

Generous Wisdom

One definition of wisdom is *the correct application of knowledge*. We see countless examples of knowledge, when applied with wisdom, being profitable to mankind. That same knowledge when used carelessly, however, can bring harm and heartache. That's been true since the beginning, starting in the Garden of Eden. Eve certainly had the knowledge she was not supposed to eat from that tree, but she did not exercise wisdom when she made her choice, did she?

Before we're too quick to judge her, we need to check ourselves. We face countless decisions every day, and the consequences of those decisions range from seemingly inconsequential to life changing. We face decisions on circumstances unheard of just a generation ago. Knowledge is available at our fingertips, but the need for godly wisdom—to be able to sift through that knowledge and make our decisions and choices—is great. So is the promise of God to give wisdom when we ask! James 1:5 assures that if we lack wisdom God will give it to us, and not just in meager portions, but generously!



Where Does Wisdom Come From?

James' admonition is to ask God for wisdom and the promise is He will give it. You can ask for wisdom in a particular matter or for life in general as Solomon did. How will that happen? The Book of Proverbs is full of admonitions about the pursuit of wisdom.

It is good to search out facts on matters we are unsure about, but understand *wisdom comes from God!* Proverbs 2:1-6 makes that clear. It portrays an active approach, seeking and searching, but from the proper source—God Himself. The temptation, many times, is to look to the latest self-help author or life experience testimonial. While at times they may offer valuable insight, never let them replace the Word itself. Job 12:13 says, "With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding."

Often, we make the mistake of reading more *about* the Word than we do reading the Word itself. God will fulfill His promise of granting wisdom as we renew our minds by the transforming power of His Word (Romans 12:2). Godly wisdom will not be found apart from His Word. Saturate your mind with His Word!

How can you be more intentional about seeking wisdom?



What Does Asking Look Like?

James tells us to just ask! God tells us He promises not only to supply wisdom, but also supplies it liberally, generously, and *without reproach*. That means we'll never hear, "I can't believe you didn't know that!" Or, "Don't ask me that again!"

How amazing! The God who has power to grant wisdom, loves us beyond measure, and has the omniscience to know what the answer to our problem is now and how it will play out in the future. Many times, we don't even fully understand the present problem! Our only requirement is to believe.

James 1:6 tells us we must "ask in faith, nothing wavering."

He goes on to compare doubting faith to a wave of the sea; it comes and goes, constantly, back and forth. Our faith in God needs to be a solid conviction, not like the wave that is subject to every breeze that comes along.

As new philosophies and thoughts rapidly bombard us, dependence on the wisdom of man sets us up for a faith filled with uncertainty. Our unwavering faith can be grounded in the God of Romans 11:33. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."

That is the God who promises the wisdom we ask for!

What other avenues do you pursue when trying to solve your problems?

What Areas Need Wisdom?

Everyday Life

We face many questions today that have different answers than they would have had only a few years ago. We bank, shop, cook, and entertain ourselves differently. We need godly wisdom in our everyday lives. This takes intentionality.

As women of God, we must honestly think about how we apply the wisdom found in God's Word to our everyday activities. What biblical principles affect our financial dealings—how much we spend on ourselves vs. our household necessities, our entertainment choices vs. our giving? Stewardship requires wisdom. Seek to intentionally apply it to your money and see the difference it makes.

We need wisdom in dealing with stress and time management! We have more “labor saving” devices than ever before, but they only serve to make us think we should accomplish more! We need God's direction to know when to say *no* and when to serve. Some women do too much and risk health concerns and resentment. Others miss the servanthood aspect altogether because they don't want to be inconvenienced.

We need wisdom in matters of our health. Increasingly, we can find more and more information online. I laughed at a meme that said, “I Googled my symptoms today and discovered that I either have a broken leg or I'm in my third trimester of pregnancy!” It's not usually that bizarre, but you can scare yourself to death, unnecessarily, when you look up symptoms online. We can go to extremes following the latest health fad, sometimes only hurting our pocketbook, other times hurting our health. We need wisdom to know the difference, and to know where to exercise moderation in controlling health issues.

