



WISDOM or KNOWLEDGE – Where are You?

Nature Reveals

Summary: The Man who thinks he has found something new is *being* something old.

Bible Verses: Ecclesiastes 12:13; Ecclesiastes 1:1-11; I Kings 11:1-10; John 7:24; Ephesians 4:1; Ephesians 5:15-17

Video Clip: YouTube – “Life Wisdom from Movies”

Music: “Love is the Way” performed by The Highwaymen

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

September 10, 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.

The Profound – a Book of Profound Optimism! – Eccl. 1:1-3

1. Ecclesiastes calls you to _____! – a joy which _____! – a joy which does not shrink back from hard questions! The foundation for joy is not in the things of this world, but can only be found in the sovereignty and grace of God.
2. Solomon's wisdom and fall were GREAT! Ecclesiastes was written as a _____ of his previous apostasy. His apostasy was grievous and its effects on the generations immediately after Solomon were more lasting than the impact on his repentance (I Kings 11:1-10).
3. Four Basic Sections:
 - a. Eccl. 1:2-2:26 = Satisfaction cannot come from anything within the power or competence of man.
 - b. Eccl. 3:1-5:20 = God is sovereign over everything.
 - c. Eccl. 6:1-8:15 = God alone gives the power to enjoy the world's vanity.
 - d. Eccl. 8:16-12:14 = Removes various discouragements and addresses numerous practical concerns.

THE MEANING OF JOY! – John 7:24

1. Vanity does not mean _____, but the point of Solomon's argument is twofold:
 - a. God is the One _____, and
 - b. God is the one _____—even nature (Eccl. 1:4-11).
2. Vanity does not refer to an absolute meaninglessness, but it refers to an _____, i.e. making your bed, washing dishes, changing oil in your car, etc.
3. To be wise, a man must know his _____. Only through the wisdom which God gives can a man come to enjoy the limitations, the restrictions (this vanity).

HOW DO YOU LIVE?

1. Live your life in a way that reflects the changes _____. “Don't live the way you used to live. After all, you are not the person you used to be.” – Ephesians 4:1.
2. There is an approach to life that, if embraced, will set you up _____ as you attempt to live out the values God has endorsed. – Ephesians 5:15-17.
3. The Best Question Ever = _____

ASKING QUESTIONS CAN LEAD YOU TO WISDOM!

1. _____ Questions:
 - a. Is there anything wrong with it?
 - b. How close can I get to the line between right and wrong without actually doing something wrong?
 - c. How did I get myself into this mess?
2. _____ Question: What is the wise thing for me to do?
 - a. What is the decision you wish you could reverse?
 - b. What is the relationship you could do over?
 - c. What mistakes could I have avoided by doing the wise thing?

ACTION: Journal This!

1. What is the wise thing you need to do NOW?
2. How is your relationship with God related to your experience of joy?
3. What foolish decisions do you most regret?

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 1:1-11

¹ These are the words of the Quester, David's son and king in Jerusalem

²⁻¹¹ Smoke, nothing but smoke. [That's what the Quester says.]

There's nothing to anything—it's all smoke.

What's there to show for a lifetime of work,

a lifetime of working your fingers to the bone?

One generation goes its way, the next one arrives,

but nothing changes—it's business as usual for old planet earth.

The sun comes up and the sun goes down,

then does it again, and again—the same old round.

The wind blows south, the wind blows north.

Around and around and around it blows,

blowing this way, then that—the whirling, erratic wind.

All the rivers flow into the sea,

but the sea never fills up.

The rivers keep flowing to the same old place,

and then start all over and do it again.

Everything's boring, utterly boring—

no one can find any meaning in it.

Boring to the eye,

boring to the ear.

What was will be again,

what happened will happen again.

There's nothing new on this earth.

Year after year it's the same old thing.

Does someone call out, "Hey, *this* is new"?

Don't get excited—it's the same old story.

Nobody remembers what happened yesterday.

And the things that will happen tomorrow?

Nobody'll remember them either.

Don't count on being remembered.

I Kings 11:1-10

¹⁻⁵ King Solomon was obsessed with women. Pharaoh's daughter was only the first of the many foreign women he loved—Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite. He took them from the surrounding pagan nations of which GOD had clearly warned Israel, "You must not marry them; they'll seduce you into infatuations with their gods." Solomon fell in love with them anyway, refusing to give them up. He had seven hundred royal wives and three hundred concubines—a thousand women in all! And they did seduce him away from God. As Solomon grew older, his wives beguiled him with their alien gods and he became unfaithful—he

didn't stay true to his GOD as his father David had done. Solomon took up with Ashtoreth, the whore goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech, the horrible god of the Ammonites.

⁶⁻⁸ Solomon openly defied GOD; he did not follow in his father David's footsteps. He went on to build a sacred shrine to Chemosh, the horrible god of Moab, and to Molech, the horrible god of the Ammonites, on a hill just east of Jerusalem. He built similar shrines for all his foreign wives, who then polluted the countryside with the smoke and stench of their sacrifices.

⁹⁻¹⁰ GOD was furious with Solomon for abandoning the GOD of Israel, the God who had twice appeared to him and had so clearly commanded him not to fool around with other gods. Solomon faithlessly disobeyed GOD's orders.

John 7:21-24

²¹⁻²⁴ Jesus said, "I did one miraculous thing a few months ago, and you're still standing around getting all upset, wondering what I'm up to. Moses prescribed circumcision—originally it came not from Moses but from his ancestors—and so you circumcise a man, dealing with one part of his body, even if it's the Sabbath. You do this in order to preserve one item in the Law of Moses. So why are you upset with me because I made a man's whole body well on the Sabbath? Don't be nitpickers; use your head—and heart!—to discern what is right, to test what is authentically right."

Ephesians 4:1-3

¹⁻³ In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run!—on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.

Ephesians 5:11-17

¹¹⁻¹⁶ Don't waste your time on useless work, mere busywork, the barren pursuits of darkness. Expose these things for the sham they are. It's a scandal when people waste their lives on things they must do in the darkness where no one will see. Rip the cover off those frauds and see how attractive they look in the light of Christ.

Wake up from your sleep,

Climb out of your coffins;

Christ will show you the light!

So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!

¹⁷ Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.

LOVE IS THE WAY

Written BY Kris Kristofferson and performed by The Highwaymen

Deep in the heart of the infinite darkness
A tiny blue marble is spinning through space
Born in the splendor of God's holy vision
And sliding away like a tear down his face

Closer you see the whole wide holy wonder
Of oceans and mountains and rivers and trees
And the strangest creation of many, the human
A creature of laughter and Freedom and dreams

Now the warriors are waving their old rusty sabres
The preachers are preaching the gospel of hate
By their behavior determined to teach us
A lesson we're soon to be learning to late.

Look closer my brother, we're killing each other
And we'd better stop and get started today
Because life is the question and life is the answer
And God is the reason and love is the way.

Because life is the question and life is the answer
And God is the reason and love is the way.

Because life is the question and life is the answer
And God is the reason and love is the way.

Yes, life is the question and life is the answer
And God is the reason and love is the way.

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3. The Best Question Ever = **“What is the wise thing to do?”**

ASKING QUESTIONS CAN LEAD YOU TO WISDOM!

1. Wrong Questions:

1. Is there anything wrong with it?
2. How close can I get to the line between right and wrong without actually doing something wrong?
3. How did I get myself into this mess?

2. Good Question: What is the wise thing for me to do?

1. What is the decision you wish you could reverse?
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