

Lesson 68:

The Quest for Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Might, Knowledge, Discernment, Insight, Common Sense, Revelation, and the Fear of the LORD

Have you ever heard the phrase, “You are what you eat”? That means that the food you eat is the material that is used to build new cells in your body. If you eat good, healthful foods, you will have a strong, healthy body. If you eat junk food all the time, you will end up having a weak, sickly body. It is important to make good food choices every day and eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins (like meat or beans), and grains (like bread or pasta).



Similarly, with regards to your spirit, soul, and mind, “You are what you READ.” You become whatever you meditate on or think about. If you think joyful, positive thoughts all day long, you will be a joyful, positive person. If you think angry, depressive

(sad) thoughts all day, you will become an angry, depressed person. The books that you read are the food for your thoughts. Your thoughts spark actions. Your actions, when repeated, form habits. Your habits create your character: are you a good, kind, gentle, loving person or a selfish, mean, angry person? It all starts with the thoughts in your heart. Ideas from books are like seeds that are planted in your heart. They take root and begin to grow. Good books plant good

thoughts in your heart, and those grow into good trees that bear wonderful fruit that are a blessing to many people. Bad books plant bad thoughts in your heart, that are like weeds and thorns, growing into tangled messes that ruin your life and harm those around us. It is very important to make good choices when deciding what books to read. GOD tells us in Proverbs 4:23 (KJV), “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” In other words, be careful about what you think about, and what attitudes you allow your heart to have. It is very important to keep negative and harmful influences away from your heart. Thus, you should be very careful about what books you read. Not every book is a book



worth reading. If you start reading a book and suddenly realize that it is scary, dark, or evil, it is OK to shut the book, take it to your mom or dad, and tell them that you don't like the book. You never have to finish it! It is a bad book! It is not worth your time!

JESUS wants us to invest our time into eternal treasures. He says in Matthew 6:19-21, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Time is one of our treasures. Once it is spent, you cannot get it back. Also, you have a limited amount of time: perhaps one hundred years at the most. You can either invest your time in positive, worthwhile activities, or you can waste your time and spend it doing things that will not benefit your life. Did you

know that if you spend 10,000 hours doing any particular activity, you will become an expert in it? What would you like to become an expert in? I recommend that you become an expert in being



one of JESUS' best friends, beginning by reading the Bible and making Him your LORD and SAVIOR. Then pick one other area of skill that you would like to become an expert in. Ephesians 5:16 encourages us to "[Redeem] the time, because the days are evil." That means we are to use our time wisely, doing good things that will benefit ourselves and others. Reading good, wholesome books is a great way to redeem the time. How do you decide whether a book is good or not? In order to do this, you will need WISDOM and DISCERNMENT.

WISDOM is having good judgment. It is the ability to look at a situation, take in the facts, and make good decisions that bring good results to your life. For example, if you see a hot stove, you have the wisdom not to touch it.

DISCERNMENT is slightly different. It is the ability to recognize the difference between good things and bad things. For example, if you see green mold growing on a piece of bread, you know that the bread has gone bad and you should not eat it.

There are two ways to learn wisdom and discernment. The first way is to make painful mistakes and having the memory of that lesson seared into your brain. For example, if you were a little child, and you touched a hot stove, the pain you experience would be a strong memory that would keep you from touching a hot stove ever again! The second way to learn wisdom and discernment is by listening to the stories of other people who have made painful mistakes, learning from their painful experiences, and obeying their instructions that are designed to keep you from similar pain. For example, when you were a small child, your mother told you, “Don’t touch the stove, it is hot.” If you listened to your mother and obeyed her instruction, you were a wise child. You never had to personally experience the pain of touching the hot stove. Your obedience helped you learn wisdom. You benefitted from the wisdom of your mother. Therefore, one excellent way to decide whether a book is good or bad is to take it to your mom or dad and ask them what they think about it. A wise father or mother will be able to look at a book, and within a few minutes or even moments, discern whether it is a good book that will help you to grow loving and wise, or whether it is a bad book that will plant bad thoughts in your heart.

