

MR. D'S NOTES ON WISDOM



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INTRODUCTION

This is not meant to be a concise work on wisdom, but a brief look at the verses that mention it in Scripture and gaining some insight into the usage. It would make the basis for a good Sunday school or preaching series. I trust that it will assist you in your ministry and life.

The desire of many is wisdom in this life but all too often when we finally achieve that goal of life we are too old and feeble to gain any benefit from that which we have striven. It is my hope that via this study the course to wisdom might be shortened.

It seems to me that wisdom is very slow coming because we gain it for the most part from the school of hard knocks and hard learned lessons from life. If however we can glean some insight from the Word - insight of what life style changes we can work to bring us into conformity with His will more quickly than we might gain wisdom a little sooner and not have to pay so much tuition at that hard knocks school.

Only after some have set themselves to this course of action will we know whether this idea be from a wise man or from one that has not been to the aforementioned school long enough.

It strikes me after saying this that most likely wisdom is wise use of knowledge - knowledge being easy to come by but how to use it may be a little more difficult. But at least if one knows how a wise man lives then he can appear to be wise - that will aid our testimony before mankind until we can gain true knowledge.

I might interject that the flow of the study from verse to verse may seem erratic, but it follows the passages as they are listed for the different forms of the word wise in the concordance.

This is not designed to be a definitive study on the subject, only some observations from the texts listed in the concordance.

I was terribly amused when I sat down to do the final proofing of this work. My wife was taking a class at the local community college for her employment and I have been doing some study at the student services building while she is in class. This evening I walked in to my usual table and on the table were some fliers.

“THE WISDOM CIRCLE”

“The purpose of the Wisdom Club is to allow a place for pagans, wiccans and other old world religions to meet without fear of religious discrimination.” Under the quote was a boiling pot. Now I am not sure why they would call it a “Wisdom circle/club” when they have rejected the purest wisdom on earth, indeed the only true wisdom - God. Anyway, let us continue in our search.

Gene 3:6 "And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

It would seem that wisdom was to be desired even in the Garden of Eden! Imagine that! I certainly won't make any strong comments that it was a woman that first desired wisdom. That could certainly be turned against man and appear to some that man didn't know enough to desire it.

Now, one must observe the obvious fact that Eve was thus proven to be unwise, not only in her decision but also in her created condition. This is not meant to be a put down to woman. All are born in the condition of lacking wisdom. I'm not sure it takes much observation of children to realize the truth of this statement. Indeed, one can't miss the obvious that even many young adults have little wisdom! Well, okay many older adults may even be lacking in wisdom - thus the obvious - wisdom must be a learned process.

This term is also translated circumspect, understanding, wisely, and insight. These terms give us some insight into the term - not terms usually associated with those wet behind the ears, as they used to say. Wisdom seems to be something that accrues with life and age.

In Job 22:2 we see that wisdom is profitable to the person. "Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?" It also seems that we can be a benefit to God as well which ought to give us a great desire to gain wisdom!

Psalm 2:10 encourages kings to be wise and to be open to instruction thus we might glean that a wise man does not necessarily know everything - the wise can be taught. "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth."

Psalm 36:3 mentions that one that has left being wise is connected with deceit and iniquity. Not only is the unwise person open to wrong, as was Eve, but we should note that we seem to have a

choice between being wise and not being wise.

This rather relates vividly to our profitability to God and self!

Psalms 94:8 relates the brutish and the fool to the category of the unwise. "Understand, ye brutish among the people: and [ye] fools, when will ye be wise?" Brutish carries the thought of one that ignites and/or consumes or burns - I would assume in the context of the fool it might relate to the thought of one who starts things that cause destruction. So if one is wasteful or troublesome and/or a fool, seek wisdom!

Hard work seems to relate to this wisdom. One that gathers the harvest is wise. This passage always reminds me of the story of the grasshopper that fiddled his way through the good times while the ants prepared for winter. When winter came the grasshopper was unprepared and had to be cared for by the ants. Prov. 10:5 "He that gathereth in summer [is] a wise son: [but] he that sleepeth in harvest [is] a son that causeth shame."

I saw a cartoon of this tale when I was a child and have never forgotten the truth of the story. I trust others will consider it well. May we as believers be wise in our participation in the Lord's harvest! What are you doing to bring the lost to the Lord?

I must smile with this next text because many are the verbally abusive people that have crossed my path over the years - those that think themselves wise. Prov. 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips [is] wise.

Dare I say more? No. Well maybe a word or two. I have had my detractors over the years. Most of these folks gave witness to their sin when they vented their verbiage toward the unsuspecting.

When I hear someone unleashing on another I often wonder of their Christian life. How can someone be verbally abusive to another child of God?

Prov. 10:19 "The king's favour [is] toward a wise servant: but his wrath is [against] him that causeth shame." We don't see a lot here but the lack of causing shame - how does that relate to our day?

Might it relate to anything that causes another to feel less than he/she really is? Like maybe teasing, like maybe cutting remarks, like maybe ignoring someone or maybe talking down to someone?

It isn't of small significance that the result of the one causing shame is wrath - that should bring about a change of action even if nothing else does. Do you suppose that one of the results of that wrath coming upon one might bring with it shame? Many that cause others shame by belittlement are themselves feeling less than they desire about themselves so belittle others to

build themselves up.

It seems obvious to the believer but isn't that clear to the lost - the wise person seeks to avoid hell - to put it in the 2002 vernacular - WELL, DDUUUUHHH! Prov. 15:24 "The way of life [is] above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath."

It also seems clear to me from this text that it is not wrong to seek God just to avoid hell - indeed, it seems that is the clear implication of this verse! Avoidance of the unpleasant seems the clear choice of the wise - not only hell but any unpleasantness.

Let me share two illustrations of these aspects. First the avoidance of hell. Faith, my wife, once gave small gifts of appreciation to some temporary employees. She included with the gift a tract. One of the women returned the tract to Faith with a note written on the back. "I do not believe in Jesus Christ." A woman, I am sure that thought she was being wise to acknowledge her disbelief to avoid further such approaches from a religious nut, was in fact showing how unwise she really was.

Secondly the avoidance of unpleasantness in general. It seems that some believers live for unpleasantness. They love to stir up trouble and cause problems for everyone.

One serious problem in my mind is that the church does not stop this sort of person. Causing division is basis for church discipline! I have never seen anyone disciplined for this - maybe this is why we have so much division in our churches today. (Rom. 16.17 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.")

Parenting is found in the context of wisdom! Prov. 17:2 "A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren."

Actually, can you really believe this one? God actually thinks that a parent ought to control his/her child - should keep that child from doing certain things - my my that sounds like God is getting abusive! At least that is what the world is telling us - keep the child from reaching their full potential by having don'ts is the same as abuse to many in the world today!

Indeed, the one that keeps the son from causing shame will have an inheritance - reward for his good control. At the very least they will have the joy of seeing a good child mature into adulthood. (You might find the account of Eli and his sons of interest in this respect.)

Dan. 12:3 may relate to the thought of the inheritance mentioned in the previous verse "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." The text is not specific but seems to suggest that the wise are very special to the Lord - shining examples of those that seek wisdom and God over foolishness and its god the world.

Dan. 12:10 speaks of the wise having understanding as opposed to the lost not understanding. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand wisely"

Again, we see that there is a marked difference between the lost and the saved when it comes to wisdom. This is not a total surprise to the person that believes in the total depravity of man - that doctrine which teaches that man in his natural state has no understanding of God's dealings with man.

David caught the Lord's recognition when he was acting wisely even when he was away from Saul. This might relate to the fact that we should act properly at all times - at the least we are to act properly when we are away from our authority. I Sam. 18:5 "And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, [and] behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants."

Our daughter revealed once that she had not lived in a proper manner (nothing seriously off base, just not as she knew she should live), or as she knew we would have liked, when she was at high school. We did not know this until she was married and safely away from our authority - JOKE - the point being she was not wise in this way of life. God appreciates those that walk circumspectly even when no one knows.

God was able to use this lifestyle of David's in the life of Saul. I Sam. 18:14 "And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD [was] with him." 15 "Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him."

When we live properly we may affect many lives around us. Our circumspectness may bring about the same in others if their fear leads them to God.

I have spoken to many people over the years that have regretted decisions they had made in life. They themselves often wondered what they had not done for the Lord by living incorrectly. I often mention this as "missed blessings" and I do believe that this is a valid truth. At times when we have chosen to go our own way, God's work is stopped in our lives. It is not that God can't do what He wants to do - He most certainly does, but he does it through other people - we miss out on knowing the joy of seeing what God could have done through us.

I Sam. 18:30 "Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, [that] David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by." If you really want a good name this is it - be wise. The "so that his name was much set by." relates to the people's view of David - he was respected. One translation mentions his name was precious.

Psalm 64:9 "And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing." This text speaks of some of David's hard times, yet there seems to be a

looking past what David was facing to the more clear, righteous/unrighteous man.

It seems to speak to the lost before God and their response to Him. Since the response seems positive we must view this as an end time context - they are going to finally view God as they should - as the God of the universe worthy of their recognition.

Wise action is related to perfection in Psalm 101:2 "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." Our lives should reflect this passage - the fact that our lives should be spent seeking to live perfectly - correctly before our Lord.

Handling matters of life should be done wisely. Proverbs 16:20 "He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy [is] he." Life is full of choices for each and every one of us and God desires that we each make those decisions as wisely as possible.

When in life should we start with these decisions? We should start at the earliest point in our life as is possible. Few young people come to college with much wisdom. One young man came that seemed to show great wisdom in his choices - he soon was dating a young lady of similar qualities. Soon this couple married. What a joy to watch them through their courtship making all of the wise decisions. They were walking with God and He with them - they certainly found good. We have seen them grow in the Lord and have served the Lord faithfully for many years since.

God desires that we avoid wickedness, however we are not to ignore it nor its end. Proverbs 21:12 "The righteous [man] wisely considereth the house of the wicked: [but God] overthroweth the wicked for [their] wickedness."

We are to consider the wicked so that we may know what wickedness is, as well as consider the way of the wicked and their end - God will overthrow them when the time comes. That "overthrow" should solidify our desire to be numbered among the righteous!

Job 34:35 "Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words [were] without wisdom."

It seems that the people around us may perceive our verbal contributions to conversation as unwise. Hummmm, seems I resemble that comment. In Jobs case his friends were rather closed minded about what he said. This most likely is the case in my life as well. Many are the times when I have talked with people that they have totally taken what I've said wrong, or completely blocked it out of their mind as worthless.

I think that the wise action is to let them rant - you will never change their mind - even if you did they will be too embarrassed to let you know.

Wisdom can somehow instruct the wise. Proverbs 1:3 "To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;"

I think that the concept of keeping your peace when you are taken wrongly may apply here. As we keep our peace it seems that we vividly see the benefit. We often see our vindication come forth by revelations which God makes evident.

Be sure to understand that the other items listed in this passage also can bring instruction if we allow it.

Gen. 41:8 "And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but [there was] none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh."

Now, to the problem. Why is wisdom completely lacking between the Garden of Eden to Joseph. The text mentions wise men were in existence at the time so the concept of wisdom had been around previously - just not a real high priority it would seem.

It may be of importance that these wise men are in a secular system - wisdom is not a Christian thing it is a human thing - all must deal with it or with the lack thereof.

Gen. 41:33 "Now, therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 41:39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, [there is] none so discreet and wise as thou [art]."

This may be of interest - the wisest of all the land was a child of God! The wisest of all the land was not an old duffer either, nor was he rich - he was wise and worthy of being given great responsibility in spite of his youth and servitude.

Might we find application in this for our church pastors and leaders? I think it obvious we should!

It was also noted of this future leader that he was discreet - a noted mark of being wise I would think.

Exod. 7:11 "Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments."

Wise men are related to sorcerers - not necessarily a required relationship, but an important point as to where the world often looks for wisdom. Also it may be an indicator of God's sovereignty - the lost seek secular wisdom at times and God's wisdom at other times.

This may also give rise to the observation that there is a difference between God's wisdom and

secular wisdom. Apply that - where do we go for wisdom as Christians - it had better be to those with Godly wisdom. I fear this is often not the case - we often go to lost counselors.

Exod. 23:8 "And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous."

This word has the idea of "clear sighted" or "seeing clearly" or "seeing things as they really are." The Net Bible translates it "open eyed" which seems to relate to not being blinded by the gift. "Gift" is translated bribe by the Net Bible. This seems clear from the context and the text. The context is a list of do's and don'ts to be followed - sorry all those that don't like lists of do's and don'ts, but yes, God is a true legalist in your mind.

The term bribe fits much better in the verse. Indeed, the term is translated bribe a number of times in the Word.

Exod. 28:3 "And thou shalt speak unto all [that are] wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office." (Exod. 31:6; Exod. 35:10; Exod. 36:4; Exod. 36:8 also)

God gives wisdom for service! Also to note, this was given to non-priests so that they could assist the priest in his service to God! God can and should use laymen in His service. Pastors ought not keep the people of God from assisting in the ministry. God is very interested in having His people assisting Him in His work.

Another possible application even though it will clearly be unpopular in this day in the church is dress in worship. God went to great length to dress his priests - look at the pulpits of today - some have men in them that look like they stepped down off the tractor.

Exod. 35:25 mentions in the context of gathering for the "Lord's offering" wise women. "And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, [both] of blue, and of purple, [and] of scarlet, and of fine linen." Gathering for the Lord is a wise thing - might our preachers take some note of this fact. Wise people - on their own - without twisting of arms, without pleading, without intimidation will gather for the Lord's offering. It may be that the pleading and arm-twisting is because some of the causes are not the Lord's.

I have spent time in two churches where the offering plate has never been passed, nor are there plans to do so. There are boxes/plates at the back door into which the offerings of the believers are dropped. Neither church has ever wanted for the funds they needed.

Exod. 36:1 "Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded. 2 And Moses called Bezaleel

and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, [even] every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:"

Just a brief comment - God seems quite interested in His sanctuary - why is it that we seem so flip about it? We seem to treat our place of worship with little if any respect. We teach our children by our absence of correction that the sanctuary is where we run, scream and shout until the service starts, then that is when we must be quiet and play with toys and books, eat crackers and maybe take our nap.

The wise man is to be considered as part of leadership. Deut. 1:13 "Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you."

There are two other qualities to be considered - understanding and being known. In other words you don't take a man that is unknown for your church leadership. How does that relate to the way we call pastors in our current church environment? Seldom do we KNOW the men we call and in that we find our problems.

A small church in the mid-west called a man that seemed right for the job. A few months into his pastorate one of the deacons arrived at the pastor's house unexpectedly for a visit and found his pastor playing poker and smoking with some of the town's men.

The deacons called one of the pastor's references - a local Bible college - to see why the pastor would have used them for a reference. The college informed the church that no one at the school knew the pastor - he was not known by his church before he was called.

Some would suggest that this is Old Testament so does not relate to calling a pastor. True it is old covenant, but it seems God is interested in these qualities for His leaders. Deut. 1:15 relates the same thought.

The following text pictures what has been mention previously - our wise walk will be a testimony to those around us. Deut. 4:6 "Keep therefore and do [them]; for this [is] your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation [is] a wise and understanding people."

One might also assume that the reverse of this text might be true - not being wise in life pictures us as fools to the lost. The sad part of this concept is that believers often condemn and scoff at a believer that takes a stand on things of the Lord - often when the lost around us realize and understand our position they have respect for our wise living.

Humm, one further thought, how does the United States appear to the world - we follow not the laws of God yet claim Him - aren't we viewed by the world correctly? As fools?

Again, we see that a bribe is inappropriate - because it blinds the wise man to truth. Deut 16:19

"Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous."

In this text we see another principle - it is implied in the previous thoughts but here clearly stated - he must be a believer. Deut 17:15 "Thou shalt in any wise set [him] king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: [one] from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which [is] not thy brother."

What would a pulpit committee be thinking of to call or recommend a non-believer to a congregation - not acceptable! Or for that matter why would any congregation place any, lost person in any place of leadership in a church - also totally unacceptable!

In Deut 32:29 we read "O that they were wise, [that] they understood this, [that] they would consider their latter end!"

This text relates being wise directly with proper understanding - oh, that the Godly would correctly understand the God that they profess to know.

In Jud. 5:29 we see "Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself,"

I would not want to be obnoxious, but certainly I should be fair to those readers of the female gender and call attention to the fact that women can be wise as well as men. It might be noted also, though I am not sure this text proves it conclusively, but one of the attributes of a wise female is to be a lady.

I shall not belabor this point, but I personally believe the older women of our generation have not taught the younger women of our generation or the next, to be ladies. There is much to be desired in this area of our Christian church in this society. (II Sam. 14:2; II Sam. 20:16 also mentions that women can be wise.)

II Sam. 14:20 "To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord [is] wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all [things] that [are] in the earth."

Another aspect of wisdom that we have not seen before - angels have wisdom. It should be of little surprise, but it seems to comfort me to know that they are wise as they care for us and guard over us. It would be a lesser confidence we might have if we knew we had unwise angels watching over us!

A second point might be made here as well. We as humans can have the same wisdom that the angels have. Since wisdom, most likely, is generated by God in our beings, through the circumstances of life, we can take solace that He is communicating the same level of wisdom that He has already communicated to them. He gives a wisdom that is equal to our ability to

understand it.

Wisdom relates to proper judgment in different situations of life. When we are called upon to act in church discipline or in jury court cases, we can have the wisdom to judge properly. One of the results of knowing this is that we can know our decision is correct - based on wise thought processes.

I sat on a jury many years ago relating to a drunk driving accident. It was of interest to me to see how all but one juror saw the guilt of the man. As the one, hold out, juror expressed herself, she expressed her total lack of wisdom. She made no sense in her thinking about the case. I Kin. 2:9 "Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou [art] a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood."

I Kings 3:12 "Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee."

There is a level of wisdom that can be given it would seem. God prepares His children for the task at hand - if you aren't the most wise, then you may assume you do not need that level of wisdom - otherwise God would have given you more.

It is a comfort to me, many times over, to know that God prepares us individually for the work that He has in mind for us. Many are the time I have wondered at my inability to sing, or to speak with the smoothness of many other men, but I know in my mind that He has prepared me as He has a need for me to be prepared - no more and no less.

Wisdom is God given as we see from this text. This has been mentioned prior to this in the study, but here we see the Biblical basis for it.

It is good to see that secular leaders can see wisdom in God's leaders. I Kin. 5:7 "And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed [be] the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people."

Sad to say in our present age God's leaders are not always viewed in such a manner. It isn't the lost people's perception that is incorrect but the lives of God's leaders. When we have many of the big name television preachers showing such total disregard to wise actions and living - what can we expect?

There have been the major adultery problems. There have been the money misuse problems. There have been other problems - plagiarism, lying, divorce, and appearance of evil. Why would any lost person view these actions as being wise use of God's time here on earth?

It is no wonder the lost hesitate to listen to the Gospel - many of those lost people lead a much

more moral life than do the Christian leadership. Why would any sane lost person want to be "saved" out of their moral life into an immoral one? Strong comments? I certainly hope so!

In the following text we see wisdom linked to counselor - I believe we have made point of this previously - why would anyone want to go to an unwise counselor? Yet, many believers have been sucked into the psychological quagmire of the world. Many so called Christian counselors take their training from the world and use these worldly principles to treat their unsuspecting clients. I Chr. 26:14 "And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward."

There is an aspect of "prudence and good sense" in the word used here. Common sense might be the thought. Some today lack common sense about counselors. (I Chr. 27:32 also)

We see in Esther that wisdom is related to knowing the times, law and judgment. Esther 1:13 "Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so [was] the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:"

I believe that all three are quite important but I would like to dwell on knowing the times for a moment. There are people that know the times, there are people that are ahead of their times and there are people that are behind their times. Those that are ahead of their times are usually misunderstood and as a result ignored by the mainstream. Those that are behind their times drag down all that is going on around them.

Knowing your times is a great asset to the individual as well as those around them. Knowing and understanding the world in which you live is imperative to being useful to God in that world. I am not saying you have to get down and wallow with the world but you need to understand those you would reach.

This is the problem with the entertainment focus in our church today. We are entertaining to get the gospel out - what are the new believers seeking -- salvation or inclusion in the entertainment crowd?

An item that might be mentioned is the number of times that people have wise men around them. Esth 6:13 tells us "And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every [thing] that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai [be] of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him."

Nowhere are we told to bring wise people into our presence nor to keep their company, however many men of the Bible did just that. It might be surmised then that having wise men around is not a sign of a lacking in character or mentality but a sign that there is recognition of need. In short, it isn't a short coming to seek the counsel of the wise. Indeed, in my own mind it is a sign of ignorance and/or lack of understanding for a pastor to not have a board of men which he turns

to for counsel.

It seems it would take a most arrogant and prideful man to reject the wisdom of the men that God has raised up in their church to assist him in his ministry. Sadly more than once I have heard of pastors disbanding their boards so that they could usurp full control over their church.

It is indicated that the wisdom of the lost is not necessarily real wisdom but maybe a false or skin wisdom. Job 5:13 "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong."

With craftiness and/or other qualities of dubious nature one can appear to have wisdom. Though it is not stated, I am sure the believer wanting to appear wise could also put on the facade of being wise. This is another good reason for seeking church leadership from among "known" men.

Though this text speaks of the negative, it speaks to the one that takes a stand as one with strength. Job 9:4 "[He is] wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened [himself] against him, and hath prospered?"

Taking a stand in our day takes real strength of character. In the secular world we have recently seen those that try to correct wrong in the maze of organizationalism are often fired or at the least threatened if they don't keep quiet.

In the church I fear it is no better. To speak out against wrong especially of the leadership is totally misconstrued - you become a troublemaker - there need be no investigation of your comments - you are automatically in the wrong.

The word used in the following verse seems to speak of a taken wisdom or of one that is not one's own. The thought of ravish is seen in the word in some contexts. Job 11:12 "For vain man would be wise, though man be born [like] a wild ass's colt." Lost man is not naturally wise it would seem.

The result is rather obvious from the verse and probably needs no further comment other than the admonition to consider your perceived image if you do use this type of false image of wisdom.

In a list of things that seem obviously foolish we see Job 15:2 "Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?"

Of course, the obvious answer is, no - a wise man should not utter vain knowledge. Thus the obvious principle - if you see a person uttering vain knowledge you know you have an unwise man or an unwise wise man.

When watching a breaking news report of a helicopter rescue that had been going on for five

hours on the local television station I was interested that the normally bright news team was babbling to fill time. A shadow on the mountain had caught their attention. They decided that it was a stretcher that was hanging below the chopper but due to the turbulence of the blades was being blown a considerable length behind the plane.

I was totally embarrassed for them when the stretcher began rising from the snow directly below the chopper. Further embarrassment was forthcoming when the chopper turned and it became clear that the shadow was from part of the plane. They didn't mean to mislead but in an effort to appear knowledgeable they uttered vain knowledge.

The final phrase of this verse is of note - I don't want to belabor the meaning as I have not studied the meaning, but I might observe that where I live the east wind is always warm - is the verse saying they fill themselves with hot air? Enough said.

There seems to be some dispute as to the exact meaning of this verse but both positions picture the wise man as sharing his wisdom. Job 15:18 "Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid [it]:"

Job 17:10 could indicate that there will not necessarily be a whole bunch of wise men around when you need them. "But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find [one] wise [man] among you."

The following text reminds me greatly of a man that I have little respect for. This lack of respect is due to his lack of wisdom. I hesitate to say it but I think he missed being a great man due to his lack of wisdom. Job 32:9 "Great men are not [always] wise: neither do the aged understand judgment."

This man was/is a very intelligent man. Although I disagree with almost every thing he believes politically his intelligence is evident. Sadly his lack of wisdom was also very evident - Past-president Clinton - I trust he will find wisdom and measure up to the greatness he should have achieved previously.

The wise man should listen when others speak - they may reject in their wisdom that which they hear, but an open ear may gain the wise man new knowledge and add to their wisdom. Job 34:2 "Hear my words, O ye wise [men]; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge." (Also see Job 34:34)

God seems to scoff at those that think themselves wise. Job 37:24 "Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any [that are] wise of heart."

Aren't these people a crack up? I trust you have had the pleasure of meeting one of these people. They can be so very aggravating but when you realize what they are they become quite comical - they are so full of themselves they even believe themselves to be wise in their unwise state.

Ahhhhh, there is hope for me - the simple can become wise! Psalm 19:7 "The law of the LORD [is] perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD [is] sure, making wise the simple."

I trust, again, that you have had the honor to meet one of these people - someone that is simple yet made wise by God. You will find them so refreshing - they will make up for those that "would be wise" that you have to put up with.

I have mentioned many times over the years, a pastor I met many years ago. I was on deputation and was invited to share our ministry in his church. At supper I asked him where he went to school. After a long pause and a flushed face he said quietly that he had quite high school and had never gone to Bible college.

His embarrassment was a very sad commentary on the church at large. I told him as much - I told him to never apologize for what Almighty God had made of him. God prepares the man for ministry, not all the preconceived notions of His people.

This man had a fair sized church of quite spiritual people. They were one of the more responsive churches I was pleased to visit over many years. The man allowed himself to be used in these people's lives to build them up as He willed.

It is obvious that the wise have no special privileges when it comes to death - they also die. Psalm 49:10 "For he seeth [that] wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others."

Kind of seems that the wise should not think themselves special nor above any of God's laws. He is just as susceptible to the failings of man as the fool - even though he ought to be wise enough not to succumb to those failings.

The wise will know the loving-kindness of the LORD! That is enough reason to seek wisdom. Few really come to truly understand and enjoy the depth of His love for the believer.

Loving-kindness is translated many ways in the Old Testament – grace, goodness, good etc. all showing a God that deeply loves the believer. This love often is not known by Christians because they never realize all He does for them. We are so wrapped up in ourselves that we think all that is good in our lives is due to our good endeavors when in fact much is directly from God and indirectly all is from Him. It is only through His good grace that we have health to do all we do. Psal 107:43 "Whoso [is] wise, and will observe these [things], even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD."

A wise man will increase learning. There are those in the church that look down their uneducated noses and ridicule those that seek learning. They despise college and seminary education and turn up their noses at those that do not reject it with them. Hummm to those that fit in this category, and few there will be that admit it, please explain thine position in relation to

this, paying special attention to the obvious back side to the verse. One that rejects learning seems to be unwise.

I recently read a thread on an inter-net forum that was about seminaries. The people were showing their disdain of seminaries by calling them cemeteries and they accused all seminaries of teaching false doctrine and causing men to become dead spiritually. I suggested they were demeaning the God that led all those men into seminary training, to which came a barrage of the same rhetoric of death and false doctrine.

I might give one further observation to these - at the same time that they despise the learning of others, they pride themselves on their knowledge of the Word - which they could only have via learning. Psalm 49:10 "A wise [man] will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: 6 To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings."

Prov. 3:7 seems to speak to the false wisdom of many in our world today. "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."

The wise shall inherit glory according to Prov. 3:35 "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools." Everyone looks forward to gaining an inheritance - it is the subject of many many movies and television shows.

I must admit when my father died there was little concern for any forthcoming inheritance for we had no idea if he had gained an eternal inheritance. He had been confronted with the Gospel many times, but he had never made a profession of faith.

As for the material inheritance there was little left after the bills were paid. He worked his entire life to gain something to leave to us but the world allowed him to acquire little in this life. We hope that he took the opportunity to make gain in the next.

Again, we see the implication that the wise should be learners. (Prov. 6:6; Prov. 8:33) One might want to spend further time on their own considering the related passage Prov. 9:8 "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. 9 Give [instruction] to a wise [man], and he will be yet wiser: teach a just [man], and he will increase in learning."

Prov. 9:12 seems to indicate that we are to keep our wisdom to ourselves in the thought that we not brag of it, however sharing it with others when it is desired would be an integrated part of wisdom. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but [if] thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear [it]."

Prov. 10:1 "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son [is] the heaviness of his mother." Alright we see here that the mother is at fault if a son turns out bad and a father is to be credited with a wise son. Well, maybe that isn't a good interpretation/application of the text indeed, it is a

very bad application of it, however it does point out the joy of a parent over the son that turns out well. It also shows the heaviness over one that is lacking.

A comment is appropriate here for mothers and fathers that raised their children to the best of their ability. When they turn out well be joyful at what the Lord has done in their life, but when the child turns out poorly do not concern yourself about what might have been or what you could have done differently. If you raised them in the Lord then they had opportunity to follow God but chose a different path. Children make their own decisions in life - you can guide all you want but they make the choices and are responsible for them.

Many are the preachers of this world that wrongly hurt parents with their unkind comments when the child goes their own way. With a certainty, if you were not raising your child properly then you may be a partaker in responsibility. This however is not a life sentence to whip yourself with the rest of your life - seek God's forgiveness and move on to a better walk with the Lord. Prayer and God are the only answer to the child gone wrong.

I might share that a number of the children I have heard about - going wrong - have later opened their eyes to their error and returned to the Lord - becoming the joy the parent desired. Not all, but many.

Prov. 10:8 "The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall."
Hummmmmmm. Well I wonder about those that say God doesn't have a do's and don'ts list - they must be squirming in their beliefs in this study and its combining do's and don'ts with wisdom and doing it so often.

I also wonder at the squirmability of those that feel gaining knowledge and learning are so wrong. Prov. 10:14 "Wise [men] lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish [is] near destruction."

The thought of the importance of souls as it relates to wisdom is seen in the next text. Prov. 11:29-30 "He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool [shall be] servant to the wise of heart. 30 The fruit of the righteous [is] a tree of life; and he that winneth souls [is] wise."

Some today see little else for the believer to do - soul winning is our purpose in life. It is certainly a wise thing to be a part of, but it is not all the wise person is to pay attention to - this study makes this obvious.

At the same time there are those that leave the soul-winning to the pastor. The congregation gets them to the church and the pastor - hopefully gets them saved. This is not only the practical application of the way churches are run but in many churches it is the pastors expressed desire. If this methodology were true then only pastors could be wise.

We have seen that acceptance of counsel is the wise persons lot. We are to assume this is wise counsel otherwise we wouldn't be too wise. Prov. 12:15 "The way of a fool [is] right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel [is] wise."

In Prov. 12:18 we see what could be embarrassing to many believers. "There he accepts that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise [is] health."

Could another believer - or God for that matter listen to your tongue for a day and call you healthy? Many believer's tongues are no different than the tongue of the lost.

On one of the computer boards where I used to read, often the members were prone from time to time to discuss at length the pastors or deacons that were or were not doing right. I wonder how this differs from the gossip these same people condemn.

The Scripture is clear that if we have a problem with another we are to go to that person personally. Nowhere do I see a Biblical precedent for discussing church leadership on an inter-net computer board with people from all over the world. (Also see Prov. 14:3 for further benefit to the wise tongue "In the mouth of the foolish [is] a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.")

Next we see that a wise man will hear his fathers instructions. Prov. 13:1 "A wise son [heareth] his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke."

Some might suggest that this is just simply listening to what he has to say, however the word translated instruction can also be translated chastisement, chasten and correction - not just simply listening. The wise son will realize his father may have "wise" things to say to him!

Wisdom leads to life. Prov. 13:14 "The law of the wise [is] a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Wisdom itself is not life, nor the source of life eternal, but the wise will certainly seek unto life everlasting.

Those around us, that are wise, can also be a fountain or source of life - if we listen. The Net Bible translates it as follows: "Instruction from the wise is like a life-giving fountain, to turn a person from deadly snares"

As young believers, one ought to be sensitive to the learning of those that have gone on before. The older believers often have suffered the pitfalls of wrong decisions and younger believers should learn from the education of life that others may give.

Many are the young pastor that have flung themselves headlong into mistake after mistake in their first work only to realize that they had a wealth of information around them that could have saved the church much sorrow.

Young people please find time to get to know some wise believers and listen to what they have to say, then go to the Lord with much prayer and heed what you hear that is Biblical. You will save God, your church, and yourself much heart ache.

It seems just being around the wise can rub off on you. How great is that - just hang with the wise and you benefit! Prov. 13:20 "He that walketh with wise [men] shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

"Wisdom by lazy," it might seem - not necessarily so - hanging with this crowd will have its hard times - like when you foolishly open your mouth with some profound foolishness and they call you on it.

Women and their homemaking can and should use wisdom. The contrast seems to be between building and tearing down. I assume these are the extreme ends of the spectrum and that there are all shades of wisdom and foolishness between.

The believer should shoot for the wise end and seek to do the best they can with the children, using all the material, spiritual, and intellectual, resources available to her. To do otherwise is to be a fool. Prov. 14:1 "Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands."

Avoidance of sin would seem an obvious side effect or result of wisdom and in this text we see it stated. Prov. 14:16 "A wise [man] feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident."

In Prov. 14:24 we see "The crown of the wise [is] their riches: [but] the foolishness of fools [is] folly." The Net Bible note on this verse states: "Toy suggests that this line probably means that wealth is an ornament to those who use it well (Proverbs, p. 269). Greenstone suggests that it means that the wisdom of the wise, which is their crown of glory, constitutes their wealth (Proverbs, p. 155)."

The second rendering seems more appropriate to me. Certainly wisdom is a crown to the person that possesses it. One that knows he is wise also will know that he is very rich.

Prov. 15:2 seems to say it like it is with no holds barred. "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness."

Note that picture of the fool with foolishness POURING from his/her mouth. Hard to come up with an illustration so vivid so I won't even try.

Prov.15:7 carries a similar message relating to the wise - that of sharing wisdom and doing it correctly. "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish [doeth] not so."

It would be sad indeed, for a wise person not to share their wisdom and even sadder if they were to misguide or misinform others with it.

A scorner is mentioned as one that will not seek out the wise. Prov. 15:12 "A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise."

Why, might be the question. The scourner would be one that scoffs at the wisdom of the wise - giving ridicule to draw importance to him/her self. Thus having built themselves up, why would they go to the one they tore down to gain their own stature?

Again we see the thought of a wise son and his parents reaction to their son. Prov. 15:20 "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother."

Often have been the times when my sons have made wise decisions and let me know of their decisions – to which I have in my mind thrust my fist in the air and hollered YEESSSSSS!!!! I might add that a certain daughter has brought about the same reaction.

What joy to know that not only have you taught them well, but that they have learned well and have committed to follow what is right before the Lord.

Prov. 15:31 "The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise." One that listens to the lessons of life is wise. Life's lessons are usually quite hard and it is difficult to listen to them. Often one is tempted to turn a deaf ear to what is coming one's way - self pity being the preferable action.

Wisdom can conquer wrath. Now, that is an important truth to remember. Often when confronted with an angry person we tend to shrink from what is right so we don't have to deal with an angry person - however if we persist with wise words we will put an end to the anger and win the situation for the Lord. Prov. 16:14 "The wrath of a king [is as] messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it."

Discernment or prudence is also a trait of the wise. Prov. 16:21 "The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning."

Understanding and decisiveness are part of this word translated prudence. Off the top I'd say that we are talking about not talking off the top of our head but waiting till we have information enough to give wise counsel.

Internet boards have been mentioned previously - you can usually tell the wise from the unwise when a question is asked. The unwise will jump in with both feet and really lay out THE answers, while the wise normally will ask for more information and also will occasionally caution the asker on taking advice from those that answer with little information.

It seems that we have another text that speaks to the wise being careful with their mouth and

being sure that the tongue is profitable to the listener. Prov. 16:23 "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."

The following verse seems to have a poor translation yet it is not entirely incorrect either. The term translated wise is the same word we saw earlier that was translated prudent. The wise man is called prudent so in a loose sense the word is alright translated wise. Prov. 17:10 "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool."

The term reproof is also translated rebuke so this is a strong term indicating a strong verbal reprimand that is easily accepted by the wise person. I am assuming that this rebuke is something that is just and deserved, not just any rebuke from a know it all.

Years ago when we were planting a small church we were meeting in our home. I knew that we would not grow unless we had more room - we were close to maxed out in our living room. I started making suggestions for possible options. We were planning to make the purchase of an appropriate house in our own name then sell it to the church when and if the time came.

We found a nice simple house with a full basement that would have been perfect. When I suggested we consider it in a service one of the men spoke out in a not very nice manner that I just wanted a nicer house and that there was nothing wrong with where we were other than it wasn't good enough for me - I wanted a nicer house to live in was the only reason I brought it up - according to him. Clearly his view of my suggestion was one of a worldly nature.

I am not sure I was wise but I allowed the criticism to roll off. It became very clear shortly after that the people did not want a shepherd to lead and guide, but a puppet they could control.

When I read the next verse I was reminded of what I just wrote about holding my peace. Prov. 17:28 "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: [and] he that shutteth his lips [is esteemed] a man of understanding."

I was called wise that day by some of the older ladies we had in attendance. Ultimately we resigned and a group of pastors that was overseeing the work met with the congregation and quickly closed down the church - those people "had no commitment whatsoever to the church and the work so why bother" was the comment from one of the pastors.

Here we again see that the wise seeketh knowledge - in this case the ear of the wise seeketh. Prov. 18:15 "The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge."

The term seeketh indicates in this text that there is a concerted effort set forth to gain this knowledge - not like sitting on a bus listening to a conversation, but of going to a library and searching for knowledge.

The thoughts of hearing counsel and being instructed are again repeated in the context of becoming wise. This seems to be an emphasis in the Proverbs. Prov. 19:20 "Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end." (see Prov. 21:11 also)

Just one more time - don't listen to those that mock education - seeking education for wrong reasons is off base, but seeking knowledge is never wrong if you seek it to further your work for God.

I won't dig deeply into the thought of drink - simply suffice it to say that the Bible does not teach total abstinence, but it certainly teaches wise use of drink. Here it is shown that to drink enough to be deceived by the alcohol is wrong. It is shown over and over that not that much alcohol can impair a driver, so I am not sure just how much drink can deceive, but it would seem that it doesn't take all that much. Prov. 20:1 "Wine [is] a mocker, strong drink [is] raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Now, here is where I may get into trouble - Pastors don't say I told you to run off your trouble maker's, BUT this passage may be of use to the pastor that has serious troublemakers in his church. Prov. 20:26 "A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them."

I don't know for sure what "bringeth the wheel over them means," but scattereth seems quite straight forward to me. Get them under way - out of your hair - into someone else's church - well no that isn't good either, but do move them out of the flock so that they do not cause further trouble.

I would clarify - these are wicked people not just someone that opposes all of your programs - these are people that are living in sin - are wicked as the text says. Someone that is not desirous of changing their lives to conform to the Word of God - these feel free to move on down the road.

I might add also that this verse does not negate all the passages that speak to the thought of reconciliation - if they are wicked work with them and see if you can bring them into conformity with the Word. If they are unresponsive to the Word then they probably should not be in your congregation.

There seems to be a certain amount of wisdom in having a backup supply of food on hand. Prov. 21:20 "[There is] treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up." Darby translates this as "There is costly store and oil in the dwelling of a wise [man];"

In Biblical times a quick run to Safeway was not possible - thus a store of food would be good in case of unexpected visitors.

Wisdom is strength. Prov. 21:22 "A wise [man] scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down

the strength of the confidence thereof."

Because the wise is in the singular and it is unlikely one person would attack a city it is thought that this is a picture of the power of wisdom. The Net Bible footnote states "Wisdom can be more effectual than physical strength."

Strength is the confidence of any opponent. The wise man uses strategy to win over strength.

What a clear statement of the wisdom of hearing the wise. Prov. 22:17 "Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge."

Incline your ear - bend your ear so you can hear as clearly as possible. Hear is a word that is normally translated obey - thus listen closely and obey.

The last portion of the verse carries the thought of putting this information into your understanding - FOR FURTHER USE. Don't just listen and hear, but listen, hear, and use the information.

How often have you heard a good lesson and heard every word and even accepted the truth but failed to incorporate the truth into your living? This is the problem with much of the preaching/teaching of our day – no application!

The following two verses relate to this idea of making wisdom a part of your life. Prov. 23:15 "My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine." Prov. 23:19 "Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way."

This also speaks of the wise father desiring wisdom for his son. Many a father has seen a son making foolish choices in life - what joy it would bring to see the son pick up a little wisdom.

Joy for the parent can come from fostering righteous and/or wise children. Prov. 23:24 "The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise [child] shall have joy of him."

The joy of parenting can only be enjoyed by those that have given life to others. Some would submit that having a pet is akin to having a child and indeed there are similarities and similar limitations on your life, but giving life to and giving care for, are much different.

The joy of seeing your dog roll over is so great, I must admit but seeing your child live a righteous and/or wise life is much greater. A right living child is as much a joy as a wrong living child is a sorrow. Both are the product of the parents upbringing, their environment, their spiritual teaching, and the extent that they have allowed God to work in their life.

This passage would be interesting to see in the commentaries of some of those denominations

that say war is wrong. I totally respect their position but wonder how they explain these passages that speak of war and wise making thereof. Prov. 24:5 "A wise man [is] strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. 6 For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors [there is] safety."

I don't want any to think that I am for making of war, but I am not against defending oneself against aggression. Christ's not defending Himself is not a proof that war was wrong but rather fulfilling the role given Him.

Nor is "love thy neighbor" inference to avoid conflict. I think we as a country have many times shown our love for our neighbors - even our enemies, while not turning our backs on our defense. To love is not to take all wrong that is sent your way. To hold to that position, a battered wife would not be able to morally leave her husband's abuse, nor defend herself from it. This does not seem to me to be a tenable position.

It seems quite clear that in judging others - now listen - well, read carefully - when we JUDGE others the wise man does not show favoritism. Prov. 24:23 "These [things] also [belong] to the wise. [It is] not good to have respect of persons in judgment."

Oh for shock, for shock, for shock - there seems to be times when we are to judge others. I have no intention of taking a side study to delve into judging, but there are many that say we are never to judge, while GOD says that there are times we are to judge. It seems that the "some" are wrong, as they often are, when they think themselves wise about the Scriptures and show their ignorance of them.

It seems our next passage shows the result of one judging another - reproof if needed. Prov. 25:12 "[As] an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, [so is] a wise reproof upon an obedient ear."

Of course the emphasis is that the judge be wise in both judging and in reproof, but the point is also that believers are called upon to judge others and reprove them as well - not a popular concept these days of I'm going to do my own thingitis.

The next text is of some consternation at first reading - it seems to contradict itself. Prov. 26:4-5 "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit".

It seems to say don't answer a fool but answer the fool.

Jamison , Fauset and Brown suggest "4, 5. Answer not--that is, approvingly by like folly .5. Answer--by reproof."

The Net Bible states, " The apparent contradiction with the last verse has troubled commentators

for some time. The Rabbis solved it by saying that v. 4 referred to secular things, but v. 5 referred to sacred or religious controversies. While this does not resolve the issue, it does give a sound application for the two verses together - in negligible issues one should just ignore the stupid person, but in issues that matter he must be dealt with, lest credence be given to what he says (Plaut, Proverbs, p. 266). The text presents two proverbs that each present an aspect of the whole truth. One should not lower himself to the level of the fool, but there are times when the lesser of two evils is to do so, other than let him gain confidence as a wise person or be considered wise by others. Paul, for example, talked like a "fool" to correct the foolish ideas of the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:16-17; 12:11)."

It seems to me that to get involved with a fool and try to discuss wisely a topic should not be undertaken, but to answer his foolishness is required lest he think himself wise. Let me illustrate this for you.

When on a Christian discussion board I once acted out according to this passage - at least once I did anyway. A man came on the board espousing Baptismal regeneration. He was quite proud of his doctrine and proceeded to spread the falsehood. Now, he was being a fool - I could have joined him in his foolishness by jumping into a discussion with him. I wisely refrained for once in my life. Several others joined in with him arguing to the limit.

His arguments were so matter of fact that they seemed un-stopable to others on the board and they just fed him more opportunity to show them the fools - as in verse four - the good guys were loosing - the good guys white hats were turning gray.

I started asking simple questions to give him opportunity to go where I knew he was headed. When we arrived at the passage of the thief on the cross, we crossed swords in earnest. In a few more quick replies to his arguments I and others showed that he could not say what he said about the passage, and he was finally left with false doctrine on his face. God had allowed us to answer his foolishness with wise use of His Word and I am sure he did not feel himself wise in the results.

It was of interest that one that held to the same false doctrine had in the process of the several day exchange come to state a position on the doctrine that actually was not baptismal regeneration, but one of baptism being the final proof of ones salvation - not that salvation was given because of the baptism but that the baptism occurred because the person was obedient to his salvation and God's work in his life.

The next text is not nice - it is very pointed and clear that a man wise in his own conceit is worse than a fool. Prov. 26:12 "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? [there is] more hope of a fool than of him."

Have you ever known one that is wise in their own conceit? Years ago we helped in a little church that had a couple in their 50's. The woman always was very standoffish to rude. I taught

a little short Bible study in the morning opening time. One day she became very rude and abstinent in the study - she was twisting what I said to make it look as though I was teaching false doctrine. I finally stopped her intrusions with a short remark that caused her to realize how foolish she was being.

Some months later her husband wanted me to look at some electronics he wanted repaired. He invited the family so we all went - knowing it would be a long visit for my wife as the rudeness was given in all directions in our family.

I finished with the electronics and the man asked us to stay for a cup of coffee. Not wanting to face the woman I was hard pressed to muster up the "yes" I knew was needed so that I would not offend the man that had been quite nice to us.

Over coffee the woman was quite short in her comments to us while her husband was being quite polite - until the husband asked what I did in my spare time. I told him I was working at the church, working at my job 25 hours a week and going to college full time so didn't have much spare time.

Like the cloud that rolled away the woman's animosity fled the scene - she became the perfect hostess and acted as if we were all old friends. She was a college graduate and seemingly did not want to be taught by some ignorant television repairman but a college man - well that was just alright.

A father's desire for a basis for knowing he has a good son is pictured in Prov. 27:11 "My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me."

When someone falsely accuses the son the father wants to know that he can make substantial rebuttal to the slanderers. When teaching I was faced with both of my sons desiring to take classes. I warned them that they would not be on a level playing field as I was not on one as a faculty member and I knew the problems would be great.

The second year that one of the boys would have registered the faculty decided that they had to discuss him in the faculty meetings to consider allowing him to register. The discussion was not pleasant - indeed I was near asking them to delineate the difference between their meeting and a gossip session.

The result of the meeting was to tell my son that he could not register. The only problems they had with him was that he was not motivated - he didn't do his memory work etc. None of the men had bothered to find out that he could not memorize - not an uncommon problem in education. All of them could memorize and they enjoyed it so anyone that didn't was not motivated.

I did not even attempt to answer them - I knew my son and knew that they would one day see

their error if they bothered to open their eyes. Come to find out they didn't even have courage of conviction enough to tell him why he couldn't register - the business manager simply said you don't have the money to register so you can't - strange since others that year registered without money

I often wondered if my silence was wise but always decided silence was louder than any comment that would have automatically been rejected. My son went on to another college and did fine.

The word used in our next text relates to prudence and understanding more than wise, but in a way wisdom is understanding - what is and the prudent use of that understanding. Prov. 28:7 "Whoso keepeth the law [is] a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous [men] shameth his father."

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Keeping the law shows understanding and prudence and is a joy to the father, while falling in among riotous friends brings shame to the father. Many are the Christian parent which have seen this shame come upon their lives. It is a grievous thing in the first place but then to see that the child cares little even huts the more.

The rich can have a false wisdom but it is of interest that the poor can understand and see the rich as they really are - in fact long before the rich see their own fault oft times. Prov. 28:11 "The rich man [is] wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out."

The last phrase seems to indicate that the poor with understanding can search or know the rich man. In the context the poor may know the conceit of the rich - that doesn't take much in most cases these days. The rich seem more and more arrogant these days - in business they do as they please whether legal or not. The fall of the many CEO's of corporations pictures the truth of what has been said.

We see in the following passage the fool raising his head once again. Prov. 29:8-9 "Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise [men] turn away wrath. 9 [If] a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, [there is] no rest."

I think the two verses are related yet both have their separate truth. A wise man turns away wrath - or avoids it or attempts to subdue it - after all what good does wrath ever accomplish?

At the same time verse nine mentions the fool - one that often either turns to wrath to win his point - or at times he is like a carrier of disease - he causes those around him to turn to wrath. As the verse says if you contend with a fool you will have no rest. Either you will come to anger out of frustration or you will wisely walk away from the situation and bang your head against the wall for having gotten involved.

You must know if you don't already that the fool is no dummy - often they are quite intelligent

and cunning - that is why the wise need to be careful - the fool knows how to lead the wise into frustration and anger and then they look as though they have won.

Here is the key - Prov. 29:11 "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise [man] keepeth it in till afterwards." This is how the wise should operate! Allow the fool to open his mind so that all may see while keeping your peace until the moment that you can share truth to the closing of your case

Prov. 30:24 tells us that there are four things - insects that are wise. "There be four [things which are] little upon the earth, but they [are] exceeding wise:"

The ants are wise in that they prepare in the summer for winter. The Conies make strong their houses. The locusts go with organization. The spider is everywhere it so desires - even in the kings palace.

"25 The ants [are] a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer; 26 The conies [are but] a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; 27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; 28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

I suspect there is a lot of application in those four wise little insects! At the very least one ought to be embarrassed not to be wise in this life if these little insects can be wise!

We seem to hit a downer when we arrive in the book of Eccleastes but remember that this book is written from a strictly human perspective. Eccl. 2:14 "The wise man's eyes [are] in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all. 15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also [is] vanity. 16 For [there is] no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now [is] in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise [man]? as the fool."

The passage simply states that there is no advantage to the wise when it comes to death - both die. I feel this is the perspective of a man viewing things from a human if not carnal mind. He should have known that there is the advantage of knowing the wise in the Lord will certainly be with the Lord, but as to death itself - there is no respecter of persons - you can be the biggest fool of all and you will only die. On the other side you can be the wisest of all as Solomon and you will also - only die.

The concept of remembrance is of interest to me. After death I have noticed that when you talk to the friends, or listen to them interviewed on television, that they are always the best person that ever was - he/she was the kindest person you could ever know. I have never ever heard anyone say "That person is the most unkind terrible person I've ever known." It just never happens.

The wise will be remembered very much as the fool. Even in ages to come this is probably true. I have seen websites that sing the praises of cult leaders and false teachers right along on the net with the wise of the past.

Eccl 2:19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise [man] or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This [is] also vanity.

Again we see the thought of the wise receiving admonishment AND we see the foolishness of it. Eccl 4:13 Better [is] a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

Ah, proof positive that age or lack thereof is not a marker or requirement for wisdom. Eccl. 6:8 "For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?" I must admit however that I've seen few young wise but many old wise people. 6 Yea, though he live a thousand years twice [told], yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

It seems there is a difficulty in this passage. "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad" -the term translated mad here seems incorrect, however all translations I checked give the same thought if not the same translation, however the word is normally translated as praise or boasting.. (See Eccl. 7:4-7 also)

I assume that it relates to releasing ones verbal skills in reaction to what is going on. It is also translated to act madly - an interesting concept for the wise - not necessarily just a quiet retiring type if something is wrong.

Eccl.7:16 mentions "Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" The Net Bible says "So do not be excessively righteous and do not be excessively wise; otherwise you might be dumbfounded." The thought seems to be don't be overtly - overly wise appearing or maybe involved in appearing overly wise to your own embarrassment.

Wisdom seems a plus for the wise. Eccl. 7:19 "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty [men] which are in the city." Wisdom gives more protection, may be the thought of the text.

By deciding one is wise does not make one wise. Eccl. 7:23 "All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it [was] far from me." A sad thought that we can't just make ourselves wise by decreeing it. Bummer - we have to gain it the hard way just like every thing else in life - do it the normal way - no shortcuts allowed - not that shortcuts exist.

I have always heard that Proverbs was the wisdom book but there seems to be quite a number of

references in Ecclesiastes as well - since most feel that Solomon wrote both it is to be expected.

Wisdom can and seemingly should change our countenance - make us less harsh looking might be a good way to put it. Thinking back to the thought of voicing opposition to oppression - well it might relate to the BOLDNESS of face at times but normally a quiet countenance. Eccl. 8:1 "Who [is] as the wise [man]? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed."

The wise will be able to discern times and judgments or procedures - he will know the things that need to be done - the things that the future may hold due to the situation of the country or nation. Eccl. 8:5 "Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment." This probably relates in our times to those that can look at the news and see the implications of what is going on. A pastor needs to have this ability to see what the needs of the church might be, given a new situations. Mission leaders also need this same insight that wise thought can give.

There may be an aspect of prayer and walk with God here as the term heart relates to the inner man - the real person inside - the person as they are before God. The person that is plugged into God on a daily basis is going to be much more discerning. In this age we have the Holy Spirit within to add to our discernment unlike the Old Testament saint that had not the Spirit indwelling.

The limitations of wisdom are shown - we can never hope to plumb the works of God no matter how smart nor wise, we might become. Eccl. 8:17 "Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labor to seek [it] out, yet he shall not find [it]; yea further; though a wise [man] think to know [it], yet shall he not be able to find [it]. 9:1 "For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, [are] in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred [by] all [that is] before them."

The fact that one is wise does not automatically guarantee him a ready supply of bread - prosperity is one translation - it only means he is wise. Eccl. 9:11 "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race [is] not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all."

I have often cringed when a preacher or evangelist or one witnessing tells the lost that accepting the Lord will automatically cure all their illness and short comings. A person coming to Him in the land where there is famine will not receive a seven course meal served to them that evening - they may well die in the famine unless God intervenes - which He may do, but He is under no obligation to interfere with natural events.

The promising of supernatural intervention is plain false teaching - in my mind it is one of the

worst or at least the cruelest of false teaching save that of leading one away from God. On the other hand I know in my own heart that He does at His will intervene to do great things in some believers lives.

Our next verse is not nice for it reveals some short comings from being wise. Eccl. 9:15 "Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man."

First of all the wise person may be poor - not what most of us want to hear. Not only might they be poor they most likely won't be remembered - bummer - the poor man saves the city and he can't even gain a remembrance! How much of a bummer is that?

I think this speaks to the fact that you should not seek wisdom for personal gain – you may well not find any gain. This also speaks to something I have pondered many times - when I go to be with the Lord I'm most likely going to be forgotten very quickly. In my own family my two grandfathers are not remembered - I never knew them, nor did I ever learn of them - beside - all that knew them are dead.

The only indication they ever existed is their names listed in my genealogy program and a very few public records of which I don't even have knowledge.

My memory may last a little longer because I have littered the world with computer disks and the internet with great verbiage. Even then with technology as it is today computers may - most likely will be - gone in a few years and the disks will be a part of the world's landfill problems. Likewise at the throw of a few buttons the internet could cease to exist and I would be remembered no more.

We are temporary on earth and we need to realize it and live our lives so that we are profitable to the Lord while we can - our memory - even if it is long lived will accomplish little - maybe nothing.

All through this study thus far I have in the back of my mind a thought that part of wisdom would certainly be quietness of outward appearance. Eccl. 9:17 "The words of wise [men are] heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools." This verse gives credence to this thought. Not that the person is always unheard from, but he/she is quiet when they counsel - not bragging of their sessions as is the custom of many speakers and pastors.

One that has counseled others in one area of the country does not automatically have to share all those sessions in great detail with their new congregations/audiences. COUNCELING SESSIONS ARE NOT ILLUSTRATION DATABASES, if you haven't received the drift of my thought. Yes, there may be some illustrations you might be able to use but be sure if you are telling the secrets of your last congregations, you may find yourself decreasing your present one! Why would any sane person come to you so they could become an illustration for your next

church?

Eccl.10:2 states an interesting comparison. "A wise man's heart [is] at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left." "at the right hand" is a Hebrew idiom to show the place of protection. The foolish man has no protection but the wise man's wisdom is his.

In the armies of this day the soldiers shield was designed to protect the vital areas, thus this illustration.

Not only is the wise person quiet but he is gracious when he speaks. Eccl. 10:12 "The words of a wise man's mouth [are] gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself." This is hard to do sometimes when you have been wrongly accused or when someone has wronged you however grace should be shown - if for no other reason than to illustrate in part the grace that God has extended to the believer in salvation.

For the umteenth time we see wisdom linked with teaching and obeying. Eccl. 12:9 "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, [and] set in order many proverbs."

Here we see that due to his wisdom he has taken upon himself to teach others. There seems to be the thought of organizing of the teaching just in case anyone views curriculum in the Sunday school as not appropriate. This would also indicate that writing down of knowledge is not wrong, though I don't think the current climate of BIG NAME writers is healthy for the church. There are many unknown men that are never heard, or read, because the BIG NAME authors are the only ones that have enough draw to bring in the dollars required to make the publishers happy.

The words of the wise may be sharp and very to the point when given in rebuke. Eccl. 12:11 "The words of the wise [are] as goads, and as nails fastened [by] the masters of assemblies, [which] are given from one shepherd."

The words will goad or prod you along and it seems that if that doesn't work then they will stick you to the wall and pin you down. The words are not haphazardly thrown out to hit who they may but are carefully placed as if placed by a master builder.

Now, I don't know what kind of spiritual master I am but I know enough to declare publicly that I am not a master of nails and wood. I can give an old piece of furniture new life with careful refinishing, but turn me loose with raw wood and you will not call me master when I am done.

When starting a small church in the mid-west I needed a pulpit, but because we were meeting in our home it needed too lie down and become a coffee table. I had designed what we wanted and my father-in-law -- the master builder in our family -- offered to help build it.

I suspect he guessed my abilities or lack thereof as he measured and cut almost the entire thing from lumber. At the end he decided it needed a little trim around the removable top. We needed four pieces - he cut the first, he cut the second, and he asked me to cut the third. When we nailed the three pieces on he discovered he wanted to cut the fourth. My one cut and it was the one that was off. Nearly every time I stepped to the pulpit I was reminded of where my talent did not lie.

Again we see the uselessness of thinking ones self wise. Isa. 5:21 "Woe unto [them that are] wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"

The Net Bible is even stronger. "Those who think they are wise are as good as dead," however none of the translations I checked follow this line of thought. The translators of the Net Bible mention in their notes that the term "woe" is an integrated part of the funeral chant of this day - thus their translation.

In the prophets we find a number of references to the wise as well to the false wisdom. I will list the references for your further study. Isa. 19:11-12; Isa. 29:14; Isa. 31:2; Jer. 4:22; Jer. 8:8; Jer. 9:12; Jer. 9:23; Jer. 10:7; Jer. 18:18; Jer. 50:35; Jer. 51:57; Ezek. 27:8; Dan. 2:12-14; Dan. 2:18; Dan. 2:21; Dan. 2:24; Dan. 2:27; Dan. 2:48; Dan. 4:6; Dan. 4:18; Dan. 5:7-8; Dan. 5:15; Dan. 12:3; Dan. 12:10; Hosea 14:9; Obad.1:8; Zech. 9:2.

We move now to the wise men that came to see the Lord. The concept of respect would follow these men but the term depicts a wide range of people from true wise men to sorcerers - men of renown in their kingdom or country.

Many view these men much wiser than those of the Jews because it seems from their study of things they knew there was a king going to be born to the Jews. Matt. 2:1 "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,"

We don't know who these men were though tradition gives them names and information about them. They for some reason were interested in Jewish prophecy and had figured out that a king was to be born to the Jews. They did not know the details so obviously went to Jerusalem where one would expect a king of the Jews would be born. This might indicate that they knew little of the Jewish political climate.

We come to the wise man that built his house on the rock. Matt. 7:24 "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock"

There is the obvious application of the wisdom of a wise foundation for your house but also further application to your spiritual house. If you build unwisely spiritually you will most certainly spend eternity regretting the decisions. The spiritually wise man will build on the rock - the only spiritual foundation strong enough to last - the Lord Jesus Christ.

The believer that goes with His Lord's command goes as a wise person but also as one that is harmless as a dove - that is a balancing act to work on! Matt 10:16 "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

It may be well to note that God does not always work through the wise. Matt. 11:25 "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes"

I suggest this to the wise person that thinks God has appointed them as the answer to every ones problems. I have seen some great wisdom come in small packages.

We have, in this next verse, that which may make a wise person wonder if his/her gift of wisdom is worth having - when compared to the possible cost. Matt. 23:34 "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and [some] of them ye shall kill and crucify; and [some] of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute [them] from city to city:" Wise people must be willing to give of their life for God - all other costs will be quite acceptable.

A servant can be wise in action - this relates to an aspect we have not considered as yet. There are wise actions and unwise actions - both stem from the wisdom of mind or ones lack thereof - we trust that a wise mind always extends to the actions of the person. Matt. 24:45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?"

In the account of the wise/foolish virgins we again see the mind guiding the actions. (Matt 25:2-9) I think most of us have probably seen wise people doing foolish things - it comes from a disconnect between mind and action.

Within the Gospels there are some occurrences of the word in accounts that are recorded in more than one Gospel - these repetitions will be skipped - more in exercise is good but seldom when reading.

Paul tells the Roman believers he is debtor to both wise and to unwise in Rom. 1:14 "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise."

On some plain the wise and unwise are on a level playing fields - one is not better than the other - Paul could be equally indebted to both. The point? Don't find ways to shun the unwise nor gather yourself unto the wise - all are equal thus the wise will associate with both.

Again, we see the professor is a fool - might also relate to one that sets themselves forth as wise. Rom. 1:22 "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"

There seems to be a strong reference to knowing proper doctrine here - as well as its relationship to conceit - Many are the ignorant in doctrine that are so terribly conceited in their "knowledge"

of the Word. Rom. 11:25 "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

If your own conceit raises its ugly head again – there must be some importance to this warning. God mentions it in both testaments multiple times. It must be that this is one of the fallacies of man where wisdom is concerned. Rom. 12:16 "[Be] of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

This term translated "in your own conceit" is normally translated himself or yourself. Being stuck on yourself and your wisdom might be a good way to view it.

Paul would that his reader be wise toward the good and the simple. Rom. 16:19 "For your obedience is come abroad unto all [men]. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil".

This term has an element of training or learning with it - it is used of Greek philosophers and orators, of Jewish theologians and of Christian teachers. Again, we see the general scope of who might be wise. Believers as well as the lost. We can learn from the lost.

Years ago when I was in Bible college I went to work for two Jewish men. At one point they set up a profit sharing plan for the employees. The owners called me in to sign the papers and since I was planning on being done with college and moving on in three years I saw no value to signing up for a program that I could not benefit from.

My employers had seen a lot of life - one had been in a German concentration camp. They both encouraged me to sign up because "you never know what might happen." I bowed to their wisdom. God left me at that job for five more years. In fact when I told them I was quitting they informed me that they would give me enough vacation after I stopped work to allow me to still be employed on the five year anniversary - so that I would be vested in the program - so that I could receive the two thousand dollars that had been invested in the plan for me. Not only did God know my future but He also placed me in the hands of two wise Jewish employers.

In the next text we see the same term used of man, also used of God Himself. Rom. 16:27 "To God only wise, [be] glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."

What a joy to know we can have, in some part, the same wisdom that God has. What a joy to know we have, in part, one of His own attributes.

Well on the other hand God doesn't seem overjoyed with the wisdom that the world produces. I Cor. 1:19 "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where [is] the wise? where [is] the scribe? where [is] the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" Guess we better

be sure which kind of wisdom we gain lest we end up in trouble with the One that gives good wisdom.

Along the same line, God uses the simple to confound the wisdom of the world. I Cor. 1:26 "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, [are called]: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;"

I think this text is one where I must camp and base my life. God could have found many many wiser than myself to do the work that He called me to do, but He could have found few less simple and less prepared. I would have been a high school drop out had that been a cool thing to do in the 50's. I almost did not graduate due to my grades and lack of interest in school. I wanted to take Chemistry in my senior year but the principal told me I wasn't smart enough and would not let me register for it - instead I took Drivers Education, two shop classes and an extra study hall.

Somewhere God saw something He wanted to use and He called me - the cream of the intellectual crop - well maybe not - maybe just someone that was willing, though I wasn't all that willing either. God worked with me for a time before I saw fit to release myself to His guidance.

In our next text Paul emphasizes the care with which the church should be built. I Cor. 3:10 "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

Many a pastor assumed themselves wise in the building of the church they were called to, only to realize they ought not have been wise in their own conceit. Many churches have floundered because of unwise pastors.

The preposition "in" indicates something that is set or fixed - a person that is really in the world system. If you seem wise to the worldly then you are most likely the opposite - isn't this the truth - one that is wise in the ways of the world REALLY isn't wise! I Cor. 3:18 "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." The next verse states this "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness."

Verse twenty continues "And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

The absolute basis of our wisdom must be God. I Cor. 4:10 "We [are] fools for Christ's sake, but ye [are] wise in Christ; we [are] weak, but ye [are] strong; ye [are] honourable, but we [are] despised."

I believe many get off track in their basis for their wisdom - listening long at the world - the world's thinking slowly sinks into the mind and foolishness creeps into their thinking making them fools.

Paul is sarcastic in I Cor. 6:5 "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?" He chides the brethren about their lawsuits between one another. Believers have no cause to go to court with one another - God gave them Matt. 18:15-18 for the handling of problems between believers - the church not the courts!

There is a real sense in which the believer is encouraged to evaluate all they hear and say in ALL their conversations - it is covered in I Cor. 10:15 "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."

God, through Paul, tells the Corinthian believers to judge even what Paul said. This is in a specific context, but it is very good advice in all cases.

It has been my observation that most people that go astray of proper doctrine do so a step at a time, not all at once. They accept error very slowly but most surely.

Many are the members of sound churches where you can find literature from false teachers in their homes - teachers they've listened to on radio or television - it sounded good so they send a few dollars and the literature starts to flow into the home.

It is not wise to compare yourself with your peers. II Cor. 10:12 "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

In the first place you will often fall into sin because you feel inferior. If not you will gain an improper impression that you are important.

In teen groups now it is popular to build one another up - but cross the group and you are skunk snot. This comes from a false sense of value built on peer influence - not a good place to find your worth - try God - He is totally honest. You are worth much to Him no matter what a silly group of humans say.

Our wise walk with God is contrasted to being a fool - not a good option to the proper spiritual life. Eph. 5:15 "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise," Verse seventeen goes on to relate that not understanding God's will is unwise.

Here we have a condemnation of all gods - everyone that has ever existed - they are ALL - NOT WISE - enough said about them. God almighty however is the ONLY "wise God" - that makes it wise, one might assume, if you follow Him. I Tim. 1:17 "Now unto the King eternal, immortal,

invisible, the only wise God, [be] honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Jude 1:25 also)

As we have seen before wisdom flows from God - in this case via His Word. II Tim. 3:15 "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Ahhhh, here goes James putting a damper on the party. James 3:13 "Who [is] a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom."

Meekness of wisdom - ye ought not brag about being wise. And, he gives us a double blow - works are tied to wisdom! If we think our selves wise we can know by viewing our works - as in, do we have any.

We have exhausted the references to wise so we will now move on to wisely - this should give us more insight into proper use of wisdom.

In our first text we see that the wise person takes note of the present situation and considers the ramification of present actions on future scenarios.

In different churches I have recommended that they start immediately to prepare for future growth. This encouragement was met with little interest. The people were only interested in what they knew in the present. Exod. 1:10 "Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and [so] get them up out of the land."

David's wisdom at a young age set him apart from his peers - he was acceptable to the people. I Sam 18:5 "And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, [and] behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants."

How many young people are accepted by people in the church? Few I fear as few act wisely - however some do and most adults appreciate their walk.

It seems - as obvious it would seem - that God appreciates the wise person guiding their steps wisely. I Sam. 18:14 "And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD [was] with him."

Earlier in the work I mentioned a young man that was taken to task for showing up with a group of missionaries for a meeting at a church in Levis. This young man failed to order his steps wisely. He was constantly at odds with the mission leadership for doing his own thing rather than the wise thing.

Verse fifteen pictures one of the results of a wise walk. "Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him." Now Saul was fearful because he saw in David what he was lacking in his own life.

Now, I am going to enter into editorializing for a moment. I personally believe that many pastors are run off from churches for this very reason. Some of the people fear being confronted with their own sin and bring about a pre-emptive strike.

One further editorial comment - since I believe this to be true, then I also wonder why more pastors aren't run off - I think the point is made so enough editorial license.

The Psalmist ties wise action to fear of the Lord and declaring His works. Psal. 64:9 "And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing."

Declaring His works - an easy phrase to turn but how often do we do this? When He has done something great for you do you tell others - either Christian or lost - ALL need to know of the glory of God manifested in His works.

Years ago I worked for a not so pleasant man. He was not evil but he certainly wasn't a saint. One afternoon the Lord had done something great for us - as I was telling my employer of the provision I was not sure how to tell him without telling of the Lord. It dawned on me that he needed to know where the provision came from and he also needed to know that we were trusting God for provision.

When I said the Lord provided for us he just looked at me.

We should declare the works of God to all we meet - not because we fear retribution but because we know Who and What He is - we respect Him enough to tell others of His glory.

Sheesh this Psalmist is a radical - he wants us to behave ourselves even when we are in our own house! Psal. 101:2 "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

Can you imagine - watching only the proper television shows even when no one can see - even when your spouse isn't in the house to check up on you.

I wondered at this next text when I first read it. The term man is actually implied, not stated in the Hebrew. Prov. 21:12 "The righteous [man] wisely considereth the house of the wicked: [but God] overthroweth the wicked for [their] wickedness."

It actually says the righteous wisely considers. The "righteous" could relate to a judge or God Himself. Either way the one judging should use wisdom before overthrowing the wicked.

Wisdom oft is removed from our courts today yet people are overthrown. This ought not be!

To walk wisely is of great importance to our survival in hard situations. Prov. 28:26 "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."

Just before settling in to write this section I was rudely cut off by a young man that had done it on purpose and was laughing at his accomplishment. I was going to notice his humor when he got out of his car - I had pulled in right behind him - but as I removed my six foot three frame from the car I decided no comment was the wiser choice. Evidently the young humorist, when seeing my size, had a flash of wisdom because he remained in his car until after I entered the store.

I don't want to get into the detail of this text, but it will suffice to say that the steward was praised for wise decisions concerning his future. Luke 16:8 "And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." (In the text you want to note the cleverness of the man rather than his dishonesty when looking at the commendation.)

One might ponder just how wise we can really become when the next verse is pondered. Job 35:11 "Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?"

We are put on the level of a fowl. Now if we compare ourselves to a Dodo bird we are quite lacking but if we compare ourselves to the ring neck pheasant of the great-plains then we might have wisdom worth something. I won't bore you with the details of how many of these fowl made a dork out of me and my hunting expertise.

God's commandments can make us wise - even wiser than our enemies. Psal. 119:98 "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they [are] ever with me."

This should be of great encouragement when we are up against evil and people that are out to give us evil.

As oft before we see the proper course for a wise person is to receive instruction - it is the wise thing to do if you desire to be wiser. Prov. 9:9 "Give [instruction] to a wise [man], and he will be yet wiser: teach a just [man], and he will increase in learning."

Ouch! I Cor. 1:25 "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." and we thought we were soooo great.

We know wisdom comes from God but in this text we see He, at times, gives greater wisdom while one is involved in His service. Exod. 28:3 "And thou shalt speak unto all [that are] wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to

consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office." (also see Exod. 31:6; Exod. 35:31; Exod. 35:35; Exod.)

In the area of God providing special wisdom, it can be seen at times when witnessing. Many years ago my wife and I were talking to a young philosophy student that had many very warped ideas about God.

As the conversation went along I could not believe the answers we were mustering to refute his theories. It was obvious God was with us giving us direction.

After an hour or so the man buried his face in his hands on his knees and said very loudly "Wait a minute you have me confused."

I told him it wasn't us that had him confused it was the Word of God that had confused him.

Not only does following God relate to personal correctness but nationally a people that follows Him will be perceived as wise by other nations. Deut. 4:6 "Keep therefore and do [them]; for this [is] your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation [is] a wise and understanding people."

This was specific to Israel but relates to other nations in history - England - the U.S.A. - both once were respected among the nations but I fear no more due to our leaving God's ways as a nation.

A leader that obviously has wisdom in the church ought to be followed. Deut. 34:9 "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses."

Just some of the thoughts of the words wise and wisdom. Prudent perceive discern, instruct understand, consider, know (with the mind), to observe, give heed to, distinguish, insight, understanding, intelligent, discreet, to cause to understand, give understanding, teach, to show oneself discerning or attentive, consider diligently, cunning men, subtle, skilful (in technical work), wise (in administration), shrewd, crafty, cunning, wily, subtle, shrewd (class of men), prudent, become intelligent, get a mind, to take heart.

Not only does man have God given wisdom but the angels themselves also can be wise, indeed it seems that they can evidently have a wisdom that far exceeds that of man as we can surely not know all there is to know in the world - well I must admit that some Christians think they do. II Sam. 14:20 "To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord [is] wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all [things] that [are] in the earth."

One might want to consider wisely, MEN, the surface implication of the next passage. II Sam.

20:22 "Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast [it] out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king."

Recently a woman caught her husband out with another man and ran over him three times with her Mercedes and left the car sitting on top of him and told the police it was an accident.

We don't want to upset the women - well back to the thought of the text. It seems that the woman in the text was just acting in a wise fashion as to the situation.

There seems to be a special wisdom which God gives to some of His servants. I Kings 3:28 "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God [was] in him, to do judgment."

I once saw an evangelist on a talk show with Madelyn Murry the famous atheist. I noted right away he wasn't arguing with her about God but rather was just having fun with her and was only saying things like "Aah Madelyn you need to get saved." Finally after quite a number of times she in frustration almost hollered "Oh, my ___ (using the Lord's name in vain) to which the evangelist declared - "see Madelyn I knew you believed in God." She had little effect from that point in the show. (Also I Kin 7:14; I Chr. 22:12; Ezra 7:25)

We see this special wisdom in even a more special way in the next passage. I Kings 4:29 "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that [is] on the sea shore. 30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt." And verse thirty-four "And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." (I Kin. 5:12; I Kin. 10:4, 6-8; I Kin. 10:23; I Kin. 11:41)

Job jabs fun at those that would be wise. Job 12:2 "No doubt but ye [are] the people, and wisdom shall die with you." These people thought all wisdom dwelled with them but Job had insight into their assumed wisdom.

All right, we have a passage that actually says I might become wise some day. Job 12:12 "With the ancient [is] wisdom; and in length of days understanding. 13 With him [is] wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding."

The old guys can be wise, indeed, it seems that this is one place where you ought to expect wisdom to be found.

This contradicts the conventional thinking - old is bad - old is worthless - old is to be avoided at all cost, our media and society tell us. Not so in the Word of God, age is something that is to be honored and accepted. With age comes wisdom normally, and the wise young person will seek the wisdom of their elders.

There was a church that had their heating in the floor of the sanctuary and the rest of the building. It was heated by running a certain temperature water through copper pipes in the concrete slab floor.

The church voted in a young deacon board that was on an economy kick. They found the system was feeding a mixture of hot and cold water into the pipes. The young men decided that if they cut the cold water off it would heat quicker and save the church on heating the cold water.

The older men of the church warned them that they could not do this without hampering the system.

Youth won out because they had the power and lack of wisdom to bow to the wisdom of their elders.

They cut off the cold water and promptly cranked up the system and blew every solder joint in the concrete floor. Result - digging up every joint in the floor and re-soldering it and redoing the floor.

Not an economical lesson, but one that was well learned I would suspect.

The text following seems to indicate that the wise are to be counselors to the unwise, yet the unwise are not always open to receiving counsel from anyone - yet the fact remains, God tells the wise to counsel the unwise - do the best that you can. Counsel those that are willing and offer to the other, but being pushy will not help most likely. Job 26:3 "How hast thou counseled [him that hath] no wisdom? and [how] hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?"

Not only is wisdom to be sought, but it is of great price. Job 28:18 "No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom [is] above rubies." It is precious not only in the having, but also in the receiving. Job 28:20 "Whence then cometh wisdom? and where [is] the place of understanding?"

Those times when I have been given wise counsel I have been most overjoyed to have received it. It is quite often a relief to know that someone with some wisdom has given advice that you can act upon. Normally this is the counsel that agrees with what God has already led you to do, but having that second - agreeing opinion is of great comfort.

Probably one of the most pointed verses I have run across in my reading of the Word is this: Job 28:28 "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that [is] wisdom; and to depart from evil [is] understanding."

If you gain nothing from this study but this one point - take this point away with you and tuck it back in your mind and keep it there for the rest of your life.

A proper understanding of God - the fear of the Lord - is what is missing most in America. We do not understand Him, or Who He is.

America is thumbing their nose at God and He will one day lower the boom on this country. We have kicked Him out of almost every area of life including our personal lives. We allow Him no part in our moral lives, we allow Him no part in our social lives and we allow Him no part in our personal lives.

Though we reject the teaching that God is dead, or that God does not exist, we relegate Him to being an unwilling participant in such reality. We do not acknowledge Him for Who He is, nor do we give Him any of His due.

The thought of age is again seen in the following passage Job 32:7 "I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom."

Oh, the times I have heard it said that we as Christians are not to judge - guess God didn't know what He meant when He inspired the following text. Psa. 37:30 "The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment."

We must talk of judgment. There are three ways. In the church we need to be speaking of church discipline. In our lives we need to be speaking of judging our own lives in light of the Word and finally we need to be speaking of the great coming judgment of God upon those that have rejected Him in their personal lives.

We must allow understanding to temper our thoughts of judgment. Psal 49:3 "My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart [shall be] of understanding."

In our inner being, we know if we are wise or not. Psal 51:6 "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden [part] thou shalt make me to know wisdom."

We don't need to wonder - we don't need to pray - we know down deep, because we are knowledgeable of all our right and wrong decisions in life. When we start gaining in the right column and loosing in the wrong column, we can know we are becoming wise.

When we start becoming honest about the wrong decisions and admitting them to ourselves we are becoming wise. When we seek forgiveness for those blunders we are becoming wise. When we see how damaging those bad choices were we are probably wise.

Realizing the reality of James 4.14 "14 Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." we can set ourselves to doing that which is right. Psal 90:12 "So teach [us] to number our days, that we may apply [our] hearts unto wisdom."

There once was a little figurine and a poster of a little child declaring "God didn't make no junk!" This passage could well be the basis for the statement. Psal. 104:24 "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

He made all in His wisdom, how dare we question His wisdom by telling ourselves that we aren't adequate to the job He has given us? We need to find our worth in Him, in the knowledge that He don't make no junk!

Psal 105:22 "To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom."

We have seen a similar text before. Psal. 111:10 "The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do [his commandments]: his praise endureth for ever."

This is the basis for the fact that the lost can not have Godly wisdom - they may have wisdom of sorts, but it can not be Godly wisdom because they do not fear Him and the beginning of wisdom is based on that fear or respect.

When it comes to Proverbs one, let us just say - take a few days away from this work and read that passage over and over and just let it sink into your heart and mind.

I would like to just mention two verses in a row - they picture for us in very clear terms how we are to learn wisdom. We are to LISTEN while God SPEAKS. Prov. 2:2 "So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, [and] apply thine heart to understanding;" Prov. 2:6 "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth [cometh] knowledge and understanding."

It seems that not only does God give us wisdom if we ask, it is indicated that he has it on the shelf waiting for us. Prov. 2:7 "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: [he is] a buckler to them that walk uprightly."

Now, if He has laid it up for us then we can know that He already has enough wisdom to go around - we don't need to worry about a shortage! He will definitely have it if we get around to asking Him for it.

Okay, at least read all of Proverbs two and take some time to contemplate the implications of it in your life. Wisdom is the key to the life we seek to live, thus you ought to want to know of its benefits.

The Proverbs are full of wisdom related information - this may relate to why they call it the wisdom book. If you truly seek wisdom spend time with it in your thought life - it will change your life.

Wisdom is our happiness. Prov. 3:13 "Happy [is] the man [that] findeth wisdom, and the man

[that] getteth understanding." If we are wise then we will be happy, while if we are unhappy we are not being wise - chew on that one for awhile Christian that is down in the mouth.

Get it and don't forget it. Prov. 4:5 "Get wisdom, get understanding: forget [it] not; neither decline from the words of my mouth."

I like the way this passage states the truth - get it but in the getting get something along with it. Prov. 4:7 "Wisdom [is] the principal thing; [therefore] get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

Don't get a hamburger without picking up some fries - well maybe that is not a low-fat illustration, but you get the idea. One goes with the other is the clear point of the text.

Well, we come to one of those texts that, if we took normal understanding of the family, we would cut this passage from the pages of Scripture. Prov. 5:1 "My son, attend unto my wisdom, [and] bow thine ear to my understanding:"

A son listen to his father? How un-society like can you get? No, self respecting son listens to his father - at least until he is wise enough to know his father knows some thing. I think we have all heard the story of the son that went off to college and when he came home, he couldn't believe how smart his father had become while he was gone.

I had taught a lesson on abortion when our children were in early high school. One day one of them came home and was telling all of us of all the information she had learned at school about abortion - almost point for point to the information I had given. I mentioned this little coincidence and she could not remember me teaching that lesson.

We have seen wisdom in many different lights, but in the next text we see yet another. I believe that it depicts how we should view wisdom - as a woman of our immediate family - as a sister. Prov. 7:4 "Say unto wisdom, Thou [art] my sister; and call understanding [thy] kinswoman:"

I must admit that I did not have a sister, and I don't think I would want to treat wisdom as I did my brother, but I can imagine how I might have treated a sister - a sister of mine would have had a lot of respect and protection and honor if she would have allowed it - in my younger days I don't think that would have been a problem, but in our liberated society a man treating his sister as I would have would most likely be labeled a pig.

Give wisdom a place of honor and respect in your life - give it the utmost care and protection - it is a gift from God and ought to be used as such.

There have been times when in my very small amount of wisdom I have been able to see someone making a big mistake, but the person would not listen. As I would walk away from that situation all I could do is pray. Such a burden for the sorrow the person was stepping into. Prov.

8:1 "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?" We may not shed tears, but we certainly will feel for the persons coming pain - in some cases tears may well come.

From the benefits of wisdom in one's life we might realize that it is worth much, yet Scripture states of its value that it is worth more than anything we can desire. Prov. 8:11 "For wisdom [is] better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it."

Now in a materialistic society as ours we can do a lot of desiring - a new huge house - a new car - a new motorcycle - a new RV - a new SUV - a new - well you get the picture and wisdom is yet more precious than all of these. As precious as rubies - you ladies can relate a little more to that than most men, however there is another aspect to desire - other than material gain. Imagine what you might desire for your children in their lives - what you might desire for your spouse in their lives - wisdom is more precious than even these.

One might come to the conclusion that we ought to desire wisdom over and above all things other than God Himself. We may be gaining a little glimpse of how important God views wisdom.

Wisdom personified states he lives with prudence. The word prudence is used in a manner that suggests wiliness or subtlety - even craftiness. Prov. 8:12 "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions."

In a world where the lie is the mode of conversation, this is very needed. The wise person must sort through all the lies and half truths to find what is really being said/done.

Many today lie in their usual conversation for no reason at all - other than they must feel it makes them more important if they embellish the truth with a lie or two.

We have seen wisdom and understanding linked together before, but never quite so directly. Prov. 8:14 "Counsel [is] mine, and sound wisdom: I [am] understanding; I have strength."

It should be obvious that to be wise, one must understand the situation and what is going on to properly be wise. The two must, and are inseparable to be truly wise.

Wisdom personified is quite the "person" as SHE has built a house. Prov. 9:1 "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:"

I am not all that sure what is meant by she has built her house, but I assume this is to be taken figuratively and that she has built a wise house or is a wise commodity that is fitly joined together in all its aspects as a well built house. There is comfort, there is strength, there is protection and there is security within her walls.

In this text we see two concepts merged together - first the fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING

of wisdom, but also that knowing God is understanding. We have just seen that understanding is a close associate of wisdom, and both are derived from a proper understanding of God. Prov. 9:10 "The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy [is] understanding." (also Prov. 10:13)

It would seem that folly and wisdom, as well as the fool and the wise, are on opposite ends of the spectrum. Prov. 10:21 "The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom."

In retrospect I find that I am the following text personified in my younger years. Prov. 10:23 "[It is] as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom."

Not the wisdom nor the understanding aspect - but the fool and his mischief. The bunch that I ran with one night collected signs and treasures from all over town. We then decided that we needed to do something with all these items that we had taken. Our wise use of our treasure was to decorate the Bible church lawn where the bunch went to church and where I had been led to the Lord. Again in retrospect I wonder if I had been disciplined by that church if I wouldn't have caught enough wisdom to have avoided showing myself a fool.

This is off the subject but, if you lead someone to the Lord please attempt to disciple them or find someone that would be willing to do so. I spent five years drifting in saved limbo because I had no idea what a Christian was to be like, and didn't have the sense to open the Bible to find out.

If one is just, will he be automatically wise, or if one is wise are they automatically just. Prov. 10:31 "The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out."

It would seem that it would be the latter of the two. If one is wise, they will automatically be just in their thought and decisions.

As with the preceding point, does lowliness come from wisdom or does wisdom come with lowliness? Prov. 11:2 "[When] pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly [is] wisdom."

It seems to me that one that is lowly might not necessarily have wisdom, but one that is wise automatically knows that there is nothing in him that is worth raising himself up for. He knows that the wisdom is from without, not some attribute to which his genes entitled him to.

Now as to neighbors - I can give you story after story. Prov. 11:12 "He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace."

When just out of the Navy I went to live with my brother and his wife for a few months in California. They lived in a little house behind a larger house and there were great parking problems.

All of us tried to do the best we could, however one of the neighbors insisted on being obnoxious. They were always pulling childish little stunts on my brother to get back at him for their perceived wrongs from us.

One day he forgot to roll the window up on his hotrod - naturally the neighbor took full advantage of the situation and stuck a running water hose in the window. When my brother found it there was about ten inches of water in his car.

I trust as Christians we can be tolerant of our neighbors. It can be a powerful testimony to the lost if we live peaceably with others.

Wisdom will have its reward, but not necessarily in this life. God will settle all accounts and reward us as we have value in His eyes, not the eyes of our peers. Prov. 12:8 "A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised."

I don't consider myself very wise at times, but in relation to some I have worked with, there is a modicum of wisdom to be perceived. Those in mind have not recognized my meager wisdom, nor have they ever rewarded me for it - indeed I have paid for that little wisdom that I have shown.

I often wondered where the justice was, but we know it is in God, not our peer. This will get us off the hook of self recrimination and self pity - if we will only look to Him for our value and our recognition.

We have seen that wisdom is related to learning and accepting wise counsel. Here we see another aspect of that thought - we should take good advice - what - yes, accept advice. Prov. 13:10 "Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised [is] wisdom."

The emphasis however is on "GOOD" advice. There is another aspect - the wisdom may come from those that advise you well.

I often desired wise words from my father. He was truly a wise man, but seldom did he share his wisdom with me. A time or two he did encourage me through word, but very seldom, and this was a very large empty spot in my life.

I on the other hand have seldom given my children advice because I seldom felt they had need of it - they have made many wise decisions in their life. Now and then I have encouraged them to check into different aspects of their decisions to be sure they have all the facts, but seldom have I given direct advice - not sure the wisdom is there to offer.

This passage is of interest. Prov. 14:6 "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and [findeth it] not: but knowledge [is] easy unto him that understandeth."

The Net Bible note indicates that this is one that seeks wisdom in an arrogant manner to appear wise, when in fact he has no understanding of spiritual things.

Alright we see in the next text that personal inner knowledge of oneself is a product or at least connected to having wisdom. Prov. 14:8 "The wisdom of the prudent [is] to understand his way: but the folly of fools [is] deceit."

Prudent has the thought of shrewd, crafty, subtle and sly. Thus, one would expect the wise to be very careful of their activity - not to be sneaky, but to be sure they are walking the walk of the true believer. To do less would seem to be unwise, to say the least.

This might even mean you are constantly on the guard and questioning other peoples motives. You want to be careful how you act, react and communicate with some people as they will most likely use something against you one day.

“Way” simply is your journey or your path - watch your step for the pitfalls others might place in front of you. Understand your way. You know you are His and you know you are on the way to live with Him, so be careful how you journey so that you don't get tripped up with sin or the sin of others.

I believe I mentioned a Sunday School superintendent that asked me to take a class in the children's area rather than the one I was teaching in the adult class.

I knew in my mind the minute he started to talk to me that there was much more behind his asking me to shift classes. I did not let on that I knew, just listened and responded. Then a day or two later I asked the pastor what kind of problems he and the board had with my teaching - he literally spewed forth with his misperceptions of my teaching - proving my inner reaction to the superintendents little talk.

The wisdom which we have been talking about is an integrated part of our life - it is in our heart, our soul, our very being. It is not something that comes and goes as we need it, but rather something that is a part of us - it is part of who we are in our total being. Prov. 14:33 "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but [that which is] in the midst of fools is made known."

Again, we see the fool - he views folly in his life as great joy. How sad that one without wisdom does not even know he is a fool - he just feels he is having a fun time in life. Prov. 15:21 "Folly [is] joy to [him that is] destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly."

This passage is not silent on our present society. The young so often flaunt their sin publicly as if it is wise and mature of them - they don't even have enough wisdom to understand their sin and how embarrassed they should be in what they are declaring publicly.

An interesting passage follows. Prov. 15:33 "The fear of the LORD [is] the instruction of wisdom; and before honour [is] humility."

Here we see that the instruction to him that would be wise comes from the fear of the Lord. The term instruction has the thought of chastisement built into it. It is an education by going through hard times.

Indeed, there are times when we are so rebellious toward the Lord that chastisement is the only understanding we have. Hebrews twelve speaks to this point quite well if you would like a further study.

Well, it would seem that if you could bottle and sell wisdom you would have great gain. Prov. 16:16 "How much better [is it] to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!"

It might be suggested that because wisdom is related to gold and understanding is related to a lesser metal silver, that wisdom is more to be sought after than understanding, however we have seen before that wisdom pretty much brings understanding with it so there is probably no difference of value - more of a manner of writing style.

It would seem the fool will even try to buy wisdom. Prov. 17:16 "Wherefore [is there] a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing [he hath] no heart [to it]?" The last phrase would indicate he just doesn't get it. The American Standard Version translates the last phrase this way. "Seeing he hath no understanding?"

He may want it with all his heart, but he doesn't understand that you can't buy it - it is something that must come from other than monetary, even though it is worth more than monetary items.

Not only does he seek to buy wisdom but the fool looks for it in all the wrong places. Prov. 17:24 "Wisdom [is] before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool [are] in the ends of the earth."

We have in the next text a discussion of the fool. I will only quote the first verse, but take time to read some of the following passages to understand verse one as well as the fool. Prov. 18:1 "Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh [and] intermeddleth with all wisdom."

The American Standard Version translates the last phrase thusly. "And rageth against all sound wisdom." The following verses describe further that raging.

Not wanting to get into a long theological discussion about what the soul is, I would suggest this passage tells us that we should like ourselves. Prov. 19:8 "He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good." Indeed, the term translated soul is also translated yourselves in other passages.

The soul basically is our mind and our being - who we are - what we are when you get inside our minds and dig around awhile. I have mentioned often that our spirit is our God consciousness, our soul is our self consciousness and our body is our world consciousness.

There is a truth in some people that their dislike of themselves keeps them from really understanding that they might be wise. They are so down on themselves that they think nothing that they think or decide can be good.

Most likely this is a terrible waste of a wise person.

Since God is the perfect wisdom and since we gain our wisdom from God, then there is no wisdom that would run counter to God, unless it were to be false wisdom. Prov. 21:30 "[There is] no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD."

To apply this one might suggest that if you are walking with God and you are praying with Him on a regular basis asking for wisdom, then any decisions you make will be wise ones.

One might wonder at the linking of two seemingly separate topics in the next passage. Prov. 23:4 "Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom."

What does striving for riches have to do with operating in your own wisdom? The term translated riches is of note - it can be translated "pretending to be rich" thus we might assume that pretending to be rich is just as bad as pretending to be wise. After all, operating in our own wisdom is like pretending we are wise, because true wisdom comes from God not ourselves.

Again, we see the wisdom of not trying to talk to a fool as they will reject - even despise your words of wisdom. Prov. 23:9 "Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words."

The importance of wisdom, truth, instruction and understanding indicates that we should give of our material wealth if we need to for the purchase of them. Prov. 23:23 "Buy the truth, and sell [it] not; [also] wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."

I wonder how you could go about purchasing these four. Truth, wisdom, instruction and understanding. One way would be to put yourself under instruction - this might be college in our day. Along with this you might find some truth, at least you would get instruction and most likely some understanding.

How might we purchase wisdom and truth? We might purchase some truth via books etc. or possibly assisting in a political campaign of an honest candidate. No comment about those possibilities will be forthcoming in our society from me. (Here anyway. :-)

By putting ourselves in positions where we can learn and be subjected to situations where

wisdom might be gained would be in essence purchasing it for ourselves. The term quite often is translated "get" thus it may not necessarily mean the use of currency to gain, as the word "purchase" implies.

Again we see the unique relationship between wisdom and understanding. Prov. 24:3 "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:"

Wisdom is the building while understanding is the making of the building into a home. Wisdom without understanding is a shell or framework which yields little until understanding is added.

We see again, that the fool isn't completely ignorant. Prov. 24:7 "Wisdom [is] too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate."

The gate is where business and court were held in the Old Testament days - this is where the elders of the cities met to care for their communities. Wisdom is too high, or lofty for the fool to attain so he knows enough not to open his mouth and prove his lack of wisdom in the gate.

The benefits of wisdom are again hinted at in Prov. 24:14 "So [shall] the knowledge of wisdom [be] unto thy soul: when thou hast found [it], then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off."

The Net Bible translates the verse this way. "Likewise, know that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, you will have a future, and your hope will not be cut off."

Quite a promise! We have a hope, an expectation - naturally there is a chance this is the completion of our salvation - without this there is no hope, however I think it speaks more to the future in this life. The fact that when we know we are wise, we can know that we can figure out our way through the trials of this life.

If we love wisdom our father will be full of joy, however if we keep company with harlots, we spoil or destroy our substance or those things we have. Prov. 29:3 "Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth [his] substance."

The word translated "keepeth company" can be translated shepherd or feed, thus this is a close company with the harlot.

Love wisdom or love the harlot - one leads to joy to your father and the other destroys all you have. Should be an easy choice to make, but I fear many make the wrong choice in life.

Ouch, I didn't want to see this text. Prov. 29:15 "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left [to himself] bringeth his mother to shame."

The verse applies this to children which is of interest - children can learn wisdom. Not that they

always do but they can.

The rod and reproof can give wisdom. The hard things of life give wisdom - the trials of life give wisdom - the hurts of this life give wisdom.

That passage that speaks to the fact that all things are for good might well relate here. God gives us things in this life that can give us wisdom to use on His behalf in our own and other people's lives. Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose."

We won't take a long look at Ecclesiastes, but suffice it to say that the book has a unique look at wisdom - the search of a man for pleasure and wisdom as it relates to that search. Spend some time just reading through the book and jot down some of the items you find.

It seems that wisdom can perish. Isa. 29:14 "Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, [even] a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise [men] shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent [men] shall be hid."

This perishing seems to relate to the spiritual decline of the people. It seems that wisdom is given, in part, to God's people for the benefit of the rest of his people, but if there is a walking away from God we can know that the wisdom will also be in decline.

We might give application to the church. If the congregation/leaders are on the decline spiritually there can be a decrease in wisdom and the church is open to drastic decline and error in all areas, because it is being led by unwise people.

Wisdom brings stability. Isa. 33:6 "And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, [and] strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD [is] his treasure."

The one thing young people need in their lives - stability - is lacking due to their lack of wisdom. One must wonder how accountable parents are going to be for the lack of wisdom their children have. The wisdom that should have been brought to the child via the rod and discipline is so missing in many of your youth.

Being a parent ain't for sissys that is for sure. The parent's responsibility is great before the Lord.

The next text is in the context of one that in pride declares they are "it" and there are no others. Isai. 47:10 "For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me."

False or self wisdom will not only mislead you into self confidence, it will pervert you. You will be prideful to the point of believing yourself which is really big trouble.

The verse prior to the one we want to look at next, pictures wise people speaking falsely and here it seems to picture those men ashamed (probably because they knew they were being less than truthful) and God's estimation is that they have no wisdom - indeed to detract from God as they did in verse eight rather well proves they are operating in self wisdom. Jere. 8:9 "The wise [men] are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom [is] in them?"

The wise man is not to glory in his wisdom, but rather he is to glory in God. This is likely because wisdom comes from God. Jere. 9:23 "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise [man] glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty [man] glory in his might, let not the rich [man] glory in his riches:"

God's wisdom is set in the same category as his power and discretion. Omnipotent, omniwise and omnidiscreet it would seem.

Not sure I've ever heard of two attributes of wise and discreet - might make a good study. Jere. 10:12 "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion." Jere. 51:15 "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding."

Ezek 28 speaks of the king of Tyrus, but looks past this earthly king to Satan and His fall. The text mentions of the king that he has become rich with his wisdom, but that the riches have corrupted him.

We should understand that wisdom seems to be useful in the area of finance and material gain, but we should not allow that gain to pollute our thinking of ourselves or our gain.

The use of wisdom for personal gain does not seem wrong, but the gain seems to tend toward pollution.

Some of the captive children of Israel were selected in part due to their ability to be "skilful in all wisdom" (Dan. 1.4). The grammar indicates they were skillful in wisdom, or that they were not only wise, but that they could use it skillfully. Then, it is assumed one could use their wisdom unskillfully. A little item we ought to remember - walking with God would be the way that we can be sure we are being skillful in the use of our wisdom.

The wisdom of these Israelites was not only present, but it was much better than of those in the king's own court. Dan. 1:20 "And in all matters of wisdom [and] understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians [and] astrologers that [were] in all his realm."

We might assume this is due to the fact that the Israelites' wisdom was from God rather than from

self as would be the case in non-believers.

A very clear declaration is made by Daniel as to the source of true wisdom - God. Dan. 2:20 "Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:"

Again, we see the wisdom of the Lord linked to his might or power.

Not only is wisdom from God, it seems to be a gift - for He giveth it to the wise according to verse twenty-one.

Daniel continues by giving thanks and praise to God for this gift. Dan. 2:23 "I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast [now] made known unto us the king's matter."

Just a little side note, as I read this passage a phrase caught my attention. "...thou God of my fathers..." What a blessing that would be to know that your ancestors had worshiped God. I have no such knowledge, though I would guess some may have. This would be an encouragement in hard times - to know that others in your family have gone before you while following God.

Much later Daniel is known for his wisdom and knowledge that is attributed to the gods - the men did not know the God of the Jews very well it is clear, but they knew the wisdom and understanding Daniel drew from his God. Dan. 5:11 "There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom [is] the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, [I say], thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, [and] soothsayers;" (also Dan. 5:14)

Christ surprised the leaders of his own area when He began teaching. This is not uncommon even among men - Christ had more wisdom than any, but when a person returns to his own town even today and shows that he is not the bumbling idiot of a teenager he was when he was growing up he surprises those that knew him.

I returned to my home town after a number of years away and took a job repairing appliances and televisions. My employer had a number of townspeople call and tell him not to send me out to their house - they knew my teenage years and wanted no part of me. Matt. 13:54 "And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this [man] this wisdom, and [these] mighty works?"

Just a theological insert. This would indicate that Christ was nothing special when He was growing up. He did not exhibit any special mental qualities growing up or they would not have been surprised. It is also indicative that He did nothing real special in the way of works either -

they did not remember Him for this at any rate.

The next passage shows that he indeed had the wisdom - just did not make a special show of it for the people to observe. Luke 2:40 "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."

The fact that the wisdom was incomplete is of interest. Luke 2:52 "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

This would indicate that His wisdom was limited and had to increase as He grew. Some say that Christ had all of His attributes fully when on earth, but this would indicate that His attributes were in some way set aside for his time on earth.

The disciples were told that they would be given wisdom to answer their detractors as they went forth for Christ. Luke 21:15 "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

The first church deacons were to be full of wisdom. A wise choice in our day. Acts 6:3 "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business."

In many churches deacons/elders are chosen on popularity rather than qualities or qualification. God has determined they should be wise, not becoming wise.

We gain another brief insight into God's wisdom. Rom. 11:33 "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Not only is His wisdom great, but it is deep. Not shallow as man's but deep - of the greatest quality and greatest extent.

The next passage is clear, relating to the difference between God's wisdom and man's wisdom. Man in his wisdom rejected God, rejected Christ, and rejected the work of Christ - man's wisdom stinketh wouldn't you say?

God in all His wisdom sent His Son to die for man yet man thumbs his corporate nose at God. Some are saved - those that bow to the wisdom of Almighty God. 1Cor. 1:19-21 "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where [is] the wise? where [is] the scribe? where [is] the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1.17 also)

A stark admission of the apostle Paul might bring us to a more humble opinion of our wisdom. 1Cor. 2:1 "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." If Paul had not great wisdom then I doubt that many of us are excellent in wisdom.

He continues to point out that he was not coming to them with man's wisdom either. It is of note how he did come to them. 1Cor. 2:4 "And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:"

He came in the power of the Spirit not wisdom - verse five indicates that there is man's wisdom, then there is a believer with wisdom and finally God's wisdom. He did not want them basing their faith on what he said - what he believed to be true, but rather on the gospel of Christ. Verse five: "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

It seems that even a believer with the wisdom of God ought to be careful when speaking to the lost lest the lost view their speech as their own wisdom.

It seems God is not impressed with our wisdom. I Cor. 3:19 "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." Well, now do you blame Him - He does know us very well.

We, the church, have a task to do - yes the gospel to the world is our command, but along with bringing glory to God we have another major task. Eph. 3:10 "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly [places] might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,"

The church is to display to the principalities and powers in heavenly places the wisdom of God. One must wonder just how successful we have been in the last thirty years at doing this. I rather think we have failed miserably.

Why have we failed, might be the question asked. One might wonder if the outspoken leaders of our "church" in this time period have detracted from this purpose. One of our presidents declared that he disagreed with the apostle Paul on one point of doctrine - not only was he disagreeing with Paul, but with God the Holy Spirit, the author of Scripture.

How foolish some of our leaders are in their declarations of our God. They make Him a fool to the public at large.

Another president behaved miserably in the white house while declaring his Christianity - not only presidents but other leaders/stars of our society. How disgraceful we are in displaying our sin as the wisdom of God.

Paul, in his letter to the Colossians makes it clear that God's will can be known by all believers - in "all wisdom" and "spiritual understanding." Col. 1:9 "For this cause we also, since the day we heard [it], do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;"

Understanding has the thought of having knowledge of information and the ability to comprehend it - or ability to use the information if so desired. Knowing God's will and understanding it may be two different things.

For example, we may know as a young believer that we are to be disciples to all nations, but may not understand the full extent of this truth - that we can be a disciple to all nations in our own backyard, that we need to know some basic truths of the faith before we can be an effective disciple.

Col. 2.2-3 has a neat declaration about God and Christ. "...God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Not only is wisdom found in God, but it is a treasure. Indeed, wisdom is the treasure of man when received from the Lord.

Paul mentions of the works of men Col. 2:23 "Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."

It seems to me that some items of worship and humility appear to show wisdom, but are actually works of the flesh.

Think about that one in relation to some of the worship practices of today's church. How much of worship today is feeding the flesh? How much is for man's enjoyment and how much is actually the worship of God.

It is of note that in our sound Bible churches we interrupt the worship of God to greet one another - clearly an act of enjoyment to man. True, God may enjoy seeing His children getting along for the brief moments, but the gain at the moment is in the flesh - feeling good about being friendly - even if it is orchestrated friendliness in many of our churches.

Only a few verses later we see one of the great "worship" passages taught in many classes as the basis for modern day worship - Col. 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Humm, don't see hand shaking listed. Nor do we see a lot of things listed that pass for worship today.

Moving right along, years ago I was the church janitor and noticed that one of the church

neighbors was using our garbage dumpster for their own garbage - it was not a small amount of garbage - it was taking up needed space for the church refuse.

I noticed a discarded envelope from the culprit's house - informed the pastor of what was going on and gave him the envelope. He said that he would take care of it.

Later he mentioned that he had just tacked the envelope with a church business card to the persons screen door. He said, "My grandfather told me to never do anything that would hinder the opportunity to witness later." He had redeemed the time with wisdom with this neighbor. I don't know if he ever had opportunity to witness to the person or not, but the opportunity would still be open. Col. 4:5 "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."

It is not often that I say "be liberal," but this is once that it is Biblical. James 1:5 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all [men] liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

If we would be wise, we have but to ask God and He will pile it on! What a promise as we walk through life. When we have that big decision to make we can ask God for wisdom. When we have that little decision to make we can ask God for wisdom. When we have any need of wisdom we only have to ask.

Not only does James link meekness to wisdom, but also to good works. James 3:13 "Who [is] a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom."

Since good works are the natural response to salvation, then a wise person will definitely be involved in good works. He will also do it in meekness. Someone once said that there was a man that was full of the milk of human kindness, but that he always managed to rattle the bottles. Don't rattle the bottles when you do your good works.

James contrasts the wisdom of this world to the wisdom from above. James 3:15 "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but [is] earthly, sensual, devilish." with the wisdom of God James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Some contrast! One devilish and the other is everything else that devilish can never be. I suspect this passage sums up much of what we have seen in this study. Wisdom is something to be desired but it is also something that comes with high responsibilities, as in, how we use this gift from the Lord.

The man, Solomon, that said that he found materialism wanting, that found women wanting, that found power wanting, and that found people wanting, finally realized in the end that wisdom, God, and the Word filled the desire of his life. Prov. 3:13-16 "Happy[is] the man[that] findeth

wisdom, and the man[that] getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it[is] better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She[is] more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days[is] in her right hand;[and] in her left hand riches and honour."

I would like to close with a thought from a woman that has emailed me for several years. She has walked through most of the trials of life and still has a cheer that infects those she comes in contact with. During the final work on this book I decided I needed to go to the emergency room with some chest pain and had a heart attach there on the table. In telling this friend of my situation, she replied, "When we are in such a situation we either live or we LIVE!" Always a factual knowledge on my part, but never so vividly did it become a spiritual wisdom as when I read those words.

Well, now that this listing is done I suppose there are some that feel it is my responsibility to say something very wise and moving so that we can all feel good. Okay, here goes "I know now that I am not a wise man."

I trust you find something in this study of interest and blessing. I have summed up most of the points in a brief listing to follow.

These lists are a summation of the text. They are here to give a general overview of the study, not to replace it.

THE WISE

Wisdom in a man is profitable to the man and God Job 22:2.

Wisdom is learned and should be sought Psalm 2:10.

Wisdom abandon is a mark of the unwise Psalm 36:3.

Wisdom is a hard worker in the harvest Prov. 10:5.

Wisdom is favorable Prov. 10:19.

Wisdom in a parent brings forth discipline Prov. 17:2.

Wisdom avoids hell or any unpleasantness Prov. 15:24.

Wisdom is a choice for and toward God Dan. 12:3.

Wisdom produces understanding Dan. 12:10.

Wisdom does right even when no one is looking I Sam. 18:5.

Wisdom is circumspect even when no one is watching I Sam. 18:14.

Wisdom has the respect of those without I Sam. 18:30.

Wisdom is examined by the lost Psalm 101:2.

Wisdom seeks to live a perfect life Psalm 101:2.

Wisdom in decision making will produce good Proverbs 16:20.

Wisdom considers the wicked Proverbs 21:12.

Wisdom is instructed Proverbs 1:3.

Wisdom is not solely for the believer Gen. 41:8.

Wisdom stands out among the crowd Gen. 41:33, 39.

Wisdom is discrete Gen. 41:33, 39.

Wisdom is not bribed Exod. 23:8.

Wisdom serves Exod. 28:3.

Wisdom gives to God willingly Exod. 35:25.

Wisdom desires the best for God Exod. 36:1.

Wisdom leads Deut. 1:13.

Wisdom holds forth a good testimony Deut. 4:6.

Wisdom is gender nonspecific - women can be wise as well as men Jud. 5:29.

Wisdom has been given to the angels II Sam. 14:20.

Wisdom knows its times Esther 1:13.

Wisdom surrounds itself with others which are wise Esth 6:13.

Wisdom utters wisdom Job 15:2.

Wisdom shares itself Job 15:18.

Wisdom may be scarce Job 17:10.

Wisdom listens to others Job 34:2; Job 34:34.

Wisdom can come to the simple Psalm 19:7.

Wisdom does not counter death Psalm 49:10.

Wisdom understands the loving-kindness of the Lord Psalm 49:10.

Wisdom will learn Prov. 6:6; Prov. 8:33.

Wisdom will receive glory Prov. 3:35.

Wisdom keeps it quiet Prov. 9:12.

Wisdom makes a father glad Prov. 10:1; Prov. 15:20.

Wisdom receives commandments Prov. 10:8.

Wisdom lays up knowledge Prov. 10:14.

Wisdom is a soul winner Prov. 11:29-30.

Wisdom accepts council Prov. 12:15.

Wisdom's tongue is health Prov. 12:18; Prov. 14:3.

Wisdom listens to his father's instructions Prov. 13:1.

Wisdom leads to life Prov. 13:14.

Wisdom rubs off on others Prov. 13:20.

Wisdom buildeth the home well Prov. 14:1.

Wisdom avoids evil 14:16.

Wisdom's crown is its riches Prov. 14:24.

Wisdom uses knowledge aright Prov. 15:2.
Wisdom disperses knowledge Prov. 15:7.
Wisdom is avoided by the scorner Prov. 15:12.
Wisdom hears the reproof of life Prov. 15:12.
Wisdom counters wrath Prov. 16:14.
Wisdom is prudent Prov. 16:21.
Wisdom educates its mouth Prov. 16:23.
Wisdom accepts reproof Prov. 17:10.
Wisdom holds its peace Prov. 17:28.
Wisdom's ear seeketh knowledge Prov. 18:15.
Wisdom scatters the wicked Prov. 20:26.
Wisdom is prepared Prov. 21:20.
Wisdom is strong Prov. 21:22.
Wisdom conquers over strength Prov. 21:22.
Wisdom is listened to Prov. 22:17.
Wisdom listens Prov. 23:19.
Wisdom brings joy to its father Prov. 23:24.
Wisdom brings war when necessary Prov. 24:5.
Wisdom is not a respecter of persons Prov. 24:23.
Wisdom reproves Prov. 25:12.
Wisdom answers the fool Prov. 26:4-5.
Wisdom has no conceit Prov. 26:12.

Wisdom in the son is the father's answer to reproach Prov. 27:11.

Wisdom keepeth the law Prov. 28:7.

Wisdom turneth away wrath Prov. 29:8-9.

Wisdom contends with the fool Prov. 29:8-9.

Wisdom keeps his mind Prov. 29:11.

Wisdom is illustrated by insects Prov. 30:2.

Wisdom strengthens Eccl. 7:19.

Wisdom changes countenance Eccl. 8:1.

Wisdom is discerning Eccl. 8:5.

Wisdom may not be remembered Eccl. 9:15.

Wisdom is heard Eccl. 9:17.

Wisdom prods Eccl. 12:11.

Wisdom builds on solid foundations Matt. 7:24.

Wisdom may not know all Matt. 11:25.

Wisdom bows to all costs Matt. 23:34.

Wisdom acts Matt. 24:45.

Wisdom recognizes value owed Rom. 1:14.

Wisdom is not conceited Rom. 12:16.

THE UNWISE

The unwise are wasteful and troublesome Psalm 94:8.

The unwise detract from the wise Prov. 10:19.

The unwise rush to hell and unpleasantness Prov. 15:24.

The unwise parent restraineth not his prodigy Prov. 17:2.

The unwise reject God and His Dan. 12:3.

The unwise do not understand Dan. 12:10.

The unwise are less than trustworthy apart from authority I Sam. 18:5; I Sam. 18:14.

The unwise person's decisions produce less than desired results Proverbs 16:20.

The unwise uttereth not knowledge Job 15:2.

The unwise do not become great Job 32:9.

The unwise can be deceived by drink Prov. 20:1.

The unwise may be conceited Prov. 28:11.

The unwise may be conceited Rom. 11:25.

THE SELF PROCLAIMED WISE

Those that think themselves wise will find that God scoffs at them Job 37:24.

Those that think themselves wise seem to be doing evil Prov. 3:7.

Those that think themselves wise are fools Rom. 1:22.

SECULAR WISDOM

It is sought at times Exod. 7:11.

It may not be real wisdom Job 5:13.

It is desired, and possibly faked Job 11:12.

THE DOWNSIDE OF WISDOM

Wisdom is often misunderstood and ignored Job 34:35.

