

## 33. Wisdom

Wisdom is one of the attributes most highly valued in the Bible. Thankfully the Bible says much about how we can gain wisdom. The Bible also contains very astute advice on other topics associated with wisdom, notably speech – a key medium that we use in relating to others.

### Wisdom through God

#### Fearing God is the beginning of wisdom

*The beginning of wisdom is to fear the LORD, and acknowledging the Holy One is understanding.* PROVERBS 9:10 NET

Fearing God is the beginning of wisdom as it leads us to base our thinking and life on God and his teachings or commands – the source of true wisdom for life.

#### Obeying God's commands brings wisdom

[A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *I have greater wisdom than those who are old, because I obey your commands.* PSALMS 119:100 GNT

#### Ask God for wisdom

[JAMES, TO BELIEVERS:] *If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God, and it will be given to you.* JAMES 1:5A CEV

### Wisdom through Others

#### Pay attention to instruction

[A WISE TEACHER:] *Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge. ...*<sup>19</sup>*Listen, my child, and be wise, and guide your heart on the right way.* PROVERBS 23:12, 19 NET

#### Take notice of correction

*If you refuse to learn, you are hurting yourself. If you accept correction, you will become wiser.* PROVERBS 15:32 GNT

## Wise Speech

### Be quick to listen and slow to speak

[JAMES, TO BELIEVERS:] *My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry.* JAMES 1:19 CEV

### Use few words

*The more we talk, the less sense we make ...* ECCLESIASTES 6:11A CEV

### Speak graciously

*The words spoken by the wise are gracious ...* ECCLESIASTES 10:12A ISV

### Remember that our words are determined by our "heart"

[JESUS, TO THE PHARISEES:] *Offspring of vipers! How are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart.*<sup>35</sup>*The good person brings good things out of his good treasury, and the evil person brings evil things out of his evil treasury.*

MATTHEW 12:34–35 NET

In v. 35, "treasury" refers to the thoughts and feelings that people have stored up in their hearts.

## Foolishness

### Fools spurn and lack wisdom

Fearing the LORD is the beginning of moral knowledge, but *fools despise wisdom and instruction.* PROVERBS 1:7 NET

*Wisdom is unattainable for a fool; in court he does not open his mouth.* PROVERBS 24:7 NET

### Foolishness involves acting contrary to God

Then Samuel said to Saul, *"You have acted foolishly. You haven't obeyed the commandment of the LORD your God, which he commanded you. For then the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever, ...* 1 SAMUEL 13:13 ISV