



WISDOM or KNOWLEDGE – Where are You?

WITHOUT GOD, DESPAIR!

Summary: The Man who is wise knows that without God, his life is nothing but despair.

Bible Verses: Ecclesiastes 2:12-26; Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16; Exodus 18:21

Video Clip: YouTube – “Good Will Hunting - Park Scene”

Music: “Desperado” performed by The Eagles

Resources: *The Best Question Ever* by Andy Stanley and *Ecclesiastes*

October 8, 2015

"Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" —T.S. Eliot

Knowledge is gathered from learning and education, while most say that wisdom is gathered from day-to-day experiences and is a state of being wise. Knowledge is merely having clarity of facts and truths, while wisdom is the practical ability to make consistently good decisions in life. God desires that your life be a masterpiece that reflects His greatness and your uniqueness. But to create a

masterpiece with your life, you must submit yourself to the hand of the Master. That moment of awareness and surrender is the beginning of true wisdom. You must allow God to influence each stroke on the canvas of your life. This series will lead you to a path of wisdom by considering the Book of Ecclesiastes, movie clips, story, and other resources.

GOD IS IN CHARGE – Eccl. 3:16-22

1. _____ = When men depart from the Word of God and are entrusted with power, they come to believe that they are the law. Quotes re: power. The Bible prohibits establishing a ruler—whether ruler or judge—who does not fear God (Exodus 18:21). Wisdom tells us that God will put it all right in the final judgment (Eccl. 3:17). God will put every judicial monstrosity in perspective and bring ultimate justice.
2. _____ = Man is not in charge. The reality of the final judgment and how every man will stand before the throne of God does not come from knowledge of animals or any kind of science (Eccl. 3:18-22). The mortality issue is only understood through the wisdom that God holds your life in His Sovereign hand.
3. _____ = Men are not only oppressed by the courts, but they are oppressed throughout their lives in business, in marriage, in various relationships, by anyone with power (Eccl. 4:1). It is better to be dead or unborn than oppressed this way (Eccl.4:2,3). Wisdom tells you that only God brings comfort.
4. _____ = The powerless and lazy criticize those who are creative and work hard (Eccl. 4:4-6). When a man works hard—and does well—others envy him and criticize him. Wisdom tells you that a wise man hates all envy. Wisdom invites you to live in a place of satisfaction about all your work and the purpose of your work is to please God.
5. _____ = Lonely men have no reason to live. Wisdom says you are built for community, and loneliness robs you of life. Working together is satisfying; it is fruitful, prevents harm, keeps you warm, defends, and keeps unity (Eccl. 4:7-12). Companionship is critical. God created you for friendship, and resides on all things which prevent men from forming friendships and living in community.
6. _____ = Fame is fleeting! You must refuse to be swept along with every new political excitement. Wisdom will teach you that this has all happened many times before (Eccl. 4:13-16).

WISDOM – THE EXPERIENCE OF RELATIONAL LIVING!

1. The _____ with His disciples:
 - a. Spent time – eating, drinking, walking, and discussing things that were important to both him and them (Luke 24:13-45).
 - b. Shared insights that were not disclosed to others (Matthew 13:36-52).
 - c. Shared the most painful depths of his experience with them (Matthew 26:38).
 - d. Humbled himself in offering acts of tender care (John 13:1-17).
 - e. Offered emotional support (John 14).
 - f. Invited and answered their questions (Luke 9:18-27).
 - g. Related to them in ways that were loving yet challenged them to grow (John 13:1-17).
2. The Elements of living relationally:
 - a. _____ = True friends experience each other as being part of themselves. Quotes by C.S. Lewis.
 - b. _____ = Confront illusions and dares to risk temporary discomfort by calling you to the truth.
 - c. _____ = Shared experience and being attuned to one another's needs.
 - d. _____ = Offers the same to one another through reciprocal giving.
 - e. _____ = Traveling companion on the journey – I AM WITH YOU!
3. Are you growing together?
 - a. Attunement to God and surrender to His will.
 - b. Love for others.
 - c. Self-understanding and attentiveness to the voices of your inner world.
 - d. Curiosity about God's creation.
 - e. Enjoyment of life.
 - f. Discernment of your unique self-in-Christ.
 - g. Courage to follow your calling.
 - h. Depth of passion and compassion.
 - i. Sense of gratitude.
 - j. Overall experience of holiness and wholeness.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Who are your friends?
2. What are the most important qualities of your Friends?
3. How are you growing by being with your Friends?

Bible Verses**Ecclesiastes 12:12-13**

¹²⁻¹³ But regarding anything beyond this, dear friend, go easy. There's no end to the publishing of books, and constant study wears you out so you're no good for anything else. The last and final word is this: Fear God.

Do what he tells you.

Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16**God's Testing Us**

¹⁶⁻¹⁸ I took another good look at what's going on: The very place of judgment—corrupt! The place of righteousness—corrupt! I said to myself, "God will judge righteous and wicked." There's a right time for every thing, every deed—and there's no getting around it. I said to myself regarding the human race, "God's testing the lot of us, showing us up as nothing but animals."

