



Page I volume 98

VOLUME 98 MARCH 2015
THE HEART OF WISDOM

Greetings to all you members of the family of God who are called by His name!

Well, plans are underway for my next mission to India at the end of this year and, Lord willing, Shannon will accompany me for the first time. There are several arrangements that need to be made to make this happen, so please be in prayer for it to be worked out for her to accompany me. I cannot wait to see how a trip like this will impact her as mission trips like these generally bless the one being sent as much as the ones whom they are being sent to.

I envision 2015 marking the beginning of me being able to make an annual trip to India and not just the trip I have only been able to make every two years. I am extremely excited about that! Over the past several years, I have come into contact with many various ministries who have invited me to come minister in their area but because of the limit of allotted time off from my secular job, I have been unable to accommodate these invitations. So now with the prospect of being able to visit India once a year and not having to rush there and back, I feel the liberty coming to minister in several different areas in the upcoming years. Praise God!

I have expressed in the past my heartfelt' desire to bring an element of discipleship to the established pastors, missionaries and evangelists there and also to the students who are preparing for the ministry. Saints, I can assure you that this is very necessary as many of these ministers and future ministers are starving to hear the mysteries of the kingdom. This is a major need there that I feel called to play a part in fulfilling as much as I am able and God has given me some wonderful ideas of how I can be a full time missionary even while I am based here in the States. I will have more to come on that in the future. Stay tuned.

As for the church I pastor, things are going very well at High Point Church. We are continuing to see growth-both in numbers of people and within people. I believe seeing this growth within individuals should be any pastor's ultimate goal. We want fruit, but as the Master taught us, we want fruit that remains. And this abiding fruit comes when God's Word, which lives and abides forever, is sown in the hearts of people. Amen.

As for this month's message, I would like us to revisit a teaching that I taught in one of the very first newsletters that Living Logos Ministries ever put out...

Of course, we are closing in on volume 100 of these Living Logos newsletters that our ministry has been putting out over the past 8 plus years! This obviously has resulted in a lot of material that has been rich and has been sent out to various Christians and ministries around the world.

With that said, I wanted to let you know that we recently updated our newsletter page on our website and included an archive of many of our past Living Logos newsletters. Just go to www.treydickerson.com and click on the "newsletter" tab and you can go back and download as many of these former teachings as you would like, free of charge.

So let me take a moment at this point to again thank all of our partners who have faithfully supported us over the past 8 years! Your generosity has enabled us to bless many people with the unsearchable riches of God's Living Word. We appreciate your faithfulness and generosity so much and always remember: you are laying up your treasures in heaven where moth and rust cannot corrupt or destroy and where thieves cannot break in and steal. Glory to God! What a privilege it is to promote the kingdom of God on the earth through supporting His ministries!

And this leads me into the heart of this month's message which I have entitled- **The Heart of Wisdom**.

DEFINING WISDOM

Early in my walk, I never really gave a lot of thought to the subject of wisdom, but in 2007, the truth concerning

wisdom just began exploding in my heart. During this time, I found a specific characteristic of godly wisdom that I would like to share with you this month, but before we get into this, let me begin by expounding just a little bit on wisdom in general...

In studying the wisdom of God, you will find that wisdom is the principle thing (Proverbs 4:7) - that is, it's the "first fruit" in regards to importance and significance in the kingdom of God (literal Hebrew definition of "principle"). In other words, there is no other virtue that we can possess that comes before the wisdom that comes from above.

Someone might be thinking- "What about love? Isn't it the greatest virtue of the Christian life?" or either "What about faith? Isn't it impossible to please God without faith?" Both of those questions are legitimate but through my studies on the subject of wisdom I have found that the wisdom that descends from above is, in fact, walking in love (compare James 3:17) and believing in God (compare Proverbs 9:10). In other words, you cannot separate godly wisdom from faith and love. They are all woven together to create the first fruits of a pure and undefiled religion that God has called us unto.

So if wisdom is the principle thing and is this important to kingdom living, what is it?

Simply put, wisdom is being skillful or an expert at something. For instance, if someone is skillful and an expert in auto mechanics, then you could say that they have wisdom in the arena of fixing cars. I have also heard wisdom defined as "the correct application of knowledge." So in regards to auto mechanics, if someone has the ability to correctly apply the knowledge of fixing cars, then they would not only know what an engine is, but they would also know how it operates.

