

Good morning folks. Edwin spoke to me a couple of months back about the thing he would like more than anything else! (Don't worry I'm not going to embarrass you Edwin) if I remember it was **wisdom**.

I think it is probably a yearning we all have, for more wisdom, especially in the times we live in - how much we need wisdom and discernment in these last days. I was reminded of King Solomon who asked God for wisdom above everything else:

**1 Kings 3:5-12** *“at Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”*

*Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.*

*“Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties.<sup>8</sup> Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number.*

*So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”*

*<sup>10</sup> The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. <sup>11</sup> So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, <sup>12</sup> I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be”.*

I would say that Solomon was half way there at least to a wise and discerning heart, in asking for it in the first place.

The Bible devotes hundreds of verses to the subject of wisdom, ‘how precious it is’, the importance of it, ‘the need to pursue it’ in fact it tells us even ‘to get wisdom at all costs’

So what is this wisdom? Well the way to see it is; wisdom is made up of 3 basic components

**1) Knowledge 2) an understanding / discernment 3) application.**

Real wisdom cannot operate independently of each of these things. If you have Knowledge on its own it can just 'puff up' as I Corinthians 8:1 says;  
*"We all possess knowledge but knowledge puffs up while love builds up"*.

Its true also is it not? That we live in age where there seems to be an unquenchable thirst for knowledge to educate ourselves? For most young people who leave school today, there is an opportunity to go to university.

The internet as well gives us ample opportunity to be an expert in any area. People who go to prison can spend their 20 years sentence for murder gaining a qualification to be a lawyer so they can defend themselves when they come out.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying this is a bad thing, but knowledge without wisdom or discernment just creates pride. You have to be able to sift your knowledge and apply it rightly.

It is equally true that knowledge & discernment without application, without applying this knowledge in practical ways is useless! You can't just sit there debating with other intellectuals and having great wisdom if you put it to no good use. It's what the Apostle Paul came across in Athens in Acts 17.

*"All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas"*.

Just as James says that "faith without works is dead" so to is wisdom without application.

So what is the difference between a **spiritual wisdom** and an **earthly wisdom**? Well firstly, only God can give someone spiritual wisdom, you have to be **born again** to receive it.

**1 Corinthians 2:14** *"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit"*.

It is like the times (I'm sure you have experienced it) when you're talking to a non believer, they just don't seem get what you're talking about! A glazed disinterested look comes over them. God first has to remove the scales from

their eyes, open their minds and hearts up to the spiritual realm before you can get anywhere with them.

So I am going to state a few **worldly proverbs** or saying's and ask the question, whether these could be true and useful in the spiritual realm as well as the earthy realm?

And when I say the 'spiritual realm' **I mean in the only true and real spiritual realm there is - and that is in Christ and the Holy Spirit inspired scriptures.**

So firstly Here a popular one and made famous in a recent song.

'Don't worry be happy' it sounds reasonable, does it not? But does it have any spiritual value? After all our faith and the scriptures tells us "not to worry and be joyful"

Lyrics 'Don't worry be happy'

'Here's a little song I wrote

you might want to sing it note for note

don't worry, be happy

in every life we have some trouble

But when you worry you make it double'

'Ain't got no place to lay your head

somebody came and took your bed

Don't worry, be happy

The landlord say your rent is late

He may have to litigate

Don't worry, be happy'

When you analyse the words, the message of this song, you realise there is one glaring omission! **It lacks is any reason not to worry!** It just a blaze 'I couldn't care less' sort of attitude. It has no substance or core belief. It is the pinnacle of worldly foolishness.

When God tells us not be anxious or worry it is quite different. Scriptures give us the reason, an incentive, a purpose to not to do so.

Listen to these words from Matthew 6;

*"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"<sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you*

not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup> Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

This is quite different to a worldly wisdom, don't worry be happy attitude. God is saying 'do not worry' for a very good reason, that He cares for you, He will meet your every need, you are secure in His love.

Or take Philippians 4; 6-7

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"*.

Why should we not be anxious? Well there is every good reason; because He is guarding our hearts and minds, keeping us safe from all harm, giving us 'peace that passes all understanding' right in the midst of these things.

As I said earlier spiritual wisdom has an application, it works itself out in practical ways. It's quite different to worldly wisdom, which is temporary, vague has no substance and is without hope.

Spiritual wisdom always gives hope, there is a difference, a fundamental difference, spiritual wisdom has hope because it sees beyond the here and now into eternity and it puts its hope in an all knowing and all loving God.

How about another one "It's no use **crying over spilled milk**" meaning; 'not to feel sorry or sad about something that has already happened'

Now we could say it has some 'spiritual wisdom' i.e. 'don't stay in the past, to move on'. I would say however, you have every reason to cry about these things you have lost if you do not have a faith.

What if you have lost your business, your health has been taken away by some accident or you have lost a family member? You're just a victim of random events; they mean nothing in the end. There Pointless, they have no lasting value.

But this is spiritual wisdom;

Romans 8:28 *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God"* or Gen 50; 20 *"What man meant for evil God meant for Good"* Or how about this one: **(Tom)**

*"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed;*

perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh". (2 Corinthians 4:7-11)

With God there is a hidden wisdom in these things, it's not just cast it off a 'stiff upper lip' and move on mentality. There is real purpose in everything that happens to us.

Or what about this as earthly wisdom **"A leopard can't change its spots"** what its saying is; you can never change, you're always bound to your habits, your addictions, your temperament, you were born that way so get used to it, how desperately depressing and defeatist.

### **What do the scriptures say?**

2 Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! Hallelujah you're completely new - the leopard has been whitewashed!"*

There is always the possibility of change, to find victory over these things, to find healing and deliverance in Christ. "I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me"

And finally here's another sad one! It comes in at no.2 in the most popular worldly proverbs list. "Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone".

What it means is:

When you are happy, people will want to be around you and share your happiness, but when you are sad, people will avoid you. What a sad reflection on our world, you have to put on a front, a plastic smile, never be real, what games of deception and hypocrisy we play!

That's not spiritual wisdom. That's not wisdom from God. Jesus was at His most cutting when he was speaking about spiritual hypocrisy. Some verses from Matthew 23;

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. <sup>26</sup> You

blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

<sup>27</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup> So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness”.

God calls us to be real with one another ‘to confess our sins to one another’ to cut right through the falsehood of worldly wisdom. To laugh with each other **but also to weep with each other and bare each other's burdens**, in spirit and truth.

I could go on, there are literally hundreds of worldly wisdom sayings we could unpack and only see they do not measure up to real spiritual wisdom. Which comes down from heaven above.

But quickly, to close, how do we get spiritual wisdom? **5 Things;**

**Firstly** have you got it already? If you're a Christian you have the Holy Spirit.

I said last week, don't fall into the error of always waiting, step out in faith, and believe you have been given this wisdom.

Scripture says; “The Spirit leads us into all truth” it maybe you just have to realise it, to operate in it and practise it - you only get wisdom, discernment by using it.

**Secondly** If you don't believe you've got this wisdom, pursue it, and seek after it with all your heart - Proverbs 4:7 says; “The beginning of wisdom is this: **Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have**”

Ask God for it! – **James 1:5** says “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, **and it will be given to you**”.

**Thirdly be humble** God doesn't give wisdom to the proud.

**Proverbs 3:7** *“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil”*

**Proverbs 13:10** *“Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice”.*

**Fourthly make the most of our time.**

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil”. (Ephesians 5:15-16)

Wisdom is being busy about our masters business, the servant who buried his coin or talent in the ground was seen as a fool.

We will be judged how we have used our time. Make most of the time you have left - it will prove you have wisdom.

And finally are you willing to be a fool for it - God says;

1 Corinthians 3:19-20 “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness” and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.”

The wisdom of this world is coming to nothing, in the end it will prove worthless. just dead and proud words.

I remember the old slogan on the tee shirt “I am a fool for Christ who’s fool are you” Godly Wisdom isn’t going along with the crowd, it is courageous, and it takes risks, risks of being misunderstood and being ridiculed

There is a definition of foolishness for Christ I like, it says; it is the willingness “to be wrong in society, or wrong according to our time, but standing true according to our conscience, as guided by the Bible and the Holy Spirit.”

There is a lovely example of this when Peter and John were told not to speak anymore in Jesus name in Acts Chapter 4 vs. 18

*“Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup> But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to Him? You be the judges! <sup>20</sup> As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”*

Let us finish with this scripture from Proverbs 3:5-8

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;  
<sup>6</sup> in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

*<sup>7</sup> Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.*

*<sup>8</sup> This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones”.*

Amen

*Tony Troy*