¹⁹⁻²² Humans and animals come to the same end—humans die, animals die. We all breathe the same air. So there's really no advantage in being human. None. Everything's smoke. We all end up in the same place—we all came from dust, we all end up as dust. Nobody knows for sure that the human spirit rises to heaven or that the animal spirit sinks into the earth. So I made up my mind that there's nothing better for us men and women than to have a good time in whatever we do—that's our lot. Who knows if there's anything else to life?

Slow Suicide

⁴ ¹⁻³ Next I turned my attention to all the outrageous violence that takes place on this planet—the tears of the victims, no one to comfort them; the iron grip of oppressors, no one to rescue the victims from them. So I congratulated the dead who are already dead instead of the living who are still alive. But luckier than the dead or the living is the person who has never even been, who has never seen the bad business that takes place on this earth.

⁴ Then I observed all the work and ambition motivated by envy. What a waste! Smoke. And spitting into the wind.

⁵ The fool sits back and takes it easy, his sloth is slow suicide.

⁶ One handful of peaceful repose is better than two fistfuls of worried work—more spitting into the wind.

Why Am I Working Like a Dog?

⁷⁻⁸ I turned my head and saw yet another wisp of smoke on its way to nothingness: a solitary person, completely alone—no children, no family, no friends—yet working obsessively late into the night, compulsively greedy for more and more, never bothering to ask, "Why am I working like a dog, never having any fun? And who cares?" More smoke. A bad business.

⁹⁻¹⁰ It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth. And if one falls down, the other helps, but if there's no one to help, tough!

¹¹ Two in a bed warm each other. Alone, you shiver all night.

¹² By yourself you're unprotected. With a friend you can face the worst. Can you round up a third? A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped.

¹³⁻¹⁶ A poor youngster with some wisdom is better off than an old but foolish king who doesn't know which end is up. I saw a youth just like this start with nothing and go from rags to riches, and I saw everyone rally to the rule of this young successor to the king. Even so, the excitement died quickly, the throngs of people soon lost interest. Can't you see it's only smoke? And spitting into the wind?

Exodus 18:17-23

¹⁷⁻²³ Moses' father-in-law said, "This is no way to go about it. You'll burn out, and the people right along with you. This is way too much for you—you can't do this alone. Now listen to me. Let me tell you how to do this so that God will be in this with you. Be there for the people before God, but let the matters of concern be presented to God. Your job is to teach them the rules and instructions, to show them how to live, what to do. And then you need to keep a sharp eye out for competent men—men who fear God, men of integrity, men who are incorruptible—and appoint them as leaders over groups organized by the thousand, by the hundred, by fifty, and by ten. They'll be responsible for the everyday work of judging among the people. They'll bring the hard cases to you, but in the routine cases they'll be the judges. They will share your load and that will make it easier for you. If you handle the work this way, you'll have the strength to carry out whatever God commands you, and the people in their settings will flourish also."

DESPERADO

Written and performed by The Eagles

Desperado, why don't you come to your senses?
You been out ridin' fences for so long now
Oh, you're a hard one
I know that you got your reasons
These things that are pleasin' you
Can hurt you somehow

Don't you draw the queen of diamonds, boy
She'll beat you if she's able
You know the queen of hearts is always your best bet

Now it seems to me, some fine things
Have been laid upon your table
But you only want the ones that you can't get

Desperado, oh, you ain't gettin' no younger
Your pain and your hunger, they're drivin' you home
And freedom, oh freedom well, that's just some people talkin'
Your prison is walking through this world all alone

Don't your feet get cold in the winter time?
The sky won't snow and the sun won't shine
It's hard to tell the night time from the day
You're losin' all your highs and lows
Ain't it funny how the feeling goes away?

Desperado, why don't you come to your senses?
Come down from your fences, open the gate
It may be rainin', but there's a rainbow above you
You better let somebody love you, before it's too late

QUOTES

Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men.~ Lord Acton

The Christian's goal is not power, but justice. We are to seek to make the institutions of power just, without being corrupted by the process necessary to do this.~ Charles Colson

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Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16

GOD IS IN CHARGE

Eccl. 3:16-22

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GOD IS IN CHARGE

Eccl 4:1-16

4. **ENVY OF MEN** = The powerless and lazy criticize those who are creative and work hard (Eccl. 4:4-6). When a man works hard—and does well—others envy him and criticize him. Wisdom tells you that a wise man hates all envy. Wisdom invites you to live in a place of satisfaction about all your work and the purpose of your work is to please God.
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2. HONESTY = Confront illusions and dares to risk temporary discomfort by calling you to the truth.
3. INTIMACY = Shared experience and being attuned to one another's needs.
4. MUTUALITY = Offers the same to one another through reciprocal giving.
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Quotes

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~ Charles Colson

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