

Life really comes down to making decisions. You are *who* you are today, *what* you are today, and *where* you are today because of the decisions you have made in the past. There are only two types of decisions you can make. From a human perspective, we could call them either good decisions or bad decisions. From God's perspective, you will either make wise decisions or foolish decisions.

The _____ decision is to seek God's wisdom for _____ decision.

BACKGROUND TO PROVERBS:

The Book of Proverbs was written by King Solomon. God did something for him that He will do for us if we will follow this king's example. *"In that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, 'Ask what I shall give you'"* (2 Chronicles 1:7).

If God were to tell you, "You can have anything you want. I'll give you one wish." What would you ask for? Solomon, at this time, was about 20 years old, and what he asked for is truly remarkable. His response was simply: *"Give me now wisdom"* (2 Chronicles 1:10).

God was so pleased with Solomon's heart that He also gave him everything that he *didn't* ask for – wealth, fame, and power. And Solomon became the wisest man who ever lived.

Why did Solomon write Proverbs? Solomon knew that his greatest legacy was not in his money, fame, or power – it was in his family. Proverbs is not just a book; it's a letter from a father to his son. Twenty-three times the phrase *"my son"* is used, and *"my children"* is used four times.

Proverbs deals with the five major areas of life: the financial, the emotional, the physical, the relational, and the spiritual. We need God's wisdom in all five of those areas. Today we're going to answer the three most basic questions about wisdom:

1. WHAT IS IT?

Proverbs 4:7-8, *"The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her."*

Wisdom is not _____. We're in a knowledge explosion in today's world. Since 1955, knowledge has doubled every five years. There's a lot of information. But you can still be an educated fool.

Wisdom is seeing and responding to life from God's _____. An attitude and an action. It is a skill that you can develop. It is seeing life through the eyes of God and living life in the will of God.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon said, "Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool so great as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom."

The word "wisdom" is related to the word " _____ " in the Old Testament. When the Israelites were building the tabernacle, God gave to them to "spirit of wisdom" to know how to build it. Wisdom and skill are inter-relatable. **Wise living is living _____.** It is extracting the most out of life and making the most out of life.

- **Wisdom is _____ by the _____.** Read Proverbs 1:1 and 2:1. Proverbs is about a father who is a king speaking to his son. A Heavenly Father, who is a King, is still speaking to His children. This is not only Solomon's word – this is the inspired word of God.
- **Wisdom is the _____ of the _____.** Read Proverbs 2:1-2a. There is to be a teacher. Who is the teacher? The teacher of wisdom is the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. The Bible also refers to the Holy Spirit as *"The Spirit of Wisdom."*
- **Wisdom is the _____ of the _____.** You will never have real wisdom until you know the Lord Jesus Christ in your heart. Proverbs 1:10 says, *"For wisdom will enter your heart."* Who is the wisdom that comes into our heart? That wisdom is Jesus Christ. The journey to wisdom begins at salvation and deepens with discipleship.

2. WHAT WILL IT DO FOR ME?

Proverbs 3:16-18, *"Wisdom is more valuable than precious jewels; nothing you could want can compare with it. Wisdom offers you long life, wealth and honor. It can make your life pleasant and lead you safely through it. Those who become wise are happy."*

What will wisdom do for me? There are at least six benefits that wisdom will bring into your life:

1. _____: How can God promise me a longer life if I'm wise? Because when you're wise it reduces the stress in your life. You have healthier habits. You get involved in fewer accidents because you do wise things, so you live longer.
2. _____: When you walk in Biblical wisdom you have God serving as your financial planner.
3. _____: How does wisdom bring honor? You don't put your foot in your mouth as often. And you know the right thing to do in every situation.
4. _____: Living according to God's wisdom makes life easier. Most of the problems you have in your life you bring on yourself from foolish decisions.
5. _____: It will make your life safe. Wisdom gives a sense of security and self-confidence and peace of mind.
6. _____: Those who become wise will be happy. Solomon asked for wisdom and God said everything else he could ever want is wrapped up in wisdom.

Someone has said: "Wisdom is to the mind what health is to the body." I believe that is true because both wisdom and health come from God. Wisdom is not something that is learned. It is something that is received.

3. HOW CAN I GET IT?

If you want to be wise you need to remember that wisdom, according to the Bible, is like gold. Therefore, you must know where to find it and then you must know how to mine it. Proverbs 2 teaches us how. There are four steps to receiving wisdom:

