

GOD'S GIFT OF WISDOM

*“Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom.”
—PROVERBS 4:6-7*

Someone once described a proverb as a short sentence based on a long experience. It's a good description, particularly in Solomon's case, as he had lengthy experiences in both wisdom and folly. From the viewpoint of a father teaching his son, Solomon wrote and compiled a good portion of the Book of Proverbs. Proverbs are not promises, but short summaries of experiences in life that embody a general truth. The book of Proverbs contains many of them, which teach us practical, down to earth wisdom that comes from God.

Wisdom is not instinctive. No one is born wise, nor does it become inherent in us as we grow older. Proverbs teaches us wisdom has to be sought, and that it may be found. In the book of Proverbs, wisdom is personified as a female, and she says in 3:13, “Blessed is the man who finds wisdom...”, and in 8:35, “Whoever finds me, finds life, and receives favour from the LORD.” This was true in Solomon's life as it is in ours.

Solomon was taught as a young boy by his father, David, to seek wisdom, and in esteeming her (wisdom) she would embrace, exalt and honour him. When Solomon inherited the throne, God told him to ask for anything he wanted, and it would be given him. His request was not for wealth, fame or power, but for wisdom in reigning as Israel's king.

Solomon was blessed with the spiritual gift of wisdom and all that defines wisdom: insight, understanding, discretion, shrewdness, knowledge, but I'd like to offer a personal definition. Wisdom is the ability to see life from God's point of view; that is from a divine perspective. Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy one is understanding." Wisdom is only possible when it is born out of a knowledge of God and a fear of God.

We'll never have minds big enough to contain God's perspective of life, only glimpses of it, but our own perspectives are conditioned by our personal histories, environments, agendas and characters. A fool regards his own perspective as the only legitimate one, but in seeking God's perspective, we are seeking wisdom that comes from the mind of God, which can only be revealed by the Spirit of God. A prerequisite to receiving wisdom is recognizing our lack of it. We're told in James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." Wisdom is not something to be achieved, but received - a gift of God by His Holy Spirit that brings us into a deeper knowledge of Him.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I pray that my knowledge of You grows deeper. I know it is the way to wisdom, and a gift from You, as I come to know You better.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I growing in my knowledge of God?