***True Wisdom***

Today, we should be grateful that we can assemble in this capacity to sing, to pray, and to study. And we’re glad you’re here and I’m glad to be with you. I want to talk to you today about the topic **True Wisdom**. Wisdom is considered by many to be simply the art of learning how to succeed in life. However, the real essence of wisdom is spiritual, for life is more than just living by a set of rules and being rewarded in some physical manner. Undoubtedly, the ultimate wisdom comes from God Almighty. He, and He alone, is the source of true wisdom. Solomon said in Proverbs 2 verse 6, **“For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”** If you want to learn about wisdom you need to read the book of Proverbs. The Bible pictures wisdom as if she were a person crying out to people; and she yearns to be heard. Proverbs chapter 1 verses 20 to 23 reads like this: **“20Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: 21She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, 22How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? 23Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.”** You know, when you talk about the foolish and the wise God puts all of us in one of those two categories and you’ll have to decide which one of those groups you’re in. But in our study today I’d like to catalog for us several characteristics of **True Wisdom**. Of what does true wisdom consist? Please consider the following points:

**(1) True Wisdom Involves Having Respect For God:** The first characteristic of true wisdom is that true wisdom involves having respect for God. Solomon said by inspiration that **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”** (Prov. 1:7) The Bible says in the book of Job, **“Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.”** (Job 28:28) But what does it mean to fear God? Well, to fear of God is to have a proper respect and an awe for God. The Bible says in Psalm 111:9, **“He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”** When people give respect to God in every aspect of their lives, my friends, that’s the beginning of true wisdom. As God’s people having the proper respect of God and His authority should be priority number one! But that’s not all…

**(2) True Wisdom Involves Learning:** Another thing that wise people recognize is their need to hear and increase in learning. One of the first things that God said to His people was, “Hear!” (Deut. 5:1; Acts 2:22). In fact, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). By the way, God expects His people to be a learning people. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-29, **“28Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”** In John 6:45 He said again, **“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”** And so wise people recognize this principle. Proverbs 12 and verse 15 says, that **“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.”** If you want to be wise you have to hear and increase in learning. Number three…

**(3) True Wisdom Involves Knowing:** The third point I want to make about true wisdom is that truth wisdom requires knowledge. It’s been said that wisdom is the application of knowledge and I think that’s true. Real wisdom is demonstrated in applying what we know and that involves knowing God and His will for our lives. Nothing is more valuable! Not earthly wisdom, not riches, not might. Folks today know all about movie stars, athletes, and television programs; but they’re ignorant of God’s will for their lives. That’s sad, isn’t it. Proverbs 10:14 states, **“Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.”** By the way, do you lay up knowledge? It’s also been said that knowledge is power. Do you believe that? It really is true! So it’s pretty important that you and I know (especially what’s in this book). In John 8:32 Jesus said, **“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** The only way to be set free is to know the truth. Come to know God, and true, spiritual wisdom will come with it! Proverbs 3 verse 13 says: **“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.** Some time ago, a man approached a preacher after worship and said, “You Christians are all brainwashed.” Well, the preacher replied, “Friend, everyone is brainwashed to some degree. Everybody fills his brains with something. The important thing is that true Christians choose what we want to wash our brains with.” As Christians we choose God’s wisdom and God’s truth. Solomon said, **“Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”** (Prov. 23:23) We all need the wisdom, the guidance, the correction, and the promises that can only be found in the word of God. The Bible is God’s revealed will, God’s wisdom, and God’s gift to us. This is His book, no matter what you might first think, and is what God will use to examine your life at the end of time. Buy the truth, know the truth, love the truth, and obey the truth. So the wise person recognizes their need to know God’s law. But that’s not all…

**(4) True Wisdom Involves Self-Control:** As you think about the topic **True Wisdom** the wise person is a person who exercises self-control. Proverbs 10:19 says, **“In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.”** That’s pretty good advice, isn’t it. In fact, it’s divine advice. A wise person knows how to control their tongue. Wise people refrain their lips from talking too much. The Bible says to be swift to hear and slow to speak (Jas. 1:19). By the way, it takes a lot of self-control to do that! And the Bible emphasizes the need for that very thing. When Paul preached to Felix one of the things he talked about was temperance or self-control. Acts 24:25 says, **“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”** The Bible says that self-control is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23). 2 Peter 1:6 tells us to add to our knowledge self-control and the list goes on. You know, self-control is underrated in today’s world but true wisdom cannot be found without it. But there’s something else…

