

# Wisdom and Righteousness

by Max Hougham

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*This sermon delves into the importance of aligning wisdom with righteousness, emphasizing the need to not only possess knowledge but to also act in accordance with God's commands. It explores the examples of Solomon's wisdom and downfall, the Pharisees' hypocrisy, and the necessity of faith accompanied by works. The message underscores the significance of training children in character and obedience, as well as the distinction between knowing what is right and actually doing what is right.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 22:6, James 2:14, James 3:13, Matthew 23:1, Luke 12:35, Titus 2:11

**Topics:** "Wisdom and Righteousness", "Faith and Works"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Good morning, everybody. I'm not trying to cut songs short or anything if anybody has another song. Just thought I'd get up and get started.

Is it extra loud, or is that just about right? OK. Why don't we all stand? And Father, thank you for this morning. Thank you for the brethren.

Help us, God, to encourage each other today to build each other up. God, I do pray for wisdom this morning, and I just pray for the boldness to exercise it and try to move forward. Help us to strive in a way of living that's pleasing to you.

Please teach us this morning. Please help us to purge imperfections and faults and strive to be conformed to your image, Lord. Help us and have mercy on us.

I just pray these things in Jesus' name, amen. I don't know if it's just the rain or what. I'm really thankful to be here.

It's refreshing, even just with the light mist out here and everything. But it just feels like kind of a sober day. I don't know if it's the week in review or the weather itself or what, but it just feels kind of sober.

I wanted to start this morning by reading you a beginning and an end. So I thought I'd start with a beginning in 1 Kings 3, verses 3 through 28. And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father.

Only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. A thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

In Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night. And God said, ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee.

And thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father. And I am but a little child.

I do not know, I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people, which thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor accounted for multitude. Give, therefore, thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad.

For who is able to judge this, thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, because thou hast asked for this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment. Behold, I have done according to thy words.

Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants. Then came there two women that were harlots unto the king and stood before him.

And one of the women said, O my Lord, I and this woman dwell in one house, and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also. And we were together.

There was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight and took my son from beside me while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead. But when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other woman said, nay, but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son.

And this said, no, but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, the one saith, this is my son that liveth, and thy son is dead.

And the other saith, nay, but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.

And the king said, divide the living child in two. Give half to the one and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son.

And she said, oh, my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it.

She is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment, which the king had judged. And they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment." That last verse there, that they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.

That was his request before the Lord, to receive wisdom. By culture, or I'm not sure why, I mean we ask for wisdom a lot in this church. I think it's a healthy thing to do.

I think it's a good thing to do. People extant of this king were able to recognize it in him. There are different ways to gain wisdom.

We've talked a lot about that here. One of the main ways that we understand today is by experience. In Solomon's case, he requested it of the Lord and was granted a large, large helping of wisdom, to the point that the Lord told him there would never be anybody like him before or after him.

And I think Solomon's writings bear that out. In this passage that I read, there's a conditional statement in verse 14 for Solomon. And the Lord tells him this, concerning kind of like what Harvey was reading in Ezekiel.

It was Ezekiel, right? He says, and if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. There's a similar conditional statement concerning David in verse 6 there. And Solomon said, thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee.

And thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. So Solomon is giving credence to the fact that his father had walked in a measure of righteousness before the Lord. And the fruit of that was God honoring David by allowing his seed to occupy the throne that very day.

You know, I see there are like two different types of wisdom, I think, that we can see in Solomon. The things that he writes about, this example of the two harlots that had a baby that they were fighting over. Solomon wrote about wisdom that concerns logic and reasoning.

Trying to, this was like a, this is really like an early literary example of a detective case. I mean, it was one person's word against the other. And they had, Solomon had to figure out a way to rightly judge whose child it was.

And he exercised logic. It was the wisdom of logic. The book of Proverbs is full of not only the wisdom of logic, but it's also full of wisdom concerning morality.

He gave us many of the Proverbs. He understood righteous behavior and unrighteous behavior. I also think, and I can't prove this, that because of who he was, he was probably, he was probably very familiar with Mosaic law, which will be relevant a little bit later here.

Let's read it. His end in 1 Kings 11, 1 to 13. Yeah.

But King Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and the Hittites, of the nations concerning which the Lord has said unto the children of Israel, ye shall not go into them, neither shall they come in unto you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines, and his wives turned away his heart.

