

FROM ABOVE | Growing in Wisdom

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WE CAN'T OVERSTATE THE IMPORTANCE OF WISDOM

Proverbs 4:7

Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore, get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.
Principal = chief, first, best thing

Today — We're not going to start by looking at the experience of an old man or woman telling us how to grow in wisdom; we're not going to hear that wisdom comes with age — we're going to start with an infant.

Jesus filled as infant

Luke 2:40

And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Jesus increased as a young man

Luke 2:52

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Jesus spoke as a grown man

Matthew 13:54

When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?"

There is wisdom available from God for every age and stage of life!
Wherever we find ourselves today,
we cannot content ourselves with yesterday's wisdom.
Acquire the necessary wisdom for the age and stage you are now!

Wisdom beyond years is infinitely better than years beyond your wisdom.

Wisdom and age are only synonymous when you continue to increase in wisdom.

Increased — to cut way through jungle like a pioneer; Jesus progressed by hacking way through obstacles of life, oppression of devils, and the opinions of men. **Jesus faced all 3 of these things...**

- **Obstacles** — natural limitation, social discrimination, absence of privilege
- **Oppression** — spiritual battle to keep you limited, losing and lost in life
- **Opinions** — too often the human voice of demonic whispers

Listen — *if you are going to grow in wisdom through the stages and ages of life, get ready to cut your way through all manner of opposition, and seize the opportunity for wisdom. Wisdom is crying out in the streets, desiring to be embraced, you must hear her voice louder than any opposition and take her as your own.*

Keys to increasing in wisdom

Luke 2:51-52

Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

**Jesus was subject, submitted, obeyed His parents – showing us that
subjecting ourselves to God and godly authority is crucial to increase in wisdom.
Godly wisdom comes from submission to God!
God gives increase of wisdom to submitted, obedient lives.**

This idea of subjection or submission to God is clearly seen in the first eight verses of Proverbs 3...

Proverbs 3:1-8

My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

Don't forget my law, keep my commands

verse 1 – subjection

a) know law, keep commands – hearer and doer –

James 1:22-25

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

b) verse 2 – blessing = length of days, long life, and peace – will be added to you!

Trust in the LORD, acknowledge Him in all your ways

verses 5-6 – subjection

a) trust LORD, acknowledge Him in all ways – “LORD, what is your will for me in this situation, what wisdom do you have for me, I’m trusting you.”

b) Gethsemane – “if there’s any other way – not my will but Yours be done.”

c) “Into Your hands I commit my spirit.” Total trust, total subjection.

d) verse 6 blessing – directed paths = accomplished purposes, fulfilled destinies!

Fear the LORD

verse 7 — subjection

- a) fear of the LORD, beginning of wisdom, conclusion of the matter, bookends of life
- b) not fearing man — in any way, shape, or form — not cost or consequences!
- d) verse 8 — blessing = health to flesh, strength to bones!
Proverbs 22:4 = riches, honor, life!

Don't lean on your own understanding or be wise in own eyes

verses 5,7 — subjection to God's understanding and wisdom and not your own

- a) “well I disagree with that” “well I think...”
- b) Job — self-righteous, accusatory, ignorant...
- c) Chapters 38-41 God lets Job have it — “Who are you to question Me?”
- d) **Job 38:1-12**

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? "Or who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth and issued from the womb; When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; When I fixed My limit for it, and set bars and doors; When I said, "This far you may come, but no farther, and here your proud waves must stop!" "Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place..."

When we're wise in our own eyes, when we disagree with God, when we think our ways are beyond His ways —

- a) we position ourselves for rebuke at best — and ruin at worst.
- b) the world today has professed to be wise and have become fools, as **Romans 1:22** tells us.
- c) if America continues down our arrogant and ignorant path, our foolishness will produce a calamity that God and His wisdom will laugh at — **Proverbs 1:21-32**.

Listen — if you are currently leaning on your own understanding, being wise in your own eyes — it's time to repent, like Job finally did — and let God forgive, restore and bless you.

Summary

Do you want to increase in wisdom just like Jesus?

1. Subject yourself to God.
2. Trust in the LORD, acknowledge Him in all your ways.
3. Fear the LORD.
4. Don't lean on your own understanding or be wise in your own eyes.
5. Ask God for wisdom.

James 1:5-8

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

***Then —
you can increase in wisdom, stature and favor with God and man —
just like Jesus did!***

Discussion Questions

1. Why is wisdom the “principal thing”?
2. Jesus faced obstacles, oppression, and opinions to increase in wisdom. What are you facing? How does His example help you?
3. How is “submission” to God crucial to increasing in wisdom?
4. Define “fear of the Lord,” and how it is the beginning and conclusion of wisdom.
5. Have you ever felt that you were “wiser than God” in a certain belief or situation? How did that turn out?
6. Read James 1:5-8 — take time now to ask God for wisdom... in a specific situation or area of your life.

NOTES