



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	Walking in Wisdom	SPEAKER	Pastor Benny Ho
THEME	Critical Concerns Beyond the Souls of Man	DATE	24 & 25 August 2024

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

One can possess knowledge but lack wisdom. While the former is head knowledge which can be studied and learnt, the source of the latter can only be gleaned from God's Word. James 3:13-17 further contrasts two types of wisdom – earthly, unspiritual, demonic “wisdom” (from a heart harbouring envy and selfish ambition) vs true wisdom from heaven (from a heart that is pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy, impartial and sincere). In a morally confused world that we live in today, true wisdom is desperately needed in order to discern God's purposes, and right from wrong. Hence, it is of utmost importance that we develop true, godly wisdom.

THREE THINGS ABOUT WISDOM

1) The Root of Wisdom

True wisdom is not rooted in what we say, but how we live. It is not about the words we speak but our deeds done in humility, with insights that God grants. In order for us to operate in the true wisdom of God, our heart must remain pure and not tainted. When the heart is filled with fleshly desires, harbours bitter envy or selfish ambition, the “wisdom” that comes forth will be corrupted. This is very dangerous as a mere (earthly or human) idea may turn into heresies and even become cults. When unspiritual or soulish energy is spent on developing these ideas, the door for demonic forces to enter opens. We need to be aware of the roots of where such teachings come from and seek discernment from the true wisdom of God.

2) The Realm of Wisdom

The condition of our heart determines the realm in which our wisdom operates from. Earthly wisdom comes from a heart that is hurt or wounded (ie. filled with bitter envy and selfish ambition (Jam 3:14)). When this happens, quarrels, fighting, disunity and disorder will result. In contrast, when we walk in humility and the condition of our heart is submissive to God, true wisdom is evident. James 3:17 states that the wisdom that comes from heaven is pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. We see these seven attributes in situations where true wisdom operates.

3) The Result of Wisdom

The result or hallmark of true wisdom is unity, peace and harmony, where people get along with one another. Instead of conflict and disagreement, unity, harmony and peace abound. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness (Jam 3:18). When we walk in godly wisdom, we become “peacemakers”, not troublemakers”.

HOW TO GROW IN WISDOM?

1) Communion with God

True wisdom begins with a listening ear, and a heart of wisdom is linked to God alone. Proverbs 9:10 states “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding”. In order to grow in true wisdom, we need to go to the source of true wisdom. We are to spend time with God, reading His Word and in prayer.

2) Companionship with the Wise

Proverbs 13:20 states “He who walks with the wise grow wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.” There is great benefit in learning from those more experienced than us. We all need mentors to walk with us and we in turn, must do our part to listen to their advice and learn from them (Prov 12:15, 13:14, 19:20).

3) Contemplation Within Yourself

Lastly, we need to develop the art of thinking, reflection and contemplation. This is how we love God with our minds. We are to think about what is noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy (Phil 4:8). In this day and age, we are bombarded with information from many different sources. We may see, but did we take time to consider? We may look but did we receive instruction from God? Instead, we must learn to observe the world around us, watch how people respond, look at the consequences of behaviours, reflect and filter all this (information) through the lens of who God is and what He says in His Word. From there, we derive lessons and instructions and pass down what we have learnt to the next generation.

CONCLUSION

“Wisdom is supreme” and the bible exhorts us to get it (Prov 4:7). The hallmark of true wisdom is unity and harmony and the key to getting it is to develop a pure heart which allows the wisdom of God to flow through us. This can only happen when our heart is free from bitter envy, selfish ambition and other fleshly desires. To develop a pure heart, it is crucial that we have communion with God daily, listen to the counsel of the wise, and take time to contemplate, reflect and meditate on what God is teaching us. Only then can we be “peacemakers” and experience peace, harmony, and unity in all our relationships.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between knowledge, earthly wisdom and true, godly wisdom? How have you personally experienced one or all of these kinds of wisdom and what was its effect?

2. James 3:17 states “But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere”. When true wisdom is operating, people get along. Share your experience(s) of times when you have witnessed this (or the reverse) happening. How do the situation(s) reflect the heart condition(s) of the people? How could the situation(s) be different with godly wisdom?

3. Ps Benny Ho shared that to develop true wisdom, we need to i) commune with God, ii) listen to the counsel of the wise, and iii) develop the art of contemplation. Share a recent example of what God had revealed to you through time spent in reflection & contemplation. How will you respond?