Another way of discerning whether books are good or bad is by listening to your conscience. Your conscience is your sense of right and wrong. It compels us to do what is right. If you are reading a book and suddenly feel like this is



not something you should be reading, STOP! Close the book. Take it to your dad or mom, and tell them what you felt, and ask them what they think. It is not wise to go against your conscience. A strong conscience will keep you out of a whole lot of trouble! You do not want to weaken your conscience by ignoring it.

Proverbs 2:1-11 says:

My child, listen to what I say,
and treasure my commands.

² Tune your ears to wisdom,
and concentrate on understanding.

³ Cry out for insight,
and ask for understanding.

⁴ Search for them as you would for silver;
seek them like hidden treasures.

⁵ Then you will understand what it means to fear
the Lord,

and you will gain knowledge of God.

⁶ For the Lord grants wisdom!

From his mouth come knowledge and
understanding.

⁷ He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest.
He is a shield to those who walk with integrity.

⁸ He guards the paths of the just
and protects those who are faithful to him.

⁹ Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair,
and you will find the right way to go.

¹⁰ For wisdom will enter your heart,
and knowledge will fill you with joy.

¹¹ Wise choices will watch over you.
Understanding will keep you safe.



Wise choices will watch over you; that is: protect you. Understanding will keep you safe. Wisdom, understanding, insight, fear of the LORD, knowledge, common sense, and faithfulness are all qualities that you will want to develop in life. It is wise to choose

books that will help you to grow in those areas. Isaiah 11:1-9 tells us that JESUS possessed these qualities:

Isaiah 11:1-9, New Living Translation

Out of the stump of David's family will grow a shoot—
yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.

² And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

³ He will delight in obeying the Lord.
He will not judge by appearance
nor make a decision based on hearsay.

⁴ He will give justice to the poor
and make fair decisions for the exploited.

The earth will shake at the force of his word,
and one breath from his mouth will destroy the wicked.

⁵ He will wear righteousness like a belt
and truth like an undergarment.

⁶ In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together;
the leopard will lie down with the baby goat.

The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion,
and a little child will lead them all.

⁷ The cow will graze near the bear.
The cub and the calf will lie down together.
The lion will eat hay like a cow.

⁸ The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra.
Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm.

⁹ Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,
for as the waters fill the sea,
so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord.



This passage explains that JESUS' wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of the LORD, and obedience will result in him being able to give justice to the poor and make good decisions. He would live such a righteous, truth-filled life, that eventually everything on earth will be made right, and the wolf and the lamb will be friends, not enemies. JESUS' wisdom will result in Heaven



on earth! If we follow JESUS' example and fill our lives with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of the LORD, and obedience,

we will be able to help JESUS to bring Heaven to earth. What is the best way to learn wisdom? By listening to wise people

and learning from their wisdom, obeying their wise instructions. Search for wise people. Your parents and grandparents are wise. Your teachers are wise. Other people are wise, too. Wise people often write down the lessons they learn. They write books to teach others the wisdom they have learned. If you read books written by wise people, you will grow in wisdom!!! Who is the wisest person in Heaven and Earth? JESUS!!!!!! His teachings and words written in His Book, the Bible – and especially in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John-- contain SO MUCH WISDOM!!! He says in Matthew 7:24 & 25, “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the

winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock."

So, the first place to start your quest for wisdom is by reading the Bible. The whole thing contains GOD's wisdom for man. Hebrews 11:6 says that God is "a Rewarder of those who DILIGENTLY seek Him". Reading the Bible is one big way to diligently seek GOD and learn wisdom at the same time. Try to learn all the Bible's wisdom, especially JESUS' teachings, and put it into practice. Then you will be very wise. I recommend that you start out by



reading the entire Beginner's Bible. Next, read The Golden Children's Bible, which contains all the major Bible stories and is beautifully illustrated. After that, you will be ready to read the New Testament (from Matthew to Revelation) in the New Living Translation. Finally, I challenge you to start at Genesis and read the Bible through like a storybook, from cover to cover. If you can, read it out loud to an

adult and discuss it. It only takes about 75 hours to read the whole Bible out loud. If you read it during summer vacation, you could read it in about two weeks! If you read for one hour per day, it would take you about two-and-a-half months. Pay special attention to the Ten Commandments,



the Book of Proverbs, and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. These passages contain so much wisdom from GOD! After reading the whole Bible, try turning the Bible verses into songs and singing them, which will help you to memorize them. The more that you think about Bible verses, the wiser you will become! Joshua 1:8 says, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." This means that if you read the Bible, think about it, and actually do what it says, GOD will make you successful! That is a very good thing!