**(5) True Wisdom Involves Saving Souls:** Another characteristic of people who are wise is a concern for the spiritual condition of those round about us. A wise man is interested in the salvation of other people. Did you know that? Proverbs 11:30 says, **“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.”** What does that mean when he talks about winning souls? Well, it involves teaching them about God’s will. When I think about that passage I’m reminded by the story of Andrew in John chapter 1. It says when Andrew heard Jesus he went and found Peter and took him out to lunch, right? No, he found his brother and brought him to Jesus! That’s what it means to win souls and all of us need to try to work at that. In fact, the Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:2, **“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”** The wise say I will work to help save souls! But again…

**(6) True Wisdom Involves Listening To Instructions:** Another thing that wise people do is listen to instructions. Have you ever tried to put something together without looking at the instructions or get to a certain destination without looking at the directions? Some of us (especially us men) know what that’s like. That’s why it’s important to listen to instruction. It’s been said that when all else fails read the directions and the Scriptures emphasize the importance of that very thing. In Proverbs 13:1 the wise man Solomon said, **“A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.”**  You see, a lot of people have the idea that their father doesn’t know a whole lot. He’s too old fashioned; just an old fogey. Well, if you say that it indicates something about your character. It may reveal that you’re not wise like the Bible talks about. Sometimes young people do not learn or forget (if they ever knew it) that their parents have had a lot more experiences than they’ve had and they know things that young people haven’t learned yet. So we need to listen to the advice of our parents if we want to be wise. Number seven…

**(7) True Wisdom Involves Building On A Solid Foundation:** Whenever you think about the topic of wisdom true wisdom involves building on a solid foundation. I take you this time to the book of Matthew chapter 7. In Matthew 7:24-27 Jesus pinpoints exactly what’s involved in regards to this point when He had this to say: **“24Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.”** A wise person is a person who builds his house on a rock. That is simply telling us that an individual who is wise hears God word and then does it. By the way, how wise are you in that regard? A number of Scriptures teach us to be doers of the word like Matthew 7:21 when Jesus said, **“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”** In James 1:22-25 James talked about the one who hears the word and does it. He said, **“22But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”** Are you a hearer only or are you a hearer and a doer? True wisdom consists of hearing and doing! And that represents the fella who builds on the rock. How wise are you when it comes to building? But again…

**(8) True Wisdom Involves Making Preparation:** Another aspect of true wisdom is that true wisdom requires making preparation. In Matthew 25:1-13 Jesus gave the parable of the 10 virgins. He then divided them into two groups. Do you know what the difference was in the two groups? One word: Preparation. The five foolish virgins made no preparation and the five wise one’s did. The Bible says beginning in verse 3, **“3They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. 6And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. 7Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. 9But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. 11Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”** (Matt. 25:3-13) By the way, which group would you be in? You know, everything we strive to achieve in life requires preparation. It’s been said that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Can you imagine God granting us entrance into heaven without us first being prepared for it? If you not preparing then failure is on the menu! One more point and the lesson’s yours…

**(9) True Wisdom Involves Pleasing God:** Another thing that separates the wise from the foolish is a desire to please God. A wise person will seek to please God. In Proverbs 10:1 Solomon said, **“The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.”** A good question that every son should ask is “Is my father proud of me?” The bottom line is that you can only please God by becoming a Christian. How do you do that somebody asked? Well, to become a Christian you must put your trust in God. You must believe that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God, who died for your sins. Hebrews 11:6 says, **“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”** You must repent of your sins (Acts 17:30). You can’t love God and keep on living in sin. Repentance means giving all that sinful life up in order to take up your cross and follow Him. Now along with faith, and repentance, the Lord commands you to be baptized. The Lord Jesus said in Mark 16:16, **“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”** Won’t you respond to the Lord’s teaching? Today is the best day for you to become a Christian and we are praying that you will!