

Sermon or Lesson: Pursue Wisdom - Part 6: Behaviors Produced By Spiritual Wisdom (NIV based)

[Lesson Question: For each verse quote below, analyze, discuss, and describe behaviors and effects produced by spiritual wisdom, and in applicable verses, describe the contrast of those behaviors and effects to the behaviors of fools.]

SECTION POINT: Fools have diametrically different thinking and behaviors than those of spiritually-wise true believers.

- - Proverbs 14:15a **"A simple man believes anything,"**
- - By definition here, "simple" persons are not significantly discerning, nor analytical, nor sophisticated, nor advanced in their thinking.
- - So when they encounter information that is of interest to them for their life, they do not question it whatsoever, but instead with simple thinking they "believe" "every" "word", outright accept it, and readily adopt it into their life, without suspecting that there is a problem with its veracity or correctness or validity. (Strong's Hebrew #3605, #1697)
- - Whereas in contrast, **"but a prudent man gives thought to his steps."** (v.15b)
- - The "prudence" or spiritual wisdom in believers causes them to thoroughly examine, consider, and "give thought to" information of interest to them, mentally conducting tests on various aspects of the information to determine its worthiness and its alignment to applicable biblical principles, before they believe any of it and integrated any of it into their life - to influence the way or the "steps" they take in living their life. (cf. Proverbs 14:8a)

- - Proverbs 12:16a **"A fool shows his annoyance at once,"**
- - A characteristic of fools is that they are easily and quickly "annoyed", irritated, agitated, or aggravated, when something happens to them that they do not like.
- - This disturbed state of mind is openly and readily evident, thereupon "showing" and becoming known "at once" or immediately by observers.
- - Whereas in contrast, **"but a prudent man overlooks an insult."** (v.16b)
- - The "prudence" or spiritual wisdom in true believers exerts influence in them to not get provoked, annoyed, offended, defensive, or ruffled, when "insulted".
- - The spiritual wisdom in these believers incites a mental demeanor of being mild-mannered, gentle, patient, and humble, which cause these believers to thereby not feel threatened nor concerned when their character or reputation is attacked or disparaged.
- - Their calm response to being insulted, dishonored, or accused is furthermore anchored in their knowledge that their worth has a solid foundation in God, in their right relationship with God, and in their living righteously that is very pleasing to God.
- - The spiritual wisdom in these believers also assists them to discern when the insult or accusation that was launched against them is false or erroneous, which they then realize probably indicates that the person launching the insult has some significant spiritual problems. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

- - Proverbs 29:11a **"A fool gives full vent to his anger,"**
- - By nature, people lose their temper and get angry, being provoked by any of various reasons, usually because they do not like something that affects them adversely in some manner.

- - In this verse, God is saying that it is foolish to have and to vent that anger, which is to "bring [it] out" or "bring [it] down" upon targeted people or things. (Strong's Hebrew #3381)
- - When angry, furious, or enraged, people typically and habitually speak whatever and everything that is upon or enters their mind, forcefully and rapidly expelling everything like an exploding volcano.
- - They think giving full vent will alleviate their anger, but it does not adequately do that because the intense energy of their anger also compels them to inflict harm and damage upon everything that they are targeting it at.
- - So consequently, they continue giving full vent of their anger because they think it is somewhat successfully striking out and inflicting harm on whomever or whatever is causing them anger or harm, which now for them constitutes a form of satiating their intense urge to counterattack and get revenge.
- - These outer conducts in response to their inner anger conspire together and fuel them to lose control, which in reality ultimately results in bringing harm down upon themselves in any of numerous ways.
- - In this verse, God is saying that all of this anger thinking and behavior is foolish, because it utterly fails to accomplish and is even counterproductive to "bringing about the righteous life that God desires". (James 1:20)
- - Whereas in contrast, **"but a wise man keeps himself under control."** (Proverbs 29:11b)
- - The spiritual wisdom in true believers serves to "hold back" and "quiet" the anger in their minds, in effect neutralizing its propensity to become intense, and quenching its escalation and development before it becomes established in them and upon them. (Strong's Hebrew #0268, #7623)
- - The spiritual wisdom in these believers accomplishes this 'holding back' and 'quieting' of anger by means of having established a different perspective in their thinking and beliefs, which determines and establishes a godly corresponding approach to how they respond to anger and its inciting cause.
- - Instead of thinking and reacting in anger and rage like fools do, these spiritually-wise believers hold and utilize a godly perspective and corresponding approach to anger-inciting causes or situations.
- - The perspective of these spiritually-wise believers is that the anger-inciting cause or situation has happened to them because God, who is sovereign over all creation, has allowed this to happen. (Psalms 109:21)
- - Therefore, they accept and turn over their situation to God, entrusting it and themselves to Him, and patiently waiting for Him to deal with it according to His will and His timing - whatever that may be. (v.23 in 1 Peter 2:19-24)
- - Consequently, these spiritually-wise believers successfully maintain control over their emotions and do not engage in venting anger. (James 1:19-20)

- - Proverbs 16:23a **"A wise man's heart guides his mouth,"**
- - For true believers who are wise, the spiritual wisdom in their heart establishes, causes, and "guides" them to intelligently think, and carefully speak and act within the influence and parameters of the spiritual wisdom that is within them.
- - Spiritual wisdom "makes [believers] prudent, intelligent", and "circumspect" - which is defined as being "heedful of circumstances and potential consequences; demonstrating pragmatism and common sense". (Strong's Hebrew #7919; AHD - 'circumspect')

- - Of course, the more spiritual wisdom that a true believer acquires and incorporates in his/her life, the more of each of these accompanying virtues exert influence in his/her life.

