

“W” Marks the Spot Gaining Wisdom

- Intro:
1. Wisdom is not just a lot of knowledge in a person’s head, but it is the ability to make applications of the knowledge that a person has.
 2. Wisdom is an essential ingredient of a successful life. The kind of wisdom Solomon speaks of is practical because it helps us deal with daily problems. It also helps us live morally with discipline and discernment and aids us mentally in solving riddles and parables.

I. Gaining Wisdom

A. The Fear of the Lord

1. There are 18 verses in Proverbs that concern “the fear of the Lord” (**Pro 1:7**). Solomon reminded us in **Ecclesiastes 12:13** that we are to “...fear God and keep His commandments...”.
2. To fear the Lord is not just a right way of thinking, but it is a right relationship with God.

B. Wisdom Comes by Instruction

1. Wisdom comes by listening to instructions (**Pro 2:1-2**). Solomon’s statement makes it clear that one is listening with the intent of applying what has been learned (**Pro 2:2**). James wrote that we must “be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” or our “religion is useless (**James 1:22,26**).
2. The parable of the wise & foolish builders encourages us to not only listen but to do what Jesus instructed us to do (**Mt 7:24-27**).

C. Wisdom Comes from God

1. Wisdom is given by God (**Pro 2:6-9**). Solomon says that it comes from God as the result of earnest prayer (**Pro 2:3, James 1:5, 17**).
2. Our God is a giving God, and He wants to give us only good gifts, including wisdom. First, asking (**James 1:5**), and second, asking in faith (**v.6**). It would be a shame if we are deprived of that which we desperately need because we do not have enough faith to ask God for it (**James 4:2d**).

D. Wisdom Comes to the Humble

1. Humility is not weakness (**Pro 15:33**). The word for humility could be translated “quite inner strength”.
2. It is a willingness to submit to God’s authority and instructions. In this context it means that one must completely admit his lack of wisdom before he can possess it.

E. To Receive Wisdom We Must Desire It

1. Having an appetite for wisdom that cannot be satisfied is necessary for one to gain wisdom (**Pro 2:4-5**).
2. If we will have the same intense desire for wisdom as one searching for food or drink then we will possess it (**Mt 5:6**). When we want to learn as bad as a starving person wants to eat or drink then we will gain wisdom.

F. To Receive Wisdom We Must Seek It

1. To be simple (not a simple fool but a simple person) means a person is open, honest, who was just what he or she appeared to be, and one who was receptive and teachable. Solomon desired to help this group of people learn to use caution in making decisions in life (**Pro 1:4**).
2. Who are the young men (**Pro 1:4**)? Some have suggested that the two words “simple” and “young” actually describe the same group of people. In other words, he was referring to the young men who were most honest and open to instruction. This is one of the qualities of youth that is often lost as we grow older. It may have been these qualities that Jesus spoke of (**Mt 18:3**).

Questions to Consider:

1. What is meant by the “fear of the Lord?”
2. Why is listening to instruction not enough?
3. How do both Solomon and James say wisdom comes (**Proverbs 2:1-6; James 1:5**)?
4. Why is humility essential to receiving wisdom?