us free until it’s implanted in our heart.

~Having a Bible on our table, in our hand, or even in our head isn’t sufficient; we have to commit God’s Word to our heart.

~Second, the man in Jesus’ parable who sowed the seed also slept, rose, and waited, day after day. It takes time for a seed to germinate.

~You can't plant a seed one day and expect to see a seedling the next. Just because there's nothing visible above ground, though, doesn't mean the seed isn't growing.

~If you dig it back up every day to check whether anything is happening, it will never grow. You have to have faith that the seed will do what it was designed by God to do—to produce fruit in its time.

~The Word of God works the same way. When we meditate on God's Word for one day, we can't expect to see results the next.

~And if we allow ourselves to meditate on His Word one day and then live differently for the next six, we are in effect digging up the seed.

The real and only key to finding wisdom that produces transformation is found in **(John 15:7–8)** Jesus said: “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

4. THE MISSING PIECE TO THE PUZZLE ABOUT CHANGE

~Most everyone desires to change something about themselves.

~The desire to improve is a natural part of our being. Most of us know instinctively, that there's more to life than what we may be currently experiencing or achieving.

~For Christians, this inner sense of awareness is intensified in that the Holy Spirit actually gives us a holy dissatisfaction that drives us to seek transformation.

~Once new Christians recognize in whose image they were created, and that their new identity is now in the Lord, they're rarely content to stay the same.

A. Growth means change!

~If you're not experiencing growth in your life it may be due to your unwillingness to change.

~This is frequently the reason for restlessness and discontent.

~We often don't see the root of the problem until much later, but that restlessness is a tell-tale sign that something needs to change.

B. In God's creation, the plant world changes easily and effortlessly.

~Plants' lives are simple—they simply grow.

~The change happens before our eyes. They morph from a seed into a seedling, and finally into the adult plant that eventually produces.

~They do this effortlessly because they were created to grow and produce.

~You and I were created with this same principle in mind. When we thwart this natural growth process, we create conflict within ourselves.

~Change is supposed to be natural and good, producing growth and maturity, followed by fruit and a harvest.

~Not wanting to change is indicative of not wanting to grow—or not wanting to grow up.

~When we assume this position in life, we're settling for mediocrity.

~We all know people who are threatened by change. You may be one of them. But once you get used to the idea and you see the fruit it brings into your life, you'll be able to let go of the fear and welcome the change.

C. Even when we sense our need to change or grow, the process can be difficult.

~We frequently don't know where to start, and the simplest baby steps can seem monumental.

~Sometimes we're so overwhelmed that we have no idea what to tackle first, especially if we need change in multiple areas of our life.

D. Alternatively, you may know where to start and may actually have tried to change for a while, but when life got really difficult, you found yourself slipping back into your previous behaviors or thinking patterns.

~It can be difficult to change, especially if nothing and no one else around you is changing.

~You can feel estranged and lonely being the only one who is moving forward.

~To alleviate the sense of loneliness caused by being the only one to deviate from the established norm, many return to old behaviors and ways of thinking.

~What we often fail to understand when we're trying to change ourselves is that there's a missing piece to the puzzle in the transformation process.

~Rarely can we make lasting, positive changes that are also effortless, because we don't know what to change to.