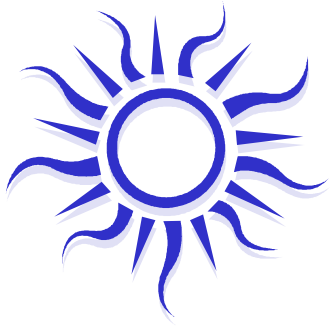


August 20, 2006



## Summer Sermon Reflections

### Depth of Personality

Shallow people aren't just boring or silly, they're also a wonderful anti-example of how much more is possible in this life. Though triggered by the nicks and dings of life, Proverbs reminds us deep Wisdom (and profound growth in personhood) must be sought in the midst of life's tussles.

Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table. She has sent out her maids, and she calls from the highest point of the city. "Let all who are simple come in here!" She says to those who lack judgment. "Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed." Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding. — Proverbs 9:1-6

### For Personal Study

The book of Proverbs is the Bible's how-to manual. The Proverbs teach us how to be successful and prosperous in our work, our dealings with family and friends, and our relationship with God. The direction and guidance that Proverbs gives us is practical, concrete, reasonable and fruitful. By reading Proverbs, we discover the vital importance of learning to live wisely.

Wisdom is the ability to use our experiences to intelligently make sound choices and good decisions. Wisdom is how we use our knowledge. We may have all the learning in the world and numerous degrees and licenses posted on our walls, but all that acquired learning merely points to past successes.

We will make mistakes. Understanding sometimes doesn't arrive until we've been given the benefit of hindsight.

It's wisdom that keeps us from repeating our mistakes. Our lives must be firmly grounded in Christ so Jesus' teachings can make God's wisdom alive in us. We need to understand that all wisdom comes from God through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is that voice we hear telling us the right way when we consciously seek God's instruction and help. The wisdom of Christ is learned and developed over time and experience; but, unlike the world's wisdom, the Holy Spirit will never steer us down the wrong path if we are paying attention to him.

Proverbs tells us we have to continually ask for wisdom in prayer, and we need to seek wisdom as we would a hidden treasure. When we immerse ourselves in God's word, we receive God's knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

### Readings & Questions

#### For Daily Discovery or Group Discussion

#### Monday, August 21

Solomon's greatest request to God was for wisdom. What is your greatest request? How has God answered your prayer?

1 Kings 3:5-15, 1 Kings 4:29-34

#### Tuesday, August 22

Why do you think the Bible teaches God's wisdom is much better to receive than gold (material riches)? How does your lifestyle demonstrate this spiritual truth?

Proverbs 9:7-12, Proverbs 16:16

#### Wednesday, August 23

What are some of the most effective ways that you can receive God's wisdom?

Proverbs 4:1-13, Proverbs 19:20

#### Thursday, August 24

What barriers keep you from listening to and learning from God's wisdom?

Mark 6:1-6

#### Friday, August 25

God's wisdom in our lives produces a variety of powerful qualities.

What qualities would you like God's wisdom to produce in you? Take a moment now to pray for God's guidance. James 3:13-18