For it came to pass when Solomon was old that his wives turned away his heart after other gods. And his heart was not perfect before the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites.

And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build in high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore, the Lord said unto Solomon, For as much as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom, but will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen. I think it's interesting that part of the consequence of Solomon's going astray, is that he would lose the very thing that he counted a blessing for his father's righteous behavior.

The kingdom, Israel, all but one tribe. You know, it says that Solomon loved many strange women. I looked up that word strange in the Strong's Concordance.

And that Hebrew word for strange can mean a couple of different things. I mean, we just have the English strange, but there's a strange that means, you know, immoral or more like a seductress or an adulterer or an adulteress. But this particular one means alien, foreigner, outlandish.

It's used four times in Proverbs, including, now this is the writings of Solomon, Proverbs chapter six. And I just wanna read that to you. Proverbs six, verses 24 to 26.

For by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread and the adulteress, I'm sorry, verse 24, to keep thee from the, I need to back up to get the full context here. My son, keep thy father's commandment and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thine heart and tie them about thy neck.

When thou goest, it shall lead thee. When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee. And when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

For the commandment is a lamp and the law is light and reproofs of instruction are the way of life. To what purpose? To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Now again, that's the same strange, the same Hebrew word for strange that was used when it says that Solomon loved many strange women, that strange women turned his heart away from the Lord.

Lest not after her beauty in thine heart, neither let her take thee with thine eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. I realize that context changes some things.

I think like just reading that verse, there are definite, that passage there, there are definitely some connotations about morality, but it is that same Hebrew word, that word that means alien, foreign or outlandish. Interestingly, and I won't go to it, but there's in Deuteronomy 17, 17, there's a very specific mandate about kings that would rule over the Israelites in the promised land, and one of them is that they would not take strange women, women from other lands, to the purpose that they wouldn't be corrupted. Before I move on, I just wanted to give, I think Ecclesiastes was written near the end of Solomon's life, and I kind of wanted to, I feel like he betrays some of his own attitudes in that book.

I wanted to turn to Ecclesiastes and just get a snapshot of Solomon's thoughts on wisdom. Ecclesiastes 1, verses 12 to 18. I, the preacher, was king over Israel and Jerusalem, and I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven.

This sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

I communed with mine own heart, saying, lo, I am come to great estate and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem. Yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge, and I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit, for in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

Seems kind of apathetic. Seems almost kind of bitter about wisdom. What especially stuck out to me is what he said in verse 15.

That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. There seems to be, like as I study Solomon, there just seems to be, there are these two ideas that come out, like the conditions that God gives about blessing throughout the Old Testament. Harvey read some of it.

Also what the Lord told David on numerous occasions. He told Solomon this thing. He told other kings this thing.

There's an expectation of righteous behavior, and yet there's also this thing that Solomon had a greater measure of than anyone who ever walked the earth, this wisdom. I think these two ideas of wisdom and righteousness are related, and yet I believe that somebody can have a great deal of wisdom, and lack righteousness. Solomon was a man who knew all the right answers.

He had all the knowledge and wisdom. The scripture says that his downfall was strange women. He knew about that.

He knew that that could happen. He wrote about it. He warned people about it, that this was something that could happen to a man.

He gives us most of what we know about those things. There was a time in his life, at least a time in his life where he valued wisdom. The very first nine chapters of Proverbs are dedicated to the pursuit of wisdom.

Chapter nine itself of Proverbs is an allegory with wisdom as the principal character. The chapter is dedicated to the getting of wisdom. I just have to conclude that Solomon's flesh and carnal nature won out over all of his wisdom.

So I just thought, like, let's give some definitions. Like, what is wisdom? And I got a definition from Webster's. I'll read it to you.

Wisdom is the right use or exercise of knowledge, the choice of laudable ends, and of the best means to accomplish them. This is wisdom in act, effect, or practice. If wisdom is to be considered a faculty of mind, it is the faculty of discerning or judging what is most just, proper, and useful.

And if it is to be considered an acquirement, it is the knowledge and use of what is best, most just, most proper, most conducive to prosperity or happiness. So to boil that all down, I kind of came up with like just a one-liner for wisdom. Wisdom is knowing and speaking the right course of action concerning solving a problem or concerning righteous living.

