



BUILD CHARACTER

WISDOM

Spiritual Outcome Defined:

Live wisely in accordance with the wisdom of Scripture and the counsel of those who have experience beyond one's own.

Spiritual Outcome Described:

Let's make a distinction: wisdom is different than intelligence. Intelligence may be had by those able to hold a great many facts in their minds. They know a lot about a lot of things, which can be a very useful tool. But there is such a thing as an intelligent fool, or conversely, a person who may not have a high degree of intelligence but who has a deep degree of wisdom. Wisdom is the person who knows how to live and how to relate. The intelligent person might be gifted at crafting words or statements, for example, but the wise will know when to speak and when to be silent.

The intelligent may have the competencies to be impressive in the moment, but the wise will have the discipline to get things done overtime.

Wisdom is not flashy and is often overlooked and underappreciated. Ecclesiastes tells us *"there lived...a man poor but wise, and he saved the city by his wisdom."* It goes on to say, though, that *"nobody remembered that poor man."* (Ecclesiastes 9:15). The wise are content with this. They do not live to be impressive but effective, unlike the fool who parades himself. Scripture has a great deal to say about wisdom.

"Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many ... know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom." -- Charles Spurgeon

The book of Proverbs is dedicated to wisdom, as are Ecclesiastes and a few others. James is often referred to as the wisdom book of the New Testament, Song of Solomon has a great deal to say about romance and relationships, and Job gives wisdom for enduring hardship and suffering. Scripture tells us, *"Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold."* (Proverbs 3:13-14). Wisdom is found through both Scripture, and according to Scripture itself, through the counsel of many (see Proverbs 15:22). We learn from our own experience, the experience of others, and the experience of Scripture. Those who grow in wisdom are those who listen carefully to the counsel of Scripture, they seek the guidance of others, and they are reflective enough on their own experiences that they learn from their own collection of wins and losses.

Evidence of this Spiritual Outcome in a Person's Life:

- Is familiar with the teaching of Scripture's wisdom books and actively applies these teachings to one's life (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and James).
- Can name personal advisors for all aspects of one's life: work, relationships, dating, marriage, parenting, money management, health, etc..
- Can name at least three areas of life (finances, relationships, work, conflict management, etc.) where living foolishly has been replaced by living wisely.
- Can name a time in the past month where wisdom was intentionally sought and found through Scripture and counsel about a specific area of life (finances, relationships, work, etc.).

Guidance

Read each passage multiple times, and if helpful, in multiple versions. Very simply, write your observations about the passage. What do you notice? What words or thoughts catch your attention? What does it mean and what implications does it have in your life?

Proverbs 1:1-7

Observations:

Discernment Question: How important has the pursuit of biblical wisdom been in your life? What have you done to acquire it?



Proverbs 1:20-33

Observations:

Discernment Question: Where in your life have you seen the fruit of wisdom? Where have you seen the fruit of foolishness?

Proverbs 3:1-8

Observations:

Discernment Question: What do you think it means to be “wise in your own eyes” rather than the one who “fears the Lord”? Which is more descriptive of your current life?



Proverbs 6:6-11

Observations:

Discernment Question: Are you more like the ant or the lazy sluggard? Why?

Proverbs 6:20-29

Observations:

Discernment Question: How has wisdom protected you from temptation? How has foolishness drawn you into temptation?



Proverbs 9:7-9, 15:12, 15:22, 15:31, 19:2, 19:27

Observations:

Discernment Question: How well do you seek counsel and receive advice or correction?

Proverbs 10:8, 10:19, 11:12, 11:13, 15:1, 17:27, 17:28

Observations:

Discernment Question: Do your words reveal wisdom or foolishness? How?



Proverbs 12:11, 12:24

Observations:

Discernment Question: Does your work ethic reveal wisdom or foolishness? How?

Proverbs 15:16, 15:27, 17:1, 20:1

Observations:

Discernment Question: Does your self-control and contentment toward material possessions and your appetites reveal wisdom or foolishness?



James 1:5, 3:17

Observations:

Discernment Question: How frequently are you asking God for wisdom and genuinely seeking him for it?

Next Steps

What are practical next steps you will do from what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture on wisdom? Include insights offered from others in your group that could be applied in your own life as well.



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