- - Extrapolating from the description from the original Hebrew words in this verse phrase, spiritual wisdom in the believer makes his/her mind wise, which then makes his/her speaking prudent, intelligent, and circumspect.

- - So spiritual wisdom exerts affect throughout the entire process within the mind, which starts with mentally thinking about spiritual wisdom, then believing it, then adopting it, then integrating it in the thinking, then activating it in the thinking, then it influencing the formation of thoughts and corresponding sentences, then those sentences being spoken and presented to other people for their consideration and contemplation.

- - Furthermore, **"and his lips promote instruction."** (v.23b)

- - Spiritual wisdom also causes the producing and speaking forth of wise spiritual persuasion and instruction, which, by implication, are accomplished with excellence and effectiveness. (from Strong's Hebrew #3948)

- - Proverbs 12:23a **"A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself,"**

- - The "prudence" or spiritual wisdom in true believers influences them to be reserved in their speaking with knowledge and wisdom - reserved in how much of knowledge and wisdom they speak, and reserved in what they say when they speak with knowledge and wisdom.

- - They do not deliberately exhibit or show off their knowledge and wisdom.

- - They do not have the intention of using their knowledge and wisdom to make themselves look good or superior.

- - They do not try to use their knowledge and wisdom to overtly nor covertly promote themselves.

- - They do not try to use their knowledge and wisdom to manipulate to gain status or reputation.

- - Instead, these true believers possess and selectively speak with knowledge and wisdom in a natural but yet concise manner, and only when they think it should be helpful or beneficial for their listeners.

- - Their spiritual wisdom furthermore influences them to maintain an attitude and position of genuine humility towards the substantial knowledge and wisdom that they have, because they know that ultimately God has extraordinarily orchestrated, gifted, and empowered them to obtain, possess, and effectively use the spiritual knowledge and spiritual wisdom that they have.

- - Of course, arriving at this perspective requires honest self-evaluation, because some believers think they have substantial and advanced spiritual knowledge and spiritual wisdom, when in reality they only have ordinary or even elementary spiritual knowledge and spiritual wisdom.

- - Whereas in contrast, **"but the heart of fools blurts out folly."** (v.23b)

- - Fools are quick to speak and proclaim information and content that they are thoroughly convinced is knowledgeable, intelligent, wise, and of value.

- - They do not want to miss an opportunity to impress other people with their knowledge and wisdom, so they "blurt out" or interject their speaking of this content into

conversations as much as possible, droning at length to disclose and thoroughly explain their knowledgeable and wise content.

- - These intentions and tactics of fools produce the effect of them operating almost by means of compulsion - "an irresistible impulse to speak, regardless of the rationality of their motivation", the validity of their content, or the appropriateness of their approach.

(AHD - 'compulsion')

- - They think what they are saying and how they are saying it is right, applicable, and useful, but they are oblivious to the reality that God judges their speaking of this content as "folly" or foolishness, and that they are spreading this folly to other people.

- - Now of course, there is information being dispensed in the world that is credible, so by implication, this adverse judgment by God generally applies to speaking of content that is in some way or relates to being moral or spiritual in nature, and is deviant to what God approves of, as established in the Scriptures.

BIG IDEA: Spiritual wisdom exerts significant and substantial effects on the thinking and behaviors of true believers who possess, incorporate, and activate that wisdom.

APPLICATIONS:

- - For those of you who are true believers, do you 'give thought to the steps' you take in your life, carefully considering whether or not those steps align with biblical principles?

- - Or instead, do you merely proceed with steps based on your own preferences, while essentially giving little or no consideration as to whether or not God approves of those steps?

- - Do you naturally draw on spiritual wisdom to promptly neutralize in your mind any impact of insults or false charges when they are launched at you?

- - Or instead, do you instantly get annoyed or even angry, perhaps leading to an extended period of time in which you have escalated to being all riled up and out of control?

- - What 'guides your mouth' - what influences the kinds of words that come out of your mouth in normal everyday living?

- - Do some of your words originate from your ungodly reaction to bad experiences that you have gone through in your life? Or from kinds of words that you picked up from the ungodliness of persons whom you had close contact with for extended periods of time, or from inappropriate music that you listened to?

- - From this study, what could you do to ensure that all of your words are approved by God? (Ephesians 4:29)

- - When you speak, do you exhibit the preference of using few words, and without drawing attention to any qualities about yourself?

- - Or instead, do you covertly try to convey that you have admirable qualities, such as for examples, a higher-than-normal level of intelligence, knowledge, or understanding?

- - For those of you who are **not** true believers, do you usually believe information that you encounter in life, but for some undetermined reason you are highly skeptical of the biblical information like that which is contained in this study? If so, can you ascertain why you readily accept and believe most information in life but not the biblical information in this study?

- - Do you frequently get annoyed or even angry? When that happens, do you usually vocalize with forceful words or demonstrate by aggressive behaviors your annoyance or anger?

- - Do you enjoy being annoyed or angry? Or would it be better for you to instead experience calmness and peace when annoying or angering situations come upon you?

- - Have you ever considered that when you speak about information that is in some way or relates to being moral or spiritual in nature, you are in reality speaking foolishness if it does not correctly align with what God has established in the Scriptures?

- - Have you ever further considered that your speaking of foolishness in this manner makes you guilty of not only spreading this folly to other people, but also guilty of contributing to their foolishness?

- - Do you really want to be in reality contributing to the foolishness of other people?

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File name: pursuewisdom06-sermonorlesson.____ (.htm, .rtf, .doc, .pdf)

Translation used: *NIV*, quoted or referred to in various places within this document

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