1. _____ – **Listen for the Voice of God**
"My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding" (Proverbs 2:1-2). The word "incline" pictures a dog whose ears are perked up when he hears a strange noise. If you want wisdom you must incline your ear to the word of God. The word "incline" means literally "to tune in" or "to sharpen the hearing." You must not only read the Bible, but you must also be ready to *receive* what God has to say. Proverbs 2:1a says, *"My son, if you receive my words..."* The word "receive" literally means "to welcome." There's no shortcut to wisdom. It takes time and effort to be wise. We must also *remember* the Word of God (*"and treasure my commands within you..."* vs. 2:1b). Then we must *reproduce* the Word of God (*"And apply your heart to understanding..."* vs. 2:2b).
2. _____ – **Ask God For It**
"Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding" (Proverbs 2:3). We are to cry out for wisdom. We are to ask for wisdom. James 1:5 says, *"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."* Benjamin Franklin said, "The doorstep to the temple of wisdom is a knowledge of your own ignorance." Someone has well said, "A Christian on his knees sees farther than a philosopher on his tiptoes."
3. _____ – **Search the Scriptures**
"If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures" (Proverbs 2:4). How would you respond if you learned that the greatest treasure in the world were hidden somewhere on your property? If you are going to find the treasure of God's wisdom you're going to have to get into this book and dig as deep and dig as diligently and dig as devotedly as you would look for hidden treasure.
4. _____ – **Apply What God Reveals to You**
"Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:5-6).

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The wisest decision is to seek God's wisdom for every decision.

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The word "wisdom" is related to the word "skill" in the Old Testament. When the Israelites were building the tabernacle, God gave to them to "spirit of wisdom" to know how to build it. Wisdom and skill are inter-relatable. **Wise living is living skillfully**. It is extracting the most out of life and making the most out of life.

- Wisdom is provided by the Father. Read Proverbs 1:1 and 2:1. Proverbs is about a father who is a king speaking to his son. A Heavenly Father, who is a King, is still speaking to His children. This is not only Solomon's word – this is the inspired word of God.
- Wisdom is the product of the Holy Spirit. Read Proverbs 2:1-2a. There is to be a teacher. Who is the teacher? The teacher of wisdom is the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. The Bible also refers to the Holy Spirit as *"The Spirit of Wisdom."*
- Wisdom is the presence of the Savior. You will never have real wisdom until you know the Lord Jesus Christ in your heart. Proverbs 1:10 says, *"For wisdom will enter your heart."* Who is the wisdom that comes into our heart? That wisdom is Jesus Christ. The journey to wisdom begins at salvation and deepens with discipleship.

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Proverbs 3:16-18, *"Wisdom is more valuable than precious jewels; nothing you could want can compare with it. Wisdom offers you long life, wealth and honor. It can make your life pleasant and lead you safely through it. Those who become wise are happy."*

What will wisdom do for me? There are at least six benefits that wisdom will bring into your life:

1. **Long Life**: How can God promise me a longer life if I'm wise? Because when you're wise it reduces the stress in your life. You have healthier habits. You get involved in fewer accidents because you do wise things, so you live longer.
2. **Wealth**: When you walk in Biblical wisdom you have God serving as your financial planner.
3. **Honor**: How does wisdom bring honor? You don't put your foot in your mouth as often. And you know the right thing to do in every situation.
4. **Pleasure**: Living according to God's wisdom makes life easier. Most of the problems you have in your life you bring on yourself from foolish decisions.
5. **Security**: It will make your life safe. Wisdom gives a sense of security and self-confidence and peace of mind.
6. **Happiness**: Those who become wise will be happy. Solomon asked for wisdom and God said everything else he could ever want is wrapped up in wisdom.

Someone has said: "Wisdom is to the mind what health is to the body." I believe that is true because both wisdom and health come from God. Wisdom is not something that is learned. It is something that is received.

3. HOW CAN I GET IT?

If you want to be wise you need to remember that wisdom, according to the Bible, is like gold. Therefore, you must know where to find it and then you must know how to mine it. Proverbs 2 teaches us how. There are four steps to receiving wisdom:

1. **Inclination** – **Listen for the Voice of God**
"My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding" (Proverbs 2:1-2). The word "incline" pictures a dog whose ears are perked up when he hears a strange noise. If you want wisdom you must incline your ear to the word of God. The word "incline" means literally "to tune in" or "to sharpen the hearing." You must not only read the Bible, but you must also be ready to receive what God has to say. Proverbs 2:1a says, *"My son, if you receive my words..."* The word "receive" literally means "to welcome." There's no shortcut to wisdom. It takes time and effort to be wise. We must also remember the Word of God (*"and treasure my commands within you..."* vs. 2:1b). Then we must reproduce the Word of God (*"And apply your heart to understanding..."* vs. 2:2b).
2. **Invocation** – **Ask God For It**
"Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding" (Proverbs 2:3). We are to cry out for wisdom. We are to ask for wisdom. James 1:5 says, *"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."* Benjamin Franklin said, "The doorstep to the temple of wisdom is a knowledge of your own ignorance." Someone has well said, "A Christian on his knees sees farther than a philosopher on his tiptoes."
3. **Investigation** – **Search the Scriptures**
"If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures" (Proverbs 2:4). How would you respond if you learned that the greatest treasure in the world were hidden somewhere on your property? If you are going to find the treasure of God's wisdom you're going to have to get into this book and dig as deep and dig as diligently and dig as devotedly as you would look for hidden treasure.
4. **Inspiration** – **Apply What God Reveals to You**
"Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:5-6).