

The Wisdom of God (Omniscience)

The Character of God—part 7

August 12, 2018

DAY 1: Wisdom, about God, life, human nature, relationships, and finding real life

1. The omniscience of God is more than “God knows everything.” He knows what is true about everything. He knows what is true about Himself, human nature, relationships, and life. He knows how we find real life or how we derail ourselves from real life.

2. We are called to discover that “knowledge” and live with “understanding.” We are to use “wisdom” in our daily lives.

Below, wisdom is personified. Underline the claims wisdom makes about itself.

Proverbs 8:1 Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice?

² On the heights along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand;

³ beside the gates leading into the city, at the entrances, she cries aloud:

⁴ "To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind.

⁵ You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding.

⁶ Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right.

⁷ My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness.

⁸ All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse.

⁹ To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge.

¹⁰ Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold,

¹¹ for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

4. We won't get to first base in really understanding God, life and people without first aligning ourselves under the authority of God. Solomon contrasts those who fear God (reverence and obedience) with being a “fool,” thinking we know better than God. What strikes you about this?

5. Wisdom doesn't come willy-nilly. It must be sought, fervently.

Proverbs 2:1 (RSV) My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, ² making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;

³ yes, if you cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,

⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures;

⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

6. What strikes you most from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Wisdom for daily life:

1. We need God's wisdom if we are to understand the reality of life. Because we are sinners by nature our own "instincts" are going to be misguided, faulty, or far worse about God, life, human nature, relationships and ourselves.

2. Today, we'll look at some of the ways wisdom "shines a light" on to our real life. Under each verse, **underline** where you need wisdom in your daily life:

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

James 3:13 (RSV) Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity. ¹⁸ And the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Psalms 119:9 (RSV) How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to thy word. ¹⁰ With my whole heart I seek thee; let me not wander from thy commandments! ¹¹ I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Ephesians 5:15 (RSV) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Colossians 1:9 (RSV) And so, from the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

James 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

3. Where is wisdom most needed in your life?

4. Ask God to give you wisdom.

DAY 3: Facing the reality of life; Does God answer the “WHY?”

1. What God knows about the reality of life is important for us to know about life. The book of Ecclesiastes in Solomon’s autobiographical gleanings about his encounter with the reality of life.

2. There are three phrases that he repeats throughout Ecclesiastes:

- a. “***Life under the sun***” – as opposed to life in heaven, or life as “it’s supposed to be.”
- b. “***Meaningless, meaningless, all is meaningless***” – the inevitable and natural result of chasing anything first, before God, to fill us.
- c. “***A chasing after the wind***” – an image of the futility of chasing anything first, other than God to fill us.

Ecclesiastes 1:1 The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem:

² “***Meaningless! Meaningless!***” says the Teacher. “***Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.***”

³ *What does man gain from all his labor at which he toils under the sun?*

Ecclesiastes 1:12 I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

¹³ *I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men!*

¹⁴ *I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.*

3. Solomon tried virtually everything to “make life work,” to fill his yawning emptiness without seeing God as his top priority, value and relationship.

4. Solomon is telling us something about the nature of this life’s reality. What things strike you about Solomon’s conclusions?

5. His words beg the question, “Well, then what is it that does give meaning?” How would you answer that?

6. His illustration of chasing meaning is “like chasing after the wind.” What is he saying?

7. We all want meaning, and we all chase meaning. How do you think meaning will come to you?

DAY 4: God answers the “WHAT?” and “HOW?”

1. When we ask God for wisdom, what is it we’re asking for?
2. We assume the gift of wisdom will answer all our “Why?” questions. Instead the gift of wisdom assumes our utter inability to understand all the “Why’s?”
3. There are times in life when God’s ways make no sense to us. When suffering or pain strike us, we naturally ask God, “Why? Why me? Why us? Why now?” And those questions seem like the most important questions.
4. Solomon warns us against the pursuit of understanding what we are not meant to fully understand and cannot fully understand until heaven. If we try to do so now, based only on evidence we see, it will lead us to the inevitable conclusion that life is “meaningless,” “a chasing after the wind.”

5. You see things you wouldn’t “expect” if God was “perfectly” ruling the world. In the following verses jot down how you respond when these things happen.

Ecclesiastes 7:15 In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these: a righteous man perishing in his righteousness, and a wicked man living long in his wickedness.

Ecclesiastes 3:16 And I saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment--wickedness was there, in the place of justice--wickedness was there.

6. The writer tried to find meaning in virtually every way possible. Solomon tried making the big bucks, running ranches and farmlands, building parks, women, pleasure, but none of these things and all of them together could not fill the vacuum in his soul. Then he tried to “understand” all this.

Ecclesiastes 1:17 Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind.

7. The God who rules sometimes, and often, doesn’t answer our “Why?” questions. What God seems to be doing sometimes makes little sense to us. What kind of wisdom is it we need?

8. When we think we know what God’s doing, we get prouder than peacocks. Trust dies, and so will love. Instead, God is shaping a people who learn to delightfully depend on Him, turn to Him often, humbly, cry out to Him, and learn to seek Him as their greatest treasure.

Ecclesiastes 11:5 As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother's womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things.

DAY 5: Examples of God's wisdom given to us

1. You ask, what is the point of wisdom, then? Interspersed in Ecclesiastes are nuggets of the kind of wisdom God wants to give us. In each verse, underline the items with which we are to do or remember.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man. ¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Ecclesiastes 5:1 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. ² Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. ³ As a dream comes when there are many cares, so the speech of a fool when there are many words.

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. ⁵ It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.

⁶ Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the [temple] messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?

⁷ Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore stand in awe of God.

Ecclesiastes 3:12 I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

2. What stood out to you from these verses?

3. What's striking is that Ecclesiastes tells us, over and over and over, that:

a. In this life we "**live under the sun.**" This life is not heaven, nor a "close second" to heaven. It is fraught with things that are puzzling, bewildering, confusing.

b. To chase after any person, project, position, passion, etc. will have as much sense as "**chasing after the wind.**"

c. To chase after any person, project, position, passion, etc. without God being first will end up being **meaningless.**

4. Ecclesiastes directs our attention to seeking God, fearing Him (reverence and obedience), and our duty, WHILE we trust Him with the WHY's? of life.

5. What's your take away from today's devotional?