This is an example of wisdom from a natural standpoint. But the wisdom we are talking about is godly wisdom and not natural, carnal wisdom... Godly wisdom can be defined as "the principles of right living." It is having the ability to correctly apply what we know about God's kingdom into everyday life's situations- thus producing a righteous lifestyle that is according to God's standards. So you could say that **godly wisdom is being skilled in the arena of kingdom living.**

But although these are the most common and basic definitions of wisdom, there is a specific characteristic of wisdom that stands out to me the most and I call it "the heart of wisdom"...

THE HEART OF WISDOM

I have found that the heart of wisdom is that it always looks ahead. In other words, **the very basis of wisdom is that it always considers the future when making current decisions.**

Isn't this just a common characteristic of a wise person? Through the knowledge and experiences of life, a wise person who chose to learn from their life-lessons, will make adjustments the next go around. In other words, because of what they learned will happen when they do certain things, they consider the outcome of their current decisions. This is wisdom, and this is exactly the opposite of what a fool does...

You know, as you read through Proverbs- the Book of Wisdom- you find that Solomon spent a lot of time differentiating between the wise person and the fool. And we also see that in describing the foolish person, he used the exact opposite characteristics than those we see in the heart of wisdom.

For instance, a fool will speak without thinking- never considering how what he is about to say will affect him or those hearing him. In regards to this, a fool will vent all his feelings. In other words, what is in his heart will become obvious because he will always let you know what he is thinking no matter how inappropriate it might be. A fool will also just blare on without giving any thought to his destination. He will rarely consider how what he is about to do will affect him down the road. So, you see, a fool conducts himself in the exact opposite manner of the wise.

People with the heart of wisdom will not vent all of their feelings. They will consider the effect their words will have before they speak them- and in many respects, godly wisdom, will restrain any words that would be hurtful and harmful to the hearers. The wise will also consider where what they are about to do will take them before they move forward- thinking ahead as to whether or not their current decision will lead them away from God's perfect plan for their life. To put it simply- **the heart of wisdom is that it looks ahead and considers where it is going.**

So what I would like for us to do now is look at how this heart of wisdom applies to the two different areas of our lives- both natural and spiritual.

PHYSICAL WISDOM

First of all, let's take a look at the heart of wisdom in regards to the natural areas of this earth-life. One example of this would be taking care of our bodies...

You see, wisdom will suppress the cravings of the flesh to eat fast food every day and just "veg-out" on the couch 24/7. Of course, that is an extreme example that hopefully none of us are practicing today, but it is an obvious example of foolishness. Saints, we need to walk in wisdom with our eating and exercising habits and not just live to gratify our flesh.

You see, our flesh is bent on gratifying itself *today!* In other words, it wants whatever it feels like *right now.* For example, a good sign that your flesh is trying to take control of the show is when you feel like you just have to have that candy bar at that moment. That is the time to suppress your flesh and treat it like you would a child and say, "You know what? If you are going to pitch a fit about it, you aren't getting anything!"

You will experience this the most when you go on a fast. Your flesh will kick and scream and tell you that you are going to just die if you don't eat something right now! Of course, this is not true because the truth is your body can go days without eating and be totally fine. But our flesh is just like a spoiled little kid though- totally irrational and selfish! But wisdom will discipline those physical cravings of the flesh because it will first consider how those eating, drinking, and exercising habits will affect it in the future.

This is just one example of how the heart of wisdom can be applied to our everyday lives. So let's look at another natural aspect of the heart of wisdom...

FINANCIAL WISDOM

Another matter that we simply cannot avoid in regards to the heart of wisdom is the area of finances. Let's look at an example of this that we can all relate to- credit cards (I'm sure everyone will like this one☺)...

When dealing with credit cards, many Americans have the mindset that they are a means of getting what they want today even though they do not currently have the money. For instance, many Americans will say things like- "I can put this new flat screen, high definition television on my credit card and then I'll own it." But the reality is- they don't really own it because they are going to have to pay for it down the road- *plus some!*

You see, wisdom will not do this. The reason why is because **wisdom will consider what something is going to cost down the road before acting on the impulses of the flesh to purchase it now.**

Now don't get me wrong- I am not saying that using credit cards is unwise (Sorry Dave Ramsey☺); it just becomes unwise when we do not handle them correctly. This occurs as we spend money on our credit card knowing that we will not be able pay it back immediately- thus incurring those high interest rates. But if we use a credit card, all with the mentality that we will pay it back at our first opportunity, then there is nothing wrong with them.

However, my point is that it is unwise to simply gratify the flesh and not consider the repercussions of those decisions. So, in regards to this, we should do our best to avoid using credit as a means to get what we want today at the cost of tomorrow.

Now we can flip this principle of wisdom regarding credit cards because did you know, you can actually use credit cards to your benefit? For example, Shannon and I have used credit cards for some time now that earn us cash back- anywhere from 1% to 5%. Of course, that is not a tremendous amount but when you charge everything you can on it (while deducting those payments out of your checkbook register as if you were using a check or a debit card) then it can add up.

For instance, when we have to make a major purchase, we use the credit card even though we might have the money sitting in our checking account. Why? Because we want to earn the rewards with the credit card company on that purchase and then we will turn around and pay it back before the interest sets in. There are some credit cards that earn travel rewards and I know a man who earned a free trip to Hawaii for himself and 3 other family members after just a few years of charging everything he could on that credit card while paying the bill in full every month! This is how credit cards can actually benefit us.

So I am not saying that using credit cards is wrong; what I am saying, however, is it is just how most Americans use them that is wrong.

As I was writing this about the misuse of credit cards, a particular scripture was ringing in my head... "The law is good if one uses it lawfully" (1 Timothy 1:8)...

You see, in the circles that I have run in, most people have this negative perception of the Mosaic and Levitical Laws. We understand that the law was given by God strictly to show us His unattainable righteous requirements- all with the hope of us throwing our hands in the air and asking for mercy. In this case, God sent the Messiah- the Lord Jesus- to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law for us so that when we responded in this manner, He would save us by grace. This is using the law "lawfully."

On the other hand, to use the law "unlawfully" would be to try and fulfill the righteous requirements of the law while rejecting the sacrifice offered through the blood and body of the Lord Jesus. In other words, using the law "unlawfully" would be us using the law as a means of justification before God. So, you see, the law is not bad in and of itself; it is just how people have used it that is bad.

Likewise, credit cards are good, if people would use them "lawfully." But the problem is many use credit cards as a way of gratifying their flesh today without giving any real thought to what it will cost them tomorrow.

But, on the other hand, wisdom will make financial decisions today that will be beneficial tomorrow. In other words, **wisdom will invest as opposed to incurring debt!** This is the heart of wisdom in regards to the financial arena.

SPIRITUAL WISDOM

So as I have stated thus far, a foolish person will just blare on without ever giving any forethought to the implications of his or her decisions. But a wise person will first consider how what they are about to do to their body and how they are about to spend their money will affect them in the future. But, you see, this principle of wisdom that we have been talking about is something that reaches well beyond just simple credit card debt as well as any other worldly examples. This is also how most people live their lives spiritually...

For example, in regards to sin, fools will succumb to temptation because they will not consider the future ramifications of their sin- how it will affect them spiritually, physically, emotionally, etc. So giving in to temptation is, in essence, an act of not walking in the wisdom of God.

What will wisdom do in regards to temptation? It will do everything it can to not even enter into the tempting circumstances. In other words, it will think ahead and do whatever it can to abstain from the fleshly lusts that war against the soul (see 2 Peter 2:11).

The Cross of Christ is a great example of this heart of wisdom that we are talking about... In Hebrews 12:2 the author tells us that Jesus “for the joy set before Him endured the Cross despising the shame.” In other words, Jesus looked beyond the temporal pain and suffering of the Cross and unto the joy that would come as a result of His obedience. Aren't you glad Jesus had the heart of wisdom at that time? And the author used this example to motivate his readers to take up their Cross and continue to strive against sin (see verses 3&4).

Saints, as long as we are living on this earth we will always have this option before us- Will we resist temptation now for the joy set before us or will we fulfill the lust of the flesh and sacrifice the long-term rewards?

SPIRITUAL DEBT vs. SPIRITUAL INVESTMENT

You see, there is such a thing as “spiritual debt” as well as financial debt. It is sad to say, but the truth is that the vast majority of people that have ever walked on this planet lived their life with this debt mentality.

What do I mean by “debt mentality?” I mean that they lived solely for their earthly life- fulfilling their own selfish, carnal desires- and they are paying for it right now in eternity... Some gave their heart to God but still lived conformed to this world- that is, they were born again believers, but they went through life only living for themselves and did not lay their treasures up in heaven. While these will still live in the presence of God for eternity, they will not receive the great rewards that they were capable of receiving. On the other hand, most people that have lived on the earth never even acknowledged the existence of God and lived totally ungodly and carnal lifestyles, having never received the salvation that was offered through Jesus Christ. These will experience spiritual “bankruptcy”- having their part in the lake of fire for eternity where the worm never dies and the fire is never quenched.

Both of these examples are the bookends of what it is like to live in spiritual debt. But, on the other hand, there are the few that find the path of life and live a life of consecration to God- putting their flesh under and sowing themselves towards their eternal harvest. These are the spiritually wise- the ones that have invested their life for their glorious future!

Let's look over at a verse in the 90th Psalm that I see as culminating everything we have been saying through this teaching (This Psalm was actually a prayer that Moses prayed during the time Israel was wandering in the wilderness for 40 years)...

In this Psalm, Moses prayed for something that I believe we should all pray for consistently for our own lives and the lives of others. In this awesome prayer, Moses shows us how the heart of wisdom applies to our life on this earth versus our life in eternity.

So what was it that Moses specifically prayed for that will enable us to gain a heart of wisdom? In verse 12, he asked the Lord to “teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” What a powerful verse this is!

What Moses was asking Yahweh was to teach them to count the number of days that they had. What does this mean? Just think about it... The carnal human tendency is to suppose that we will live on this earth forever. Most people (particularly young people) just float through life never considering that their life may end soon. Since this life is all that we have ever known, we just live life never really considering what happens after we die. But life after death is a reality that we must consider! As a matter of fact, eternity is something that we better consider because **how we live our life now will determine where and how we will spend eternity.**

Do you see how vague this is to most people- even Christians? But this is exactly why Moses prayed this for Israel... He prayed that God would teach them to calculate and evaluate their days on this earth so that they would be ready for the next life. So I pray now for both of us... "Lord, teach us to number our days as well- to see how short this life really is so that we would make the most of our time here on the earth. Lord, give unto us this heart of wisdom." Amen!

In the 90th Psalm as well as several other places in Scripture we are reminded of our human frailty. The Scriptures that are ringing in my ears even as I am writing this describe mankind as grass (see Isaiah 40:6-8 & James 1:9-11). And the point of emphasis in these Scriptures is that we are like grass in that we grow up one day and are cut down the next. Some of us are beautiful, glamorous, and successful like the flower of the grass, but we all will suffer the same fate of death regardless of what we accomplish here on the earth. We are all but a vapor.

You see, in the world success is sought for. People live their whole lives to make a buck and be able to retire one day. And although there is some wisdom in preparing for our future here on the earth, if that is all we live for, then we are living a life of vanity.

You see, our life on this earth is so short in comparison to eternity. And I believe the church has allowed the same mentality of the world to creep into it. We have adopted the same carnal and foolish thinking that is only concerned with this earth-life. This is indeed a grave mistake because a day is coming- soon and very soon- when we will stand in front of our Master and have to give an account for the stewardship of our life on this earth. I personally want the Lord to look at me and say, "Well done good and faithful servant! You have been faithful in little (i.e. in this short life) and now you will become ruler over much (i.e. in the eternal kingdom of God)!"

So which end of the spectrum are you going to strive for? Are you going to live for today and be in debt for the future or are you going to live for the future and lay down your life today? **Life is short, my friends; so live for eternity!**

So, in conclusion, we could say that **making current decisions that will positively affect our future is the heart of wisdom!** By far the most important aspect of this is regarding the spiritual because he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption but he who sows to the spirit will of the spirit reap everlasting life (Galatians 6:8). But we should also incorporate this characteristic of wisdom into our earth-life as well- physically, financially, etc.

My brother and sister, if we would live our lives with a heart of wisdom we would be making one of the greatest decisions we could ever make in our life. My prayer is that you will take this truth and begin to reevaluate your life to make sure you are investing in those things that are of eternal value. Never forget: **what we do today will echo for all eternity!** What sound will you make?

Until next month... Maranatha!

Victoriously,