We need wisdom in running our households. Proverbs 14:1a tells us “every wise woman buildeth her house.” It's not only our schedule that gets crazy, but those of everyone else in our household. Keeping the house together, getting everyone where they need to go, fed, clothed, monitoring what they see and hear, and being proactive with their social media—it all takes wisdom. (If ever there were a time when we needed to be intentional about what our family

is doing on social media, it is today.)

Wisdom requires knowing what is available both to our children and ourselves in the realm of social media, phone apps, etc. Ask God for wisdom on this one and be ready for some surprises!

Are there any specific situations or challenges in your life that call for wisdom you don't possess?

Spiritual Life

Matthew talks about a day when false prophets will be so deceitful that they will take many in (Matthew 24:24). We need wisdom to discern the truth of God! Romans 16:19b urges us to be “wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.” In other words, we need wisdom from God to know the difference between good and evil in an increasingly wicked culture.

Immersing ourselves in His Word will assure that we

recognize truth and asking for wisdom will help us to distinguish error. We'll be able to help others who are deceived and confused. One needs wisdom to communicate truth without offending and alienating those with opposing views, and to know when to debate and when to walk away.

Discretion is also needed in knowing which blogs, on-line sermons, and podcasts to follow. There's a lot of information, some not worthy of

our time and some are thinly veiled heresy. We need wisdom to know the difference!

Wisdom helps us remain faithful in our spiritual disciplines. Fast paced lives make it harder and harder to have daily time with the Lord. We are busy going and doing for

God, but find we neglect our own time in the Word and in prayer. Ask for wisdom to use time wisely. Begin a reading plan, study a book at a time, journal your prayers, or pray with a partner. Remember God gives us wisdom generously when we ask!

How do you discern between a solid Bible teacher or author and one who may not be teaching accurate truth?

Relationships

James 3:17 says, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." All of these things are needed in our relationships! The structure of today's family consists of different combinations of people related by birth, marriage, or adoption. It may be a multigenerational or foster home. Singles navigate many things alone. Wisdom is needed

in dealing with these situations, and for the church as she comes alongside, offering help.


Mentoring relationships are desperately needed in today's society. Wisdom is needed to begin and maintain this kind of relationship whether you are the older woman or the younger woman. Finding the right match, approaching the other person, finding activities and topics of conversation and a schedule that works for both parties will take wisdom and patience. Ask

God for wisdom and opportunity.

God's wisdom is needed to make our marriages a picture of Christ and the Church. The world has all kinds of ideas and stumbling blocks to insert into a relationship if given the opportunity. Pray for wisdom to maintain a healthy marriage that is an example of God's design both to your children and the world.

Ask God for wisdom in finding friends. We all need friends who come alongside us as a source of godly support. We should also be that for others, and it may not always be someone we would suspect. God knows who needs *us*. God can also give wisdom in navigating sticky situations with friends, co-workers, or acquaintances in the community who are not believers. We may be the only Christian they know and may have more influence on them than we realize. Ask for wisdom to be a light in their world.

Where do you need the most wisdom right now?

Charles Spurgeon said "Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise, but to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom." We may study and read and collect all the knowledge we can, but wisdom comes from God! How wonderful is the promise that if we ask, He is faithful to give wisdom, to give it generously, and not scold us for asking! With unwavering faith, we can have the wisdom we need to face our most challenging situations. 

About the Writer: Diana Bryant is president of Florida Women Active for Christ. She is a Welch College graduate and attends Ryanwood Fellowship FWB in Vero Beach, where her husband Randy pastors. Diana has been active at all levels of WNAC, holding various offices since 1980. She enjoys opportunities to speak at women's events to encourage and challenge them in their walk with the Lord.