

D.r.i.v.e.s. R.eady for Lifelong Learning

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Learning God's wisdom proverbs says is *Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. Proverbs 3:13,14 NIV* According to this verse wisdom should be worth more than a caddy!

Proverbs contains many strong statements about the benefits of wisdom, including long life, wealth, honor, and peace. If you aren't experiencing them, does this mean you are short on wisdom? Not necessarily. Instead of guarantees, these statements are general principles. In a perfect world, wise behavior would always lead to these benefits. Even in our troubled world, living wisely usually results in obvious blessings—but not always. Sometimes sin intervenes, and some blessings must be delayed until Jesus returns to establish his eternal Kingdom

But Just like Johnny's Cadillac it' comes one piece at a time! That is why an old dog is wiser than a young pup, one piece at a time they hopefully have added God's wisdom to their life! There is no

short cut to spiritual maturity it comes one piece at a time! This is why the r in drive stands for Readiness for life long learning.

Now learning facts just to win Jeopardy is not what I am talking about! Learning to be a well rounded individual will not count for much in eternity. The lifelong learning I am urging us to do, is a life time of learning how to drive our life in a way that honors Jesus. So one day we can stand before him and hear well done good and faithful servant.

I also choose the song one piece at a time, because When cash sings Now, up to now my plan went all right 'Til we tried to put it all together one night And that's when we noticed that something was definitely wrong. The transmission was a '53 And the motor turned out to be a '73 And when we tried to put in the bolts all the holes were gone. So we drilled it out so that it would fit And with a little bit of help with an A-daptor kit We had that engine runnin' just like a song Now the headlight' was another sight We had two on the left and one on the right But when we pulled out the switch all three of 'em come on.

All human being learn something throughout life, now I know you may doubt that of some. And please do not point to your neighbor! But it's

true we all learning something either wisdom or foolishness.

Foolishness is having three headlights and no clue how to put them together! Wisdom is seamless functionality, we could say wholeness, functionality!

Foolishness is being the same hot head at 50 you were at 20 and with three broken marriages to show for it. Wisdom is having one marriage, where you have learned to reign in self for the betterment of a marriage!

But that is not to say people who have Godly wisdom never experience a divorce or some sinful reality. It is to say they have learned from God how to function in a highly dysfunctional world. But as I say it means you must be ready for a life time of learning!

Explain Luke 2:40& 52 NASB

The Child continued to grow and become strong, [c]increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and [x]stature, and in favor with God and men

These two verses at the end of chapter 2 of Luke gives us a glimpse at the first 30 years of Jesus' life. In two verses that bookend the story of Jesus at the Temple as a 12 year-old boy, Luke describes Jesus'

growing up. Underline the phrase continued to grow and to increase. The terms translated Continued to grow and 53 to increase, in each instance, means more than to grow bigger. Luke has in mind a change for the better by advancing and making progress. It means Jesus grew to spiritual maturity just like everyone else one piece at a time. One experience at time. Does that surprise you?

So if Jesus got it one piece at a time? One day at a time? And one experience at a time? How are we going to get it? Let's list four words as to what Jesus learned.

Grew in Strength=Physicality

Jesus grew day by day and moment by moment just like every other child. Luke describes it as becoming strong. Obviously there's a physical component in that but we should also see there is a spiritual component to strength. One fact we often forget in these scriptures is Jesus grew up just like every other Jewish boy of the day but he was also sinless. Can you imagine never sinning? Can you imagine without the stain of sin on His life, how strong, fast and agile he must have been! Can you imagine how strong he was without the effects of sin in His life?

He grew as a child grows but in a manner that's unique, in a manner unaffected by sin. His growth was never hindered, never impaired, and

never restricted, or never affected by sin. So He developed certainly a kind of physical strength, the kind of physical manliness, a kind of look that would be unique. He could certainly do the labor of a carpenter which [Mark 6:3](#) indicates is what He did in His father's business. In fact at a young age he likely outworked older men. He could certainly walk miles. And, of course, if you live in Nazareth, You're either going up or down because it's on the side of hills. And all of Galilee is rolling hills. He could walk for miles...the strength to do that, the strength to endure sleeplessness as He did often in His ministry, praying all night. The strength even eventually to be tortured, the strength to be crucified and still live so that His life wasn't even taken from Him by the act of crucifixion, rather He gave it up by Himself. He had some...some unique physical capacities. But Luke tells us he grew into these one piece at a time-one day at a time!

