



January 11, 2015
1 Kings 3
“Wisdom”
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After King David died, we read in [1 Kings 2:12](#) that his son, Solomon “*sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.*” Solomon would have about 17 years old when he became king. After about three years have passed, the borders under Solomon’s reign stretched as far as the Euphrates River in Iraq on the east, and as far as the Mediterranean Sea and the border of Egypt on the west.¹ But, being as young as he was, he knew he lacked something that would help him lead these people and this power nation, so when God appeared to him and invited him to ask for anything he wanted, Solomon asked for one thing: wisdom!

When Solomon asked for wisdom, we know his motives were pure, because he realized he was young, inexperienced, and that he was, as they say, “in over his head.” It’s to his credit that he asked for the thing he needed more than anything else. And, because his was such a noble request, God promised to give him a long life, honor, wealth, and death to his enemies, in addition to a “*wise and discerning heart.*”²

In this study, we’ll learn more about the difference between worldly wisdom and Godly wisdom, and how to get and apply Godly wisdom!

A Child’s Maternity Is Questioned

1. The first thing Solomon needed wisdom for came in the form of a question about a baby’s maternity.³

¹ [1 Kings 4:21](#) - “*And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. These countries brought tribute and were Solomon’s subjects all his life.*”

² [1 Kings 3:12-13](#) - “*I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for - both riches and honor - so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.*”

³ [1 Kings 3:16-28](#)

2. The Bible tells us that Solomon proposed something that on the surface seemed to be completely irrational, however, his proposal was intended to elicit a response, which it most certainly did!
3. The real mother had compassion for the baby and displayed selflessness. She was willing to give up her son if it meant that her child's life would be spared.
4. The lying mother was full of bitterness over the death of her child, and it's incomprehensible, but she felt that if she couldn't have the other woman's child, then she wanted both of them to be childless.
5. Solomon witnessed the lying woman's reaction and gave the child to the real mother.
6. The result of his decision is found in [1 Kings 3:28](#), which says: *"When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice."*
7. The Bible tells us that Solomon's reputation for being wise spread around the known world, and he was unmatched by any other person on earth. ⁴

Wisdom

8. [Proverbs 4:5-7a](#) - *"Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom."*
9. The Bible tells us two things in regard to wisdom:
 - a. Wisdom is attainable, otherwise God wouldn't tell us to get it.
 - b. Wisdom doesn't come naturally; you have to work at getting it.
10. God tells us to get wisdom because the circumstances of life demand it, and knowledge in and of itself, is simply not enough.
11. We will have problems and challenges and circumstances that confront us all the time that require much more than knowledge.

⁴ [1 Kings 4:29-34](#) - *"God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite - wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom."*

12. Every person has experiences in life when he or she realizes “book-smarts” or “street-smarts” aren’t enough; what’s needed is wisdom from the Lord!
13. We live in a culture that says all you need to do is get knowledge, because there is a tremendous emphasis on knowledge, there is an unfounded belief that the answer to anything and everything is a good education.
14. It is true that a good education may make a person smart, but education will not make someone wise.
15. Someone has said:
 - a. Knowledge is the accumulation of information.
 - b. Understanding is the interpretation.
 - c. Wisdom is the application.
16. Pastor Gary shared an illustration about a man who was making millions of dollars a year and was at the top of his career, but what he needed was the wisdom of God to help him be a father to his son.
 - a. We can read all the parenting books in the world, but what will make us better parents is wisdom.
 - b. We can read all of the self-help books, books written to help us improve our marriage, books on dieting, books on investing, and the list goes on and on, but what we all really need is wisdom.
17. When you are facing a crisis, you need the wisdom of God!
18. When you are making life-impacting decisions, you need the wisdom of God!
19. When you have questions or fears, or when you are worried or overwhelmed, you need the wisdom of God!

What Is Wisdom?

20. The Bible makes a distinction between worldly wisdom and Godly wisdom.
21. Worldly wisdom is developed over time and with experience.
22. It is the use of knowledge and information based on human understanding and reasoning.
23. [1 Corinthians 3:19a](#) - *“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight.”*

24. Godly wisdom is given from above.

25. It is the capacity to see things from God's viewpoint and to respond accordingly to Scriptural principles.

How Do We Get Godly Wisdom? - Know Jesus

26. **Colossians 2:3** - *"[In Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*

27. **1 Corinthians 1:30** - *"It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God - that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption."*

28. **1 Corinthians 1:22-24** - *"Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."*

How Do We Get Godly Wisdom? - Pray And Ask God

29. **James 1:5-8** - *"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."*

30. **Proverbs 2:6** - *"For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."*

How Do We Get Godly Wisdom? - Learn And Apply Scripture

31. **2 Timothy 3:15** - *"... from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."*

32. **Psalms 19:7** - *"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple."*

33. **Proverbs 8:33-34** - *“Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.”*

How Do We Get Godly Wisdom? - Surround Ourselves With Wise Friends

34. **Proverbs 13:20** - *“He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.”*

35. **1 Corinthians 15:33** - *“Do not be misled; ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’ ”*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read **1 Kings 3:4-15** to provide the foundation for this study.
3. Read and discuss **1 Kings 3:16-28**.
4. Spend time talking about the emphasis our culture places on education.
5. Read and discuss the illustration Pastor Gary shared concerning knowledge. (See #15 above)
6. What are some examples of times when you thought you had made what seemed like a wise decision, only to find that the decision you made wasn't a godly decision?
7. Do you find that you generally go to the Lord for his wisdom when making decisions?
8. Share examples of the outcome of situations in which you sought the Lord's wisdom.
9. Share examples of the outcome of situations in which you made an intentional decision to go against what you knew to be the Lord's direction.
10. How big does the decision have to be before you seek the Lord's help? (See #17 through #19 above)

11. Read and discuss [1 Corinthians 3:19a](#).
12. How has knowing the Lord and the Scriptures helped you get godly wisdom?
 - a. Read and discuss the Scriptures in Pastor Gary's outline. (See #26 through #35 above)
13. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: remember that wisdom doesn't come naturally, but it is attainable; recognize the difference between worldly wisdom and godly wisdom; consider the importance of making sure they are surrounded by wise and godly friends; be intentional about knowing Jesus and the Word of God; pray and ask for God's wisdom so they can apply the Scriptures in their life.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).