And how about righteousness? Webster says that righteousness is purity of heart and rectitude of life, conformity of heart and life to the divine law, a God-given law. Righteousness, as used in scripture and theology, in which it is chiefly used, is nearly equivalent to holiness, comprehending holy principles and affections of heart and conformity of life to the divine law. It includes all we call justice, honesty, and virtue, with holy affections.

In short, it is true religion. So how do we boil down that big, long definition? Righteousness is knowing God's will and his commands and seeking to apply them to our lives and to live them out. So how is it possible that you can have wisdom and yet lack righteousness? Let's look at an example.

I'm not gonna go through the whole thing, but just for a little context, like everybody's familiar, I think it was referenced today by you, Robert. David, a man who saw something another man had, desired it, plotted the man's death and destruction to get it. And there's this principle in there that I see, and I see it in David, Solomon's father.

I just wanna read this short account between David, not the whole story, but just the little exchange between Nathan the prophet and David in 2 Samuel 12, verses one to 14. And the Lord sent Nathan unto David, and he came unto him and said unto him, there were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding more flocks, I'm sorry, many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up, and it grew up together with him and with his children.

It did eat of his own meat and drank of his own cup and lay in his bosom and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler under the rich man and he spared to take of his own flock. In other words, he

refused to slaughter his own animals for this man, the traveler.

And of his own herd to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. And he said to Nathan, as the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die, and he shall restore the lamb fourfold because he did this thing and because he had no pity.

And Nathan said to David, thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul. And I gave thee thy master's house and thy master's wives into thy bosom and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah.

And if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword and has taken his wife to be thy wife and has slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house.

That's sowing and reaping, Harvey. That's an interesting point, isn't it? About sowing and reaping. You know, if somebody like David or somebody else, you know, you can commit murder and perhaps receive forgiveness of the Lord.

And yet you will suffer the consequences of it, even in forgiveness. Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house. I will take thy wives before thine eyes and give them unto thy neighbor.

And he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this son. For thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the son. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

And Nathan said unto David, the Lord also hath put away thy sin. Thou shalt not die. How be it? Because of this deed, thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

The child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. Wow, that exchange is remarkable to me in the sense that, I mean, for many reasons, there's a lot to be said about it. But in the context of what we're talking about today, like here's David listening to a parable and he rightly judges it, and yet he's the offender.

It's just remarkable. I mean, he had the ability, he had the wisdom, he had the understanding to rightly judge this thing, and yet he was the offender. I think it's also notable that David sought repentance, whereas it doesn't seem to be recorded that Solomon did when he was given the bad news about his trajectory, his course.

Just as a little side note, like in child training, people often quote, I mean, I've heard it over the years several times, Proverbs 22.6. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. I think the emphasis is usually and incorrectly on salvation of a child. I think that they're going to glean from you certain character traits, values, but as far as salvation, I don't believe that's something that we train into a child.

I find it interesting, just to think about like what things did Solomon glean from his father? I mean, good and bad, like David was known to have a lot of wives, a lot of concubines. Solomon did the same thing. I also find it interesting that two of the most clearly laid out disconnects in the Old Testament of this principle of wisdom and righteousness seem to come through this father and son, these father and son

kings.

So just like to all of us parents, I think it's important that we remember that children glean not only positive attributes, but negative ones as well. If we fail our children, making our families and our failures right with them is just as important as teaching them right in the first place. There's this poem I may have shared with some of you, and it's a very sobering poem.

It's very short, and it says this. Neither written word nor moral plea can teach young hearts what they should be, nor all the books upon the shelves, but what the teachers are themselves. I just find that very sobering.

I wanted to transition this idea into the New Testament and see what Jesus had to say about this idea of wisdom and righteousness. He lived in a time when there was no lack of wisdom, albeit the wisdom among the religious elite tended to lack an understanding of God's heart concerning loving our neighbors as ourselves and what the purpose of the law was, like the Sabbath, for example. It was meant to serve man, not for man to serve the Sabbath.

In one of Jesus's biggest and longest rebukes, I wanted to try to glean a few things in Matthew 23. I'll try to speed up a little bit here for sake of time. I had a lot of reading today.

Then spake Jesus to the multitude and to his disciples, saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers, but all their works they do.

For to be seen of men, they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments and love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets and to be called of men, rabbi, rabbi. But be not ye called rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your father which is in heaven.

Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayer. Therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte.

And when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor. Ye fools and blind, for whether it is greater the gold or the temple that sanctifyeth the gold.

And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing, but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind, for whether it is greater the gift or the altar that sanctifyeth the gift. Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it and by all things thereon.

And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.

These ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at an ant and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye may clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so, ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore, ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues and persecute them from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed from the earth. I'm sorry, shed upon the earth from the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barakias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.

Verse two and three says that we ought to do what they teach. Jesus' audience ought to do what they teach, not as they do. There's a clear disconnect between the righteousness that these men didn't have and the wisdom that they did have, the things they understood.

When wisdom and righteousness don't match up, Jesus calls it hypocrisy. And herein lies the danger for any of us who possess a measure of wisdom. If we have wisdom and speak righteous things, but we do not and will not live out the righteousness, we can become hypocrites, just as the scribes and Pharisees were being accused of.

I'm gonna read a short passage out of Luke chapter 12. Verses 35 to 48. Let your loins, this is Jesus speaking, let your loins be girded about and your lights burning.

And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meet and will come forth and serve them.

And if he shall come in the second watch or in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be therefore ready also, for the son of man cometh at an hour when you think not.

Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us or even to all? And the Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But, and if, that servant say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming and shall begin to beat the men's servants and maidens and to eat and drink and to be drunken, the Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him and at an hour when he is not aware and will cut him in sunder and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

And that servant, which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.

And to whom men have committed much of him, they will ask them more. I think Jesus was trying to clarify for Peter that yes, this will be required of all men and especially people who have knowledge, who have wisdom. It falls right in line with how he caps off the Sermon on the Mount.

It falls in line with something I'm gonna read in a little bit that James has to say concerning understanding. And in verses 47 and 48 there at the end is another key to the relationship between wisdom and righteousness. Knowledge or wisdom is something that God will hold us accountable for.

And it comes, and I'm sure there could be an exception to this. You know, Jesus said that the Gentiles like under, and I think Paul talked about it too, that the Gentiles understood some things to be wicked and they abstained from those things. And also that like the knowledge of God is like written on the tables of man's heart, something to that effect.

But this knowledge or wisdom, the things that we learn are things that God will hold us accountable for and it comes before righteousness. He expects us to pursue what we know is right and righteous. I talked about James.

I just wanted to touch on him a little bit before I finish up. In chapter one, I'm just gonna read verse 22 to the end of the chapter. James encourages his audience in this way.

He says, Being doers and not just hearers is righteous. It's a summary. Here, James gives us a little summary of Jesus capstone of the Sermon on the Mount about hearing and doing.

And then one passage that I just told, especially precious for the last several years, I just really appreciate it. Right here in James is in chapter three when he gives us a little rundown on the different types of wisdom. Chapter three, verse 13.

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation or good behavior his works with weakness of wisdom. Meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. Where jealousy or envy and fighting are, he says there is confusion and every evil work.

Contrast that with the wisdom from above. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, approachable, right? We can be approachable, we can have wisdom, and yet we can be humble and approachable. Full of mercy and good fruits without partiality and without hypocrisy.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. Wisdom from above ought to be accompanied by righteous fruit, which we have there in verse 17 and 18. I'm gonna finish by reading one more short passage in James.

James chapter two, verses 14 to 20. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace and be warmed and filled, notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith and I have works.

Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well. The devils also believe and tremble.

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? I think it's interesting that he says like, the knowledge alone is not sufficient. Understanding that there is one God alone is not sufficient. It's what we do with it, it's what we understand.

Like some of these truths and some of these wisdom, this wisdom that we have are things that even the demons understand and they use that wisdom to exploit us and to try to trip us up, to ruin us. So just having the knowledge alone isn't enough. It's pushing into it, trying to put it into practice, trying to be conformed to the mind of Christ.

I don't believe, especially like, in light of the example of David that we read today, like, I don't believe that righteousness is always 100% perfect performance. I think when we make mistakes, even, I've never met anybody that's done what David did, but apparently, even when people make very big mistakes, when it's accompanied by repentance and trying to take the situation forward and in a way that is honoring to God, that's righteousness too. Just as a final thought, for the sake of those around us, our children, our brothers and our sisters, for people outside the church, they are more naturally affected by the things that we do, by our actions, over the things that we know and talk about.