Next, in your quest for wisdom, you should get a library card and begin checking out lots of good books from the library. Every time you go, try to choose

- one **biography** (a true story about a real person),
- one **historical fiction** (a story set in a time period that really happened, such as during the Civil War),
- one **science** book, and
- one **classic** (you can ask your librarian for a list of classics you should read).

There are also many good series books to choose from, such as The Boxcar Children series or The Chronicles of Narnia, where there are multiple books that contain the same characters.

Finally, in your quest for wisdom and knowledge, I challenge you to read your textbooks like a storybook, from cover to cover. When you receive your new textbooks at the beginning of the school year, take a week or two, curl up on the couch, and read your history book and science book straight through. You will learn so much and you won't have any of the pressure of doing homework or answering test questions. Just read it for the pure enjoyment of it! During the course of a school year, you could read your textbook several times. Then, when you actually study a particular chapter in class, your brain will already be accustomed to the general information, and you will be ready to learn the details that your teacher covers in class. Every bit of knowledge that you learn is like a gift in your bag that you can use to help other people. For example, if you learn all about the organ systems in the body, you could become a doctor or a nurse and help to heal people of their diseases! Use your reading skills to become an excellent student. A good student:



1. Listens to his teacher;
2. Does his homework (Read the assignment and answer questions);
3. Treats his classmates kindly.



**"Up to now,
you have been learning how to read.
Now, you are reading to LEARN." -Unknown**

This Funny Phonics course has taught you how to read. You have learned phonics rules that allow you to sound out words and build your vocabulary. You are now able to understand written words and sentences. Reading is an amazing tool that you now possess! Now, you can use that tool to learn about many things! Science, history, math, art, foreign languages – all of these areas of knowledge are now open to you. Use your new tool wisely. Use your ability to read to do good and learn wholesome, good things that will benefit your life and the lives of the people around you. Use this new talent of reading to help you build a house of wisdom! Get all the wisdom that you can possibly find!

Finally, think about these words from the Apostle Peter, in 2 Peter 1:5-11

⁵ In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.

⁸ The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.

¹⁰ So, dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away.¹¹ Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Your reading material can help you to grow in faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, patient endurance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love. This will give you a grand entrance into Heaven! WOW!!!! That's worth doing!!!



To summarize, I urge you to first of all, use your reading skills to read the Bible and get to know GOD the FATHER, the HOLY SPIRIT, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST as your BEST FRIENDS. Make JESUS your LORD and SAVIOR, and dedicate your life to loving and serving Him. This is the most important decision you will ever make in life. Then, grow in wisdom and understanding by reading books written by wise people who love GOD. If you realize that you are reading a book written by a foolish person who hates GOD, close the book and don't waste your time on it. Use your reading to help you develop good character qualities by reading about good people who have done good things. Then, use your reading skills to increase your knowledge and learn ways to love and serve others. Every bit of knowledge that you add to your mind is like a gift that you can offer to

other people. Finally, use your reading skills to become an excellent student.

Reading is an amazing tool. Now go and use it for good, and may the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the HOLY SPIRIT, and ABBA FATHER make their home with you and teach you everything you need to know!!!



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the most important decision you will ever make in your life?
2. What is the most important book that you should read?
3. When you get a new textbook, what is the first thing you should do with it?

PROJECT: Have you started reading through the whole Bible yet? If not, select a Bible (either the Beginner's Bible, the Golden Children's Bible, or the New Living Translation), and begin at page one today. Mark it on a calendar. See how long it takes you to read through the whole thing!