



FROM THE PASTOR

# Weekly Devotional

## Wisdom

Pastor Appleton

*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. (James 1:5)*

Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. By wisdom we exercise judgment between good and evil. It has both theoretical and practical parts. In order to make good decisions, we must have knowledge and understanding of what is good. But wisdom does not consist of merely knowing things. It's possible to have knowledge without wisdom. Wisdom includes applying, or using, what we know to choose what is good. Here we can see that wisdom involves both the intellect and the will. For example, a man can know that drunkenness is bad. But unless he combines that knowledge with the choice to avoid drunkenness, he's not really exercising wisdom. The goodness of sobriety is not found in knowing that sobriety is good. The goodness of sobriety is found in being sober. Thus, we can see that knowledge apart from use is useless.

In Deuteronomy 4:5-6, Moses says, "I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore, be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom..." Here we see both the theoretical and practical parts of wisdom. The theoretical part is the knowledge of God's revelation, "the statutes and judgements". The practical part is acting, "according to them" and being "careful to observe them". Combining the right knowledge with the right action is "your wisdom".

Here then, are two indispensable things for true wisdom: (1) knowing God's will; and (2) using that knowledge to do God's will. If we are ignorant of God's will, we lack the precepts upon which wisdom is founded. Knowledge of God's will comes from God's word, "the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6). If you want to know what is good and acceptable for God; then you must learn it from God. This means hearing and meditating upon the word of God in the holy Scriptures. But don't stop there! Take the truths that God teaches you and put them to use in your thinking, feeling, and doing. That's true wisdom.

Jesus, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom (Colossians 2:3), says, "Whoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man..." (Matthew 7:24). It's bad to be wise in our own eyes (Proverbs 26:12); but it's good to be wise in Christ's eyes.



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In keeping with the Great Commission, Providence strives to be a transformed Christian community, centered in the worship of God and bearing witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord. As Christ's disciples, we endeavor to build vibrant lives, strong families, and a fellowship in which members care for and love one another and together seek the well-being of our city, state, and world. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we seek to develop a vital preaching and teaching ministry aimed at drawing men and women to Christ; healing, comforting and nurturing them in the faith; equipping them for service, and deploying them effectively into all walks of life.

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### WISDOM AND THE FEAR OF GOD

*May 26, 2024*



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# The Celebration of Worship



## Prelude & Welcome

## Reflection & Preparation

Psalm 107:1-2, 21-22  
©2018 Trinity Psalter Hymnal

## Call to Worship

Psalm 111:1,10

*Leader* Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

## Invocation

## Hymn

*All You That Fear Jehovah's Name* · Trinity 9

## Scripture Reading

Luke 18:9-14, 1 Corinthians 3:18-20

Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, `God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. `I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, `God, be merciful to me a sinner!' "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; and again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."

## Song

*My Life Is in You, Lord* · arr. J. Moser 2009

Words & music by Daniel Gardner, 1986. CCLI License #173651

My life is in You, Lord, my strength is in You, Lord, my hope is in You, Lord, in You, it's in You; My life is in You, Lord, my strength is in You, Lord, my hope is in You, Lord, in You, it's in You. I will praise You with all of my life, I will praise You with all of my strength; With all of my life, with all of my strength; All of my hope is in You. You, it's in You; in You.

## Worship in Giving

### Offertory

*My God's So Good to Me* · Mark Hayes

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## Song

*Not Haughty Is My Heart*

The Psalter, 1912; mod. TRENTHAM S.M.: Robert Jackson, 1894

1. Not haugh - ty is my heart, not loft - y is my pride;  
2. With child - like trust, O Lord, in you I calm - ly rest,  
3. O peo - ple of the Lord, in him a - lone con - fide;

I do not seek to know the things God's wis - dom has de - nied. con - tent - ed as a lit - tle child up - on its moth - er's breast. from this time forth and ev - er - more his wis - dom be your guide.

## Pastoral Prayer

## Sermon

*Be Not Righteous Overmuch* · Pastor Appleton

*Ecclesiastes 7:15-18 NKJV*

- <sup>15</sup> I have seen everything in my days of vanity: There is a just man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs life in his wickedness.
- <sup>16</sup> Do not be overly righteous, nor be overly wise: Why should you destroy yourself?
- <sup>17</sup> Do not be overly wicked, nor be foolish: Why should you die before your time?
- <sup>18</sup> It is good that you grasp this, and also not remove your hand from the other; For he who fears God will escape them all.

*Notes*

## Hymn

*Thy Way, Not Mine, O Lord* · Trinity 686

## Benediction & Postlude

*Following the service, the elders will be available to pray with you at the front of the sanctuary.*