Our actions more profoundly impress people than words of wisdom, good or bad. And I thought, perhaps God put that in the hearts of men, you know, that ability to learn, to learn from what people are doing rather than what they're saying, that what people do is more powerful, the actions are more powerful than words. Perhaps he put that in the hearts of men since he too highly esteems what we do with what we know.

I hope that was a blessing. And thank you for your attention and God bless you all. I'm blessed to be walking with you.

Yeah, I've been blessed today and thankful for what Harvey and Max both shared and reaping what we sow that is very serious. Yeah, I don't know, I really can't add to it. And it's God that decides what he can.

I think there is a verse something like giving beauty for ashes. We do bad things and God can make something good out of it, but there's still, it is God's intention and God's hands what results and what the

end matter will be in our lives of what choices we have made. We can't choose that.

Yeah, I've been blessed and God's will be done. Amen to Brother Walter saying, it's a blessing to be here for both lessons and don't wanna flatter you Brother Max, but God has given you much wisdom in speaking. And it was a very edifying lesson.

One of the verses you read about James, the devils believe in tremble. And I never thought of it, really probably until you just read it. And I've read it maybe a thousand times in my life.

The devils believe in tremble. In contrast to Psalm 2, fear God and rejoice with trembling. Philippians 2, work out your salvation, fear and trembling.

Corinthians, fear and trembling. And so the devils, they also believe in tremble. In other words, Christians believe in tremble.

In fact, you know the Quakers, how they got the name the Quakers? George Fox, he talked to Oliver Cromwell and he read the verses to him and said, tremble at the word of the Lord being read. And so when you read, Felix trembled too, right? Felix, Festus, or one of them, Festus, Felix, right? He trembled. Tremble.

Belshazzar saw the writing in the wall, knocked his knees, knocked, he trembled. Tremble. So the devil trembles because Christians tremble.

We tremble too, or we should tremble at the word. Comment, Brother Max, nothing to add, but by the way, who wrote that poem? That was a good poem. I don't know.

Anonymous. But, you know, it's not, how do they say it today? They say, if the heart is right, if your heart is right. It's not the doctrine or this or that.

If your heart is right, that's okay. But notice the, you know, be doers of the word. How about the parable of the two sons? Not the prodigal, but the other two sons.

His heart was right. I'm gonna go, but he didn't. And the other son's heart was wrong, or say it was faulty.

He said, I'm not gonna go, but he did. And Jesus said, which one did the Father's will? Obedience. It's obedience, doers of the word.

Your heart may be right, but you're going in the wrong direction. But if your heart isn't right, and you do those things that are right, you will be blessed. Now you can correct me on that, Daniel, or someone, if your heart is right.

No, your heart should be right. But if your heart is right, that's what they say. You know, we talked to people last night.

Well, my heart is right, right? Well, what about obedience? If your heart is right, that doesn't mean you're obeying the Lord and his commands, right? Your heart can be right, but if you disobey, you're still not walking right. I may need correction in that, Dwayne, or something like that. The Lord be magnified.

Yeah, Robert, I guess if you're inviting it anyway, I'll critique that. I mean, I guess I would lean toward thinking something like, oh, hereby we know if we love the Father, if we obey His commandments,

something like that. Hereby we know if the heart is right, if we obey His commandments.

I'm not sure how much I think it would be possible for the heart to be right. For someone who's not obedient or willing to be obedient to... Okay, it would be possible if somebody was ignorant of a command or an instruction. But anyway, I'm not quite sure, but I kind of think something like that.

Okay, I've heard the statement that says, if the heart is right, nothing else matters. But no, if the heart is right, everything matters, right? I think, anyway, God is the discerner of the hearts and the intents, and we see fruits. Ultimately, He'll lay the axe at the root of the tree and judge all those things rightly.

I appreciate the message, too. I don't really have anything to say about it besides amen and thank you. Yeah, thanks, Max.

That was a really good topic. I thought, I'm sure others did as well. There's just lots of examples of how knowing what's right and doing what's right are different.

I've heard it said, you know, the judgment of God isn't going to be... He's not gonna judge us on our knowledge of what's right, but our faithfulness to do those things. And it may be related, but the thing I just thought to maybe comment on, Solomon's instruction or admonition to... It's almost like a promise, I guess. If you train up a child in the way he should go when he's old, he will not depart from it.

