

The Christian Life in Biblical Perspective
7 Essentials Of the Christian Life
The Essential Life Formation Of The Effective Christian Life
James 1:2-8
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We have already heard about wisdom from James 3 where it talks about the difference between worldly wisdom and the wisdom from above and I will be referring to that in this study. By the way I was so excited about finishing up the dream in Daniel 2 that I put it in the bulletin as that was what I would be preaching, then I was reminded a short time later that this Sunday was going to be Communion Sunday on Sunday night. There are a couple of ways that historically people have emphasized Communion. Some do it be the regularity of each Lord's Day. In the reform tradition the habit has been more, not by its regularity on the Lord's Day but by its intentionality on specific Lord's Days and so we celebrate the Lord's Supper ten times a year with intentionality at that time so I'm going to ask that you forbear with Daniel 2 and we'll pick this back up next Sunday night. Tonight I would like to look at 1 Corinthians 11 when we come to the Lord's Supper. The Lord Jesus says, He has earnestly desired to eat this Lord's Supper with you tonight. Come and meet with Him. We will look at the four prevalent views of the Lord's Supper from Christendom and then we'll bring focus to our celebration at the table tonight at 6pm. Let's look at James 1. This the Word of God, it's the Truth

James 1:5- 8 says, *5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

The grass withers. The flower fades. God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

Almost two years ago we had the privilege to go to England for the Embers to a Flame Conference and while in England I had the opportunity to visit two of the places I had always wanted to go visit. One place was Cambridge where I wanted to see where Charles Simeon preached. I wanted to see where the White Horse Inn was. I wanted to see how the Reformation was so powerfully influenced from Cambridge. Then I wanted to go to Oxford because all of the reformers that were educated from Cambridge got burned in Oxford. We have a saying that goes, "The Reformation was birthed in Cambridge and burned in Oxford." Cambridge birthed the reformers and Oxford burned them and I wanted to go to Oxford where Cranberg, Latimer and Ridley gave their lives.

Another reason I wanted to go to Oxford was because of a chapel that is there that is well known for its acoustical enhancement of singing. When you are there it is marvelous to listen to. The only other place that comes close for me is a place called St. Anne's in Jerusalem. But I love to hear singing there. I am also enamored with it because of its history. The chapel was actually built over 600 hundred years ago and it's well known for its singing. Sadly, it is much more well known for its singing than its preaching though. The trustees commissioned an inspection of it because of its age. One of the reason it was a wonderful place for its singing was because the roof was actually

made of oak timbers and so the resonation was unbelievable when people would sin. After the inspection they said, "We have some bad news for you. Did you know that oak timbers have oak worms in them? If those oak worms quit holding hands you will be in trouble here."

So they went about to replace the roof and looked all around trying to find oak timbers. They even went all the way to the top and the official laughed and said, "Do you know what it's going to cost to get that roof oak wood timbered?" They said, "No." They told them and it was prohibitive. The official said, "There is just no way. It will have to be imported and when it is imported it will cost this." Finally they made plans to use a substitute wood in its place. Then they received a phone call from that same official and he said, "I've got news, good news and great news. The news is you can replace your oak timbered chapel with oak timbers. The good news is we have all you need right here in England." They said, "What's the better news? How can we afford that? You have already told us the price and even if it doesn't have to be imported it will still cost a lot." The official said, "That's the best news. The board of directors and the trustees of the chapel when they built it over 600 years ago they knew the value of an oak roof for singing and they also knew about oak worms. So when they built the roof they set aside three acres of land and planted oak trees so they would be ready to replace the roof when it was time." That's wisdom.

Wisdom is something that is on short supply for us today. We don't preach for it, teach for it, study for it and we don't even ask for it. The text in James says that if any of you lacks wisdom let him ask God and let me tell you who doesn't lack wisdom. A person who doesn't know that they lack wisdom is a fool. They are not wise. It is something that we are in short supply of but when it is present there is the ability to look to the future without fear but with Gospel confidence. When there is wisdom there is the ability to respond to the adversity of life with patience and confidence in the providence of God. That text in James started out by saying, "Count it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials, knowing that the trying of your faith produces steadfastness."

What do you and I do when that trouble comes to our marriage, when we face raising children in this broken world? Where do we go for wisdom? You and I will go for wisdom. We'll either go for the wisdom of the world or we'll go to the wisdom above. The wisdom of the world is chaos, jealousy, selfish ambition, manipulation, coping, maneuvering, vanity and emptiness. But there is a wisdom that comes to us by faith through prayer. There is a wisdom from above that brings peace, Truth, and joy. There is a wisdom that when it is sown it brings forth a harvest of righteousness. There is a wisdom that when challenges comes in my family, my children, my marriage, my life or I'm just simply trying to make decisions about life, how do I take care of this temple of the Holy Spirit, my body?

How do I decide about vocation, job, life or the person I'm supposed to marry? Is the wisdom of the world guiding you or wisdom from above? What about how I am to respond to the one I am married to? Am I using the wisdom from above or the wisdom of the world? When I think about happiness do I look to the world for its empty cisterns that tell me 'this is happiness' in addictions, sexual promiscuity and sexual perversion? Do I think that happiness is just swapping our mates in my marriage because this one doesn't meet my needs? Do I choose the idolatry of relationships instead of the

confidence in the Lord who makes me count in a relationship for His glory? You and I make decisions in life all the time.

We are in a series about seven essentials of an effective Christian and this study covers the fifth one. Here is what we have covered up to this point. First of all you can't have a Christian life unless you know your destination. What is the purpose of the effective Christian life? It is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Life is worship. Life is not things, sports even if your team is winning and life is not lost when they are losing. Life is not in toys, it's not technology. Why God made me, saved me and sustains me is to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever which is my life purpose. Life is worship.

The second essential is that I need lifelines to lead that life. God's lifelines are His Word and His Spirit. I must be immersed in His Word and surrendered to His Spirit. I must hear His Word preached. I must study it. I want to memorize it and meditate upon it. When my life gets cut open I want to bleed out Bible. I want to surrender to the Holy Spirit who is my Teacher and my Comforter who can guide me in it.

When those lifelines and that life purpose are present the third essential is that there will be life marks. The two life marks of an effective Christian are Truth and love. Truth is their way of life and love is how they do life in Christ who is their Truth and in Christ whose love constrains them.

The fourth essential is the life style. We have the life purpose, the lifelines, the life marks and so what's the life style of a Christian? A Christian lives by faith and repentance and faith and repentance is not the act of the moment, it's the acquisition of a lifestyle of putting off by faith and repentance the old man everyday and putting on the new man in Christ and for Christ everyday.

So in this study what is the fifth essential? I am calling this essential life formation. How can I physically, intellectually, socially, psychologically, and personally grow up and make a difference as I glorify God and enjoy Him forever? This is life formation, the development of your life. The Bible tells me to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells me to bring my children up. The Bible tells me that there is to be something called formation in me as a Christian. In other words, when I look at my life now I ought to have moved forward from where it was then and that ought to have been forward from where it was when I began. I was born again and Paul says, "By this time that carnality ought to have been dismissed and now you ought to be mature, now you ought to be spiritual, now you ought to be practiced in righteousness." How can I get from milk to meat? How can my life get formed up and move forward? I believe that essential of life formation has to do with wisdom from above.

The wisdom from above is the wisdom that you ask from the Lord, in faith, believing. The wisdom from below is always available. I'm afraid most Christians today are learning it from the organs of communication in our society like the media. I see Christians whose life view is framed by radio talk shows, music, plays and by worldly wisdom in this world. There is just enough overlap of what they have observed about Truth that we subtly get drawn into it and our lives become chaotic, despairing, angry, bitter, and cynic instead of that Gospel life which is steadfast, hopeful, unstoppable optimism with the ability to move forward knowing that in Christ I'm saved, kept and my Savior is at work. That is missing because we don't have wisdom and we don't apply wisdom when we begin to think about marriage or responding to the issues of marriage or

raising up children or how we participate in the body of Christ or how we choose vocation and why we work with our hands. What is our work about? What is life? What is happiness? With wisdom from above there is this rare blessing of hope and stability in life. There is steadfastness. There is moving forward. There is the ability to look to the future without fear and to live in the present without compromise. There is the ability to function with conviction without arrogance. There is hope without self exaltation. There is self examination without self reliance.

There is this unbelievable blessing that comes with something that is rare in and of itself and it is wisdom. We keep going to the technological substitutes. We think we're going to get wise because we can hit Google. I just get the facts about something. We think that's wisdom. It's not. If I gave you one prayer request, what would you ask for? Do you know someone in the Bible that was given the opportunity to make one request and by the way it was assured that it would be answered? It was Solomon and he asked for wisdom. The whole book of Proverbs is there to teach us about sanctified common sense in life. The book of James is an extraordinary declaration of the wise life. You ought to read Proverbs, then jump over and read a Gospel to get focused back on Jesus who is our Wisdom and then go to the book of James because there is the implications of it.

The book of Proverbs talks about knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Knowledge is where you have the facts. Understanding is perception of how those facts are sitting and how I look at life. Having wisdom means I'm ready to live life with decisions that produce righteousness. Is there anyone among you wise and understanding? Let him show is by what? Is it by having all the answers to the questions? No, that is knowledge. Is it by knowing what the answers mean? No, that is understanding. If you have wisdom, let him show it by his behavior. It is how your life is formed that will show wisdom. You and I were born with a finite number of sunrises and sunsets so what did you do with yesterday? It's gone. Was it the wisdom of the world that guided your choices yesterday or was it wisdom from above? It is so precious. I confess to you that in studying for this I have never been under so much conviction about how my lack of wisdom was so obvious in my life.

So what does it look like? Who is the wisest man that has ever lived? It is not Solomon. It is Jesus because He is the One who gave the wisdom to Solomon. Now, how did Jesus in His humanity gain wisdom? We know He did. There is an interesting passage of Scripture that we can draw some thoughts from. It is one that I have read from and taught from for years. Just the other week in talking with a very wise man in New Zealand I went back and looked at it again and it opened up freshly like I have never seen before. The passage is Luke 2 where Jesus is declared to be wisdom. Those people at Oxford had knowledge when they said, "Oak beams make good roofs for singing." Oak beams have oak worms which show they had understanding and that means that this roof is going to disappear one day. Then they had wisdom because they made preparation for it with their behavior. Where does that kind of wisdom come from above to live life that way?

Luke 2:39-40 says, **39** *And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.* (Jesus was probably about 2 years of age in this verse and then they give a summation verse of the next part of His life.) **40** *And the child grew and became strong, **filled with wisdom.** And*

the favor of God was upon him. So His formation was He grew up physically. He grew up spiritually in favor with God and He was observed by others and He was filled with wisdom that in His humanity it declares that this Boy was filled up with wisdom in His childhood. Now how did that happen? It is interesting. Luke, the writer of this Gospel, probably started writing this Gospel while Paul was in prison in Jerusalem and later Caesarea by the Sea. When Luke was writing this which was his second volume because he had already written the book of Acts or at least most of the book of Acts, this will be volume one of what Jesus began to do and teach and this will be volume two of what Jesus continued to do and teach through His church. As Luke is writing this it says in Luke 1 he went out for the sources, while the Holy Spirit is guiding him but he talked to Apostles, others and eye witnesses.

I believed he talked to Mary and I believe it is Mary herself that recounted this incident to Luke. This is the only recorded information we have in holy writ about Jesus' life from age 2 to age 30. This is all we have. Do you think the Holy Spirit is giving us something important here? Now what is it that occurred in this one incident that occurred the year Jesus is moving into what is called to be a son of the commandment? At that year when He was age 12 to age 13, the young Man moves from His mother's teaching pronounced into His Father's life right then. It is in that year that they again go to Jerusalem. So let's pick up and see what happens.

Luke 2:41-45 says, **41** *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.* (A 20 days journey.) **42** *And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.* **43** *And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it,* **44** *but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances,* **45** *and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.* I know what you're thinking right here. You are thinking, "So for a whole day they didn't know where Jesus was? What kind of parents are these?" Would you like to know how many children, as a pastor, I've taken home for people after church on Sunday in my ministry? Would you like to know how many cell phone calls I've gotten where they said, "Is our daughter still there?" Oh yes the one running around crying in the lobby looking for you. I hope that hasn't happened to you but let me give you a little more reason as to why this happened.

When they would travel they wouldn't travel alone because of robbers. So they would travel together and the method of traveling was women and little children up front. The men and the young boys were behind. So Mary would have been up front and Joseph would have been in the back. So can't you see what's happening? Jesus is around 12 and this is the age for at least this trip or the next trip where he no longer goes with His mother and He would be travelling with His dad. You can just see how they have gone on this days journey and they sit down that night where Mary says to Joseph, "Where's Jesus?" Joseph says, "I thought He was with you. For the last ten years we have made this trip He's been with you." Mary says, "Yeah but He's 12 so He's with you now Joseph. Where is Jesus?" Joseph says, "I thought He was with you. He must be still back in Jerusalem." Mary says, "Let's go get Him." That's probably what happened. I would have loved to have sat in on that conversation. So now what do they do when they get back?

Luke 2:46-51 says, **46** *After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." 49 And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that **I must be** in my Father's house?" 50 And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. 51 And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.* This is the one incident that describes Jesus from 2 to 12 years of age and this is where Mary pondered this in her heart to tell Luke.

Now the summation of Jesus from 12 to 30 years of age, covering 18 years in this one verse is in Luke 2:52 which says, *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man."* So the summation comes out of this incident where Luke reveals what the Holy Spirit has brought to him in conversation with Mary that the next 18 years Jesus grows in wisdom, stature, favor with God and favor with man. In my whole life I have taught that text saying there are four categories for life formation where one is wisdom which has to do with your intellectual life. Two is stature which has to do with your physical life and your comportment in life. Thirdly, is your favor with God which has to do with your spiritual life. The word favor is an interchange for the word grace. Then fourthly is favor with man which is your social, relational life. Every year I go through those four things to see where I'm short and I need to grow etc.

Then I went back to this text and looked at it again and I was shocked when I saw that text again because I realized that many times that when the Bible puts together a list very seldom is it giving four silos for there is some interconnection. Usually the interconnection is the list which is an implication list and an application list of the first one in the list. For example, the first commandment in the Ten Commandments is do not have any other gods before Me. How can I not have any other gods before me? Here's the way, don't have any graven images and listen to My Word. Don't take the Lord's Name in vain. Remember the Lord's Day. Keep it Holy. So now that God is your God let's move to relationships. So honor your father and mother. Don't murder. Don't commit adultery etc. So those are implications of the first thing on the list. Another example is where it says, the fruit of the Spirit is love and how do you know when someone has the fruit of the Spirit in love? There will be joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control etc.

Now I think it's fair to look at these four categories but I want you to look at it a little bit differently because back in Luke 2:40 there was a declaration of Jesus that He was filled up with wisdom and the result was stature and His relationship with God. Now Luke 2:52 revisits Luke 2:40 and it gives it with clear summation that Jesus grew in wisdom. So now He knows how to comport His life and how to take care of His body which is stature. Now, He knows how to properly relate to His Father which is favor with God. Now, He knows how to properly relate with man which is favor with man. Wisdom informed His formation physically through stature in life. Wisdom informed Him spiritually and wisdom informed Him socially and relationally. Wisdom showed Him how to behave and how to form up in life.

What do you wear to this place that shows dignity and respect? How do you dress? How do you speak? How do you choose a life mate? How do you respond to sin when it invades our relationship? How do I bring up my children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord when just a cookie cutter won't work? I'll never forget when my wife picked up James Dobson's book How to Raise a Strong Willed Child and I won't tell you which one of my kids made her do this but one of them did. My wife, after reading the first chapter put down the book and said, "That's it, I'm not reading anymore. I cannot live life this way." I said, "Honey you have to live life." She said, "No, I don't. I can just go be with Jesus is what I can do." I said, "No, honey I cannot afford you to go be with Jesus right now because then I'll have to read the book. So please read the book and let's talk about it." Here is how sin is grabbing this child and here is how sin is grabbing that child. I desperately need wisdom. By the way worldly wisdom is what's coming from most of our pulpits these days even Christian ones. They talk about seven steps of worldly wisdom of how to control your children instead of the Biblical understanding of what it means to get sound doctrine in the heart and soul of a child. People want quick fixes instead of long term life changes. The same thing goes for our marriages. We have technique studies and technique books. Yet God looks for transformation from the inside out.

I believe this matter of wisdom is so crucial that we need to see what we can pick up from Jesus. Here is Jesus in this moment and this text records for us in Holy Writ the very first words of Jesus ever recorded in Scripture right here. Up until now nothing that He has said has been recorded and the first thing He says is, "Why are you looking for Me?" meaning outside of the temple. He says, "I must be in My Father's house. Why would you be looking out there?" He is not saying, "Why are you looking for Me?" because He knows why they are looking for Him. He is their son. The implication is why are you looking out there, out side the temple for three days? You know I would have to be here. He is not rebuking them. It is what I call rhetorical bewilderment. He is expressing bewilderment so they can pick up on something.

Number one He is in His Father's house so He is affirming divine Sonship. This temple was His Father's house. Secondly, He is determining His calling. My Father has business for Me to do. I'm going to be about My Father's house and My Father's business. The third thing He is saying is a very positive one and that is how He has been raised. We go to the temple every year. Back home we go to the synagogue regularly. I love to take people to Israel to take them to Nazareth. There is an orthodox church that is built like a synagogue in Nazareth right on the foundation of the synagogue where Jesus went continually, where He taught and from which He was run out of. This is how you raised Me for 12 years. Why would you be out there? You didn't raise Me to be out there. You raised Me right here. Here are the habits of our family. Did you notice the phrase in the text where it said "our custom" was to go every year? If I went to your children and said, "What's the custom of your family on the Lord's Day?" what would they say? If I went to your friends and asked them what your custom in relation to the Father's house, what would they say? I know it's not the church building but it is the gathering of God's people.

Then this amazing thing happens were Jesus was submissive and went home with His family. Someone said to me after hearing this in the first service, "Isn't that something that Jesus is absolutely perfect and righteous and went home and submitted to

sinful parents, parents that were sinners?” I said, “That is amazing isn’t it but of course you and I don’t need to learn that, do we?” But He went home and was submissive to His parents and then the summation of this incident is that Jesus grew in wisdom. Now watch His stature, watch His favor with God and watch His favor with man. So what do we learn here?

I want to give you five takeaways from this text. Knowledge, understanding and wisdom are what we want. Where can I go for knowledge? I can go to the books. I can go to the Bible. I can get facts. I can Google. I can get knowledge. Where do I go to get understanding? I can go to life. Where do I go to get wisdom? I can go to school for knowledge. I can encounter life for understanding. To get wisdom here is your first takeaway. You go to Jesus. I want to look at 1 Corinthians 1 which contains two of my favorite verses in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31 says, **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.”* If you have come to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior then why are you a Christian today? It is because of Him. He bought you, sought you, brought you, paid for you and redeemed you.

I love that hymn *Be Thou My Vision* which we sung today. Did you hear the words to that hymn? Not only is it ‘Be Thou my vision’ so that I can fix my eyes on Jesus but the second verse says, ‘Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word, I ever with Thee, and thou with me Lord.’ Wisdom is the Lord and you can’t have wisdom without going to the Lord. Is the Lord your wisdom? Is the Lord your life? Some of you reading this may have not done that yet so I want to stop right here for a moment.

If you are reading this searching for the matters of life you are not going to get a technique from me. You’re not going to get tips for living. You’re going to get Jesus Christ. He can be your wisdom. He can be your life. His Words are true and He will never leave you nor forsake you. He will give you what to think and He will give you how to respond. He will guide you and guard you, your going out and your coming in. His wisdom is so glorious and His plans are not for your destruction. Even in suffering and adversity His plans are for you life ever more. It is Him who will lead you into your family, your marriage, your job, your school, and your decisions in life. The Lord is your wisdom. So I can go to school for knowledge. I can go to life for understanding and I go to Jesus for my wisdom.

So number two is now that I have come to Jesus for wisdom, through Jesus I go to prayer and His Word. His Word is wisdom and His prayers allow me to call upon Him for wisdom. Do any of you lack wisdom? Let him ask of the Lord. What did the rest of that text say? It says He will give it to you liberally, freely. You must go to the Lord in prayer for wisdom but wisdom from above must come to you. It’s not in us. In us is foolishness and vanity. In us is the intuitive acts of sin, destruction, chaos, selfishness and ambition but out there you have a Savior. You call upon Him in prayer and you can go to His Word and in prayer and the Word He will bring wisdom to you. Call upon Him in prayer.

The third takeaway is you go to your family for wisdom. Where did Jesus grow in wisdom? He went home and was submissive to His parents. Go home. You may say, “Harry, I’ve left and cleft.” Okay, but you can still use your dad and mom as counselors. But have a home where your children will see wisdom. Show them wisdom in how to

use a computer that doesn't use you. Show them wisdom in how you make decisions in life about what is important. Show them where things belong in life. Have you ever noticed how the older you get how much smarter your dad and mom get? One thing I miss every single day of my life is being able to go to or call up my dad or mom and ask them a question. I took advantage of it so many times I only wished I had taken more advantage of it. Go home, get council, get wisdom counseling in your family and make a home that adorns wisdom. Make a home that declares wisdom to your children as they see how you deal with challenges and decisions in life. Jesus went home and was submissive. So go to Christ, go to prayer and the Word, go home and then comes number four.

The fourth takeaway is go to church for wisdom. Jesus goes to the temple, the gathered place in the Old Covenant in the assembling of God's people and what has He done? He sits and listens. He asks questions and He responds. Go to the covenant family. I beg you for the sake of wisdom in your life, don't treat Christ's church as your drive-by religious experience periodically. Be connected to the people of God. It's the depository where God works in the lives of His people. I know the church isn't perfect. I tell people that church is like hot dogs. I love to eat hot dogs but I just don't want to watch them get made. I know that's the way it is with the church of Jesus Christ but I'm amazed at how God uses it. It's very easy to go sit on the side lines and be a cynic and a critic and you may choose to do that but I'm asking you as a part of Briarwood Presbyterian Church that you make yourself available to others and you make yourself accessible of others.

God has given teachers, disciplers, the preaching of His Word, His worship, sacraments, the gathered assemble of God's people in that large group, the wisdom that comes in the great hymns, the marvelous songs of praise, the glorious confessions of faith, the wisdom that comes from the reading and hearing of His Word, and the wisdom that comes from seeing His people, talking with them and asking them questions. Not only does His church have that large group where wisdom abounds but it has that small group also. I have always seen that wise people find a way to sit in a circle and listen to wise people. We call that small group. They have a way of finding wise people to sit among and to be a part of. So go to Christ, go to prayer and the Word, go to your family, go to Christ's church, the family of God and then comes the fifth place.

Finally but not least, go worship. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is code language in the Bible for worship. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who is at work in you, living under the awe of God. The awesome God that knows me and loves me and in whom I trust and in whom I am upheld, it is Him. If you search for wisdom anywhere else then from the Lord Himself and He loves to visit wisdom upon those who worship Him in life, then it's vanity and fool heartedness. You can acquire knowledge and you can acquire some understanding but you have to be given wisdom from above.

His name was Teddy Roosevelt and he went on a safari and came back. What he didn't know was that on the same cruise ship was a couple that had given 40 plus years to translating the Bible and planting churches and had never come home in Africa. As he was coming home from a safari in the 1900s this couple was on the same ship. When they got to New York this older missionary couple that had left as young people from that same harbor were now coming back to that harbor, now 40 plus years later after giving

their whole life, stood by the railing and saw bands playing. They see banners and they begin to think “Oh my goodness what a welcome.” “Welcome” is what the banner said. Then they realized that it wasn’t for them but it was for Teddy Roosevelt. One couple was there to pick them up. He was a president of a Bible college and his wife who had been a classmate of this missionary couple in Bible College and they went out to eat that night.

As they were sitting there she noticed that her dear classmates, now home from missionary service were sitting very quietly. She said to them “You seem so pensive I guess from returning home from so many years in Africa it must be difficult because things have changed so much.” The missionary man said, “I wish that was my only problem. I have to confess to you to my shame that I am feeling so sorry for myself. I went for 40 plus years and gave my life for Christ and to others through medical clinics and Bible churches and I come home and have one dear couple to meet me. Then here’s a man who goes for four weeks on a safari and a whole city turns out with banners and bands playing.” I’m so glad I wasn’t sitting at that table because I know what I would have done and that’s why this is so convicting to me. I lack so much wisdom. I would have got up and put my arm around him and said, “This is a terrible world. I can’t believe that happened.” I would have thrown a pity party for them and died in a pile there right with them but this was a lot smarter lady who had wisdom from above.

She has been given knowledge and understanding and then wisdom broke through. She went over and put her arm around that missionary and said, “Teddy Roosevelt went on safari and was gone for four weeks and he came home. Now there are banners and bands welcoming him home but my dear friend, you’re not home yet.” That’s wisdom. That’s life from Christ. “You’re not home yet. You have banners and bands playing but not here. Here, you’re bringing Christ and you have just changed locations for a couple of days until you see Him.” Oh that God would grant us that wisdom, what true happiness, life and decisions that our life would be formed up – stature, favor with God and favor with man, full of the grace of the Lord Jesus. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could be together. Thank You for the privilege to be in Your Word on this Lord’s Day. Father would You form up our lives with this marvelous gift of wisdom? For those reading this today who would respond to my invitation earlier to take step one to come to Christ, would You allow them this day to turn to You and put their trust in You alone? Friend, just say to Jesus, “Lord, I don’t want the foolishness of this world and the vanity of my sin, I want the wisdom of redemption in Christ.” Father, I want to pray that You would ask each one of us beginning with me that I would stay focused on Jesus who is not only my redemption and my sanctification but who is my Wisdom and then allow me to come to Him by prayer and the Word. Allow me to learn in my family, wisdom. Allow me to embrace Your family, Your church and sit, listen, ask and answer. Allow me Father to know the joy of living life in the fear of the Lord that You are awesome. Be lifted up O holy God. Give me the wisdom to live life under the eye of my great God. I pray this in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

