

## Listen: Wisdom is calling!

KSBC August 2, 2009

Getting Answers about Wisdom

Proverbs 1:1-33

**Intro** Life is challenging. Life is complex. Making decisions, regretting choices made, living with consequences, second guessing yourself, comparing your decisions with others, choosing between two unsatisfactory options, avoiding hard decisions . . . life often causes a sigh that wishes for less complicated and simpler experiences. We often find ourselves longing for a sense of clarity and direction that seems beyond us.

We know there is only one God who rules the universe but have difficulty knowing how to resolve a misunderstanding with a family member. You believe that the Bible is true and from God for our good, but struggle deciding if that movie is ok for your children to watch. You know so much that is right and true, but feel discouraged as the issues of money, sexuality, friends, business, job, neighbors, family and communication hammer away at you on a daily basis. What we long for whether we know it in these terms or not, is in fact wisdom. This sense of wholeness where our lives are connected to our creator God and lived in his likeness in real time.

It is what Eve traded away as she rejected life as remaining submissive to God and his words. She accepted the lie of the devil that life is more about self sophistication than humbly following God. Wisdom takes us back to a life that has the aroma of Eden where the presence and desires of God are carried into the realities of our everyday existence – and we reap the benefits of walking with God.

Along with the law and the teachings of truth, God provides in his Word the words of wisdom to help us in the challenges and complexities of life. Being a follower of Christ does not make you smarter but it should reflect a better way to live life on the street, in the work place, in the home and in relationships. Wisdom is living life with skill under God that draws others attention to him in a manner much like the impact of salt or light. God provides instruction for living life with skill in the Proverbs.

### Read Proverbs 1:1-7

#### Three questions and two warnings . . .

What is wisdom? 1:1-6

Who needs wisdom? 1:2-5

Where is wisdom found? 1:7

Warning: Pressure from people to forsake wisdom is severe. 1:8-19

Warning: Danger of delay in choosing wisdom is deadly. 1:20-33

### Question #1 - What is wisdom? 1:1-6

Note the number of terms used in these verses to describe the objective of this book – to attain or know wisdom. Several synonyms and parallels are used to provide a broad understanding.

Eight answers from these early sections of Proverbs help us get our thinking straight regarding wisdom:

1. Wisdom is the skill or expertise of living life well.
2. Wisdom is a gift from God.                      1:2 attaining      1Kings 3:12ff; 4:29      Prov. 2:6
3. Wisdom is godliness in working clothes.      Not neutral      Eph. 5:15
4. Wisdom is attained only through significant effort.                      1:2,3      3:13-18      8:11-12
5. Wisdom is often about between – discernment.      1:2 understanding
6. Wisdom is practicing good sense – prudence.      1:3
7. Wisdom is close friends with planning – discretion.                      1:4 scheming
8. Wisdom is all about listening and learning.      1:5, 6

Illustrate – James 1 – need wisdom in complex times of stress?

**Question #2 – Who needs wisdom?**                      1:2-5

Note the people the book is addressed to . . . the ones who will benefit the most from the sayings and teachings of wisdom.

- The student or learner      1:2-3      attaining/acquiring
- The teacher or mentor      1:4      giving
- The young and gullible      1:4
- The wise and discerning      1:5

**Question #3 – How do you find wisdom?**                      1:7

1:7 is the foundation of the thesis of the book. If Proverbs is to help people gain wisdom, then verse 7 provides the essential definition and direction that must be followed to find it.

1. Fear God.                      1:7      2:5      9:10

The first and controlling principle of wisdom is submission to and worship of God.

Fear of the Lord                      14x in Proverbs                      sometimes syn w/love for God

2. Delight in God's words. 1:7 knowledge, wisdom, discipline – a standard of truth

2:1 Psalm 19:7-9 1:2-3 Jer. 18:18

Proverbs – 1:6 – for understanding . . . provoke thought through paradox, teasing symbolism, wit, common sense . . .

3. Seek hard after God. Fools despise – turn from God and his words. 1:7

Wisdom is activated by obedient choices and effort. 1:8 2:2

Wisdom is an authority that the learner must submit to . . . parents, kings, teachers, experience, God

Responsibility to respond well to instruction is squarely on the seekers shoulders

1:8 1:3; 19:20 12:1 4:7 4:13

Warning: Pressure from people to forsake wisdom is severe. 1:8-19

Note the intro and foundation to wisdom is followed by both an illustration of how wisdom is found and a warning of severe pressure from others to forsake the way of wisdom.

Parents are actively warning and teaching.

Warning: Danger of delay in choosing wisdom is deadly. 1:20-33

Note the assumption that wisdom is highly accessible to people in every aspect of life.

Note the individual responsibility assigned of foolishness . . . 1:24-25

Note the severe consequences . . . 1:26-33

**Conclusion** What are the complexities, frustrations, unpleasant consequences, hurts and challenges that you are facing this week? Marriage, work, parenting, relationships, politics, communication, being a kid, being a teenager, being an old person got you down? Commit today to be a listening learner who seeks hard after God. God is wisdom. God gives wisdom.

- Evaluate, repent and grow in your responsiveness to God as a listener/learner.
- Turn down the volume in some way on the influence of fools in your life.
- Stop putting off the radical responses that you know God requires of you.