And I guess I'm not real familiar with like how you said people tried to apply that to salvation. I guess I haven't exactly heard that. Or maybe if I heard it, I didn't understand what I was hearing.

I don't... Training is powerful and training at a young age is very powerful and effectual. But you can't train somebody to love God. You can't train somebody to give themselves to God.

But like I think of, you know, you can train a tree to grow a certain way when it's young and it's, I don't know, maybe there might be a stage when it'd be possible to bring it back or to do something else. But I mean, that's just, that's the way it's going to go. And, oh, I guess I tend to think of that verse as applying more to just, you know, practical things, issues of character.

I've known many men of great character who I perceived to have hearts that were far from God, selfish men, carnal men, who had great character. Oh, the other thing I wanted to say, like the devil, I haven't completely tried it out, but I always tend to think of the definition of wisdom as knowing what's with the end result, what's going to bring forth the most fruit or the most benefit in the end result. And so it's always like the future.

So doing what's wise, the wisdom is maybe doing hard things now or things that aren't the easiest or maybe even don't seem to make sense now because we know in the end it's going to pay off, which is the whole, I think that's the premise of the whole gospel, like despising this world, but now knowing it's going to end and investing in the one that's going to come. Anyway, I've seen men that, I've known men that knew how to make sacrifice now for fruit that was going to, for fruit in the future that's going to pay off in the future. They knew how to do that.

They'd been trained, I think, as children they had parents who taught them well to be men of great character. But those men didn't. They were investing in the wrong, they were making the wrong investments.

They were sacrificing now for the wrong fruit. And that what I think would be applied to what you were saying before. I mean, I'm thinking of Bible college.

I also saw men of poor character whose, it seemed to me, hearts were really toward God. But they just, they had this awful foundation and they had a really hard time in all kinds of practical matters of life, but these were men who just like, wanted the good stuff at the end. And you can't train that, but that probably applies more to the thing that you said about children seeing what you're pursuing.

Your children seeing your heart, our hearts as parents and what we're pursuing. Showers of blessings, showers of blessings, Mercy of God is upon you, That's all the showers we need. Show me showers of blessings, Fresh in the season of your birth, Over the hills and the valleys, Down the pines and the valleys.

Showers of blessings we need, Mercy runs round us our following, But for the showers we bring, There shall be showers of blessings, That never find us worn, Renders us young and fresh, Come in the words of a blessing. Showers of blessings we need, Mercy runs round us our following, But for the showers we bring, There shall be showers of blessings, All that today we might find, Now as you have with a blessing, Now as on Jesus we come. Showers of blessings, Showers of blessings we need, Mercy runs round us our following, But for the showers we bring, There shall be showers of blessings, If we but trust and obey, There shall be seasons refreshing, When we let you have your way.

Showers of blessings, Showers of blessings we need, Mercy runs round us our following, But for the showers we bring. O the grace that saves, Has appeared to every man, For it teaches us to say, No to all ungodliness, Endless self-control and godliness, In the present age we're in, While we wait for our Savior, And the blessed hope from Him. What a faithful priest, Who has given up his life, To redeem us from our deeds, Let not all us in his sight, Waiting on his glory, When the word in flesh appears, Glory came to this world, And the dead renewed the King.

What shall we now say, Tell each in that grace abound, Brethren may it never be, Thus this heart is found, Let us come boldly to the, Throne of grace in time of need, To find help for our troubles, And the grace that makes us free. Alleluia, praise Jehovah, From the heavens praise his name, Praise Jehovah in the highest, All his angels praise proclaim, All his hosts together praise him, God in heaven and stars on high, Praises to him in the heavens, And above the skies, Let the praises be to Jehovah, For his name alone is high, Far above the earth and sky. Let the praises be to Jehovah, They were made at his command, And forever he established, His decree shall ever stand.

From the earth all praise Jehovah, All ye clouds ye dragons all, Fire and hail and snow and vapors, Stormy winds that near him call, Let the praises be to Jehovah, For his name alone is high, Far above the earth and sky. All ye fruitful trees and cedars, All ye hills and mountains high, Reaping fingers, leaves and cattle, Birds that in the heavens fly, Kings on earth and all ye people, Praises greater judges all, Praises named on men and nations, