

YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE

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Job 28:28

And to man He (God) said, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

1. A joke you sometimes hear in New England has to do with a man who was traveling through a rural part of Maine and became hopelessly lost. He then encountered a man who had never been beyond the boundaries of his own little world. The traveler asked how to get to his desired destination, and after thinking for a few minutes the man responded, "You can't get there from here."
2. Having never been anywhere he did not know how to get anywhere.
3. Every journey has a beginning point, but knowing where we are going and how to get there matters.
4. The Scripture verses we read point out an important principle related to the acquiring of wisdom, knowledge and understanding.
5. In his letter to the Corinthians Paul differentiated between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians 1:18-22
For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE." 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish **the wisdom of the world**? 21 For since in **the wisdom of God** the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.
6. The wisdom of the world does not always reject the existence of God, but it can never arrive at the truth related to God.
7. Some have a negative concept of God which demonstrates that they do not know God.
8. Others have a concept of God that is comforting and condoning, but it is not correct.
9. At some point every human being must confront God, and the God they must confront will be Jehovah God who stated to Moses, "I am Who I Am."
10. Another passage in Proverbs related to wisdom states, "The beginning of wisdom is: acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring, get understanding. 8 "Prize her, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. 9 "She will place on your head a garland of grace; she will present you with a crown of beauty." Proverbs 4:7-9
11. Acquiring wisdom is a journey, but this morning I want to focus on several foundational truths related to wisdom.

I. The foundation of wisdom.

- A. Job defined wisdom as the fear of the Lord.
- B. Solomon stated that the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom, knowledge and understanding.
- C. The word “beginning” refers to the commencement or starting point related to the acquiring of wisdom.
- D. When it comes to the wisdom of God the first principle is, “Fear God.” 1 Peter 2:17
 - 1. God is holy, and must be treated as holy.
 - 2. Because He is holy we must reverence Him and worship Him.
 - 3. Not only will we reverence God, but we will also reverence all that He has declared to be holy which includes His Son, His Spirit, His Word, His church, His work, His ordinances, and His methods.
- E. The Apostle Paul concluded his indictment of the lost with this charge, “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” Romans 3:18
- F. Until we come to fear and reverence God the Word of God will remain a closed book.

II. The fountain of wisdom.

- A. Jesus Christ is the personification and source of God’s Wisdom. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no man may boast before God. 30 **But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,** 31 so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."
- B. Jesus Christ is also the author of God’s Word. 1 Peter 1:10-12
As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time **the Spirit of Christ** within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by **the Holy Spirit** sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.
- C. As Peter preached the Gospel on the Day of Pentecost the initial response was fear as the people fully understood the implications of his message. Acts 2:37
Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

III. The fruit of wisdom.

- A. A right relationship with God. 2 Tim 3:14-17
You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you **the wisdom that leads to salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
NOTE: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the wisdom that leads to salvation.

B. A right walk before God. James 3:13-18

Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. 18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

C. A true follower of Jesus Christ is going to love and fear God, but reverence for God will cause us to take the things of God seriously.

1. 2 Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

2. Philippians 2:12-13

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

3, Hebrews 2:1-4

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, **so that we do not drift** away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3 **how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?** After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

APPLICATION

1. Much of what goes on in many churches is designed to get results, and almost anything goes as long as it gets results.

a. Contrary to popular thinking the end does not justify the means in God's sight.

b. Also man's inventions do not always match God's intentions.

2. God does not measure success or results the way we do as evidenced by the outwardly successful ministry of the Church at Laodicea. Revelation 3:14-22

3. From the world's perspective the Old Testament prophets were mostly failures, but they are celebrated successes in Heaven.

4. Any ministry that does not produce fear and reverence for God is leaving something out of its message.