Grew in Wisdom=Mentally

This is the Intellectual Development. Jesus as you can see, exemplifies the epitome of intelligence when He confronted the teachers, masters of the Law of His day, the Pharisees, and everyone who wanted to test His mettle as a recognized Teacher of His day were amazed and astonished with His answers. As you read the Gospel, notice how much knowledgeable the Lord had of the Pentateuch, the book of the

Prophets, Historical books and every book in the Old Testament, I am sure He greatly feasted on every pages of God's words! How about you?

Howard Hendricks said that if we stop reading, we stop learning, and when we stop learning we stop preaching or witnessing. Listen to the mental prowess Jesus developed in 12 short years in verse 46,47

Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers.

Jesus accepted the limitations of a human mind. The fact that he "increased in wisdom" says that He went through a learning process just like our kids go through. Jesus had to learn to read and write. We find Him asking questions and discussing the Law with the teachers, and later would even say that there were some things He just didn't know, such as the time of His second coming. There is no magic or miracle going on it tells me Jesus was a learner! And that we need to be ready for life long learning.

Favor with God= Spiritually

In this text the word "Grace" is translated from the Greek word "charis" which refers to the divine influence upon the heart and life of an individual in a way that is reflected in its direction and purpose. The definition seems to suggest that the recipients of God's grace are those whose hearts and lives are being directed to achieve a divine purpose.

Thus when Luke says "and the grace of God was upon him" he indicates that the life of the Christ child would be divinely influenced and directed to achieve a divine purpose.

It explains how this child was protected in the days after Christmas from soldiers of Herod who sought to kill him. It explains how, with hundreds of soldiers searching for him, his parents were able to slip him out of the country to live in a foreign land.

GRACE OF GOD SERVES A DIVINE PURPOSE. When the grace of God is upon us it is for a divine purpose. Dr. H.W. Beecher relates the story of the traveler who came upon a bridge in a storm. Despite the howling winds he rode across the bridge to find lodging in an inn. The next morning he was asked how he was able to cross the bridge. The man answered he just rode across. The inn keeper took him to the

bridge site and showed him that the bridge washed out days earlier. Only a strip of plank lay across the raging river and he managed to cross it in the middle of a storm, without missing a step. The traveler nearly fainted when he saw the 100 foot drop that could have been his fate. Then the innkeeper asked, "Where are you going?" He answered, "I'm delivering a vaccine to the hospital across the valley; without it hundreds will die." -The innkeeper then answered, "Now you know why you were able to do the impossible, grace carried you across the bridge because you are an answer to someone's prayers."

In the same sense, God's grace is upon us for a reason. You may be the answer to someone's prayers. We were saved from the fire for a reason. We survived the hardships of the past year for a reason. The accident we encountered should have been fatal but we survived for a reason.

Our response is to drive long enough with God so we have an idea the general direction he is pointing us towards!

Favor with man = socially

Jesus did not possess special means of spiritual growth which are not available to us. It is essential to realize this if we are to understand

Jesus. It is equally essential to appreciate it if we are to grow like him. He grew in favor with man by learning how to overcome disfavor of siblings found in a large Jewish family.

He learned social skills by daily interaction with people how to influence and point others to God the father. That is what Jesus was doing at the age of twelve in the Temple, growing in favor with man?...At the age of thirty he chose twelve disciples....Why did he go to Bethany, to the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus? It was undoubtedly because he found in their spiritual fellowship and love an atmosphere which helped him. Jesus learned his social skills just like we do, step by step part by part!

Illustrate

Several years ago I restored a 1962 Ford 85 Oldsmobile convertible with a 215 V8. I bought the car because the body was in good condition the price was right but it was right because most of the motor was in 5 gallon buckets. Arrogantly I thought to myself how hard can a motor be to put together. Months upon months pouring over a repair manual I understood the facts of assembly and got all the parts where it was supposed to be. When the big moment came to turn over the motor you should have seen the disappointment in my face when I could not get it

to turn over! I had a couple of buddies come over who happened to be mechanics, I was terrified when they could not get it to turn over! I had a friend who had a race shop and I took it to him, told him what was going on he just laughed! Called me the next morning to come get my Car. I was like how in the world did you get it going?

He just had an amused look, he said you young kids forgot the old cars all had manual oil pumps and they would not run unless the pump was first primed!

Jerry said something to the elders last Tuesday that has stuck with me. He said we can have knowledge. If that all we have is knowledge all we have is facts. But if that knowledge leads to understanding because of God's revelation then we have a change in our life! Without understanding and the Holy Spirit revealing how to use it was have just a bunch of parts!

Unless the Holy Spirit primes our pump our motor won't run! We will have nothing but a bucket of parts if we know the facts of Jesus life, without actually knowing Jesus. That is why Jesus said: that *some men; For they look, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really listen or understand. Matthew 13:13 NLT* Do you really want to spend your whole life looking and never seeing?

To hear but never understand? Or are you ready for life time of learning by begging the Holy Spirit how to put to use the facts he has given you?

Demonstrate: John 6:63

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life John 6:63 NASB Let's say this together out loud. How many times does Jesus use the word life to characterize the spirit in this one passage? Might that be important clue to tell if the Spirit is at work in your life?

Do you know how to tell if you are receiving revelation from God? You are finding and giving life! If you are learning to walk in step with the spirit, you will find spiritual profit and new lie. What is another way of saying this?

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life; without the work of the Holy Spirit, we cannot even see our need for new life (14:17). All spiritual renewal begins and ends with God. He reveals truth to us, lives within us, and then enables us to respond to that truth. But we must be ready. How are we ready? Pray, listen and obey the truth!

Activate Four tools to wait for God's wisdom or revelation!

What do you think when you hear the phrase wait on the Lord? Wait

on the Lord is where revelation comes from. Waiting on the lord is where change happens. But is this waiting a passive waiting, where we sit on our butt waiting for God to do something? I would challenge you to study for yourself, I believe scripture calls us to yes wait but be active while we wait for God to bless us with understanding, revelation and wisdom. There is no better promises of this than Luke 11:9-13 ***So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.***

"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for ^[f] a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

There are four ways we can seek God's wisdom. There are four ways we can be ready for a life of learning God's wisdom. Let me give them to you. . .

Memorize

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against

you. Ps 119:11 The word hidden is clearly in reference to memorizing scripture. Hiding (keeping) God's Word in our heart is a deterrent to in. This alone should inspire us to memorize Scripture. But memorization alone will not keep us from sin; we must also put God's Word to work in our life, making it a vital guide for everything we do. obviously it is a life long journey to master both.

Meditate

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers. Psalms 1:1,2

Biblical meditation is far different from eastern religious meditation. Eastern religions meditation is an attempt to empty ones minds.

Biblical meditation seeks to fill mans mind with Godly wisdom!

I often say biblical meditation is reading a passage putting it on the back burner of your mind to simmer. As it simmers it's aroma should fill your thoughts, actions and intention throughout the day!

Map

The path of the righteous is level; O upright One, you make the

way of the righteous smooth Is 26:7

The primary way paths, trails, roads and interstates are level. As man surveys, and mapping the most level way from point A to B! In recovery we talk about making a plan for sobriety, mapping out how you will remain sober in the face of Temptations. To remain righteous it requires us to map a path that seeks righteous ways and avoids the valley of sin. Do you have a map for 2012 on how you are growing more like Christ?

Make Adjustments

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says:

"In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. Isaiah 30:15

This verse assures us we are driving in the right direction if our life is filled with rest, quietness and trust. We have all been lost at some time or another in life, usually the first indication that we are lost, is this uneasy feeling we should have made a left instead of a right. To get back on the path it will require us to make a u-turn the bible calls this repentance. Driving life in a godly direction will require making adjustments daily.

Now, that may seem a lot to remember to simply wait for God's revelation, but remember it all comes together one piece at a time!

Conclusion: Part of the reason the people of Israel didn't recognize Jesus as the Messiah was because they already had their minds made up as to what they were looking for; so, when the Promised Messiah came in Jesus of Nazareth, they rejected him. He just didn't fit the image.

Listen: If you don't hear another word I say today, hear this: Life is dynamic, not static. Situations and circumstances change. So do people. What worked in the past is probably not going to work in the present or the future. The only way to stay abreast is to be adaptive and willing to grow. So my question today is simple will you follow Jesus? If the answer is yes; then it requires you to be Ready for life long learning. If you want to commit your life to Jesus-then come up front as we sing If you desire is to join this church fellowship come up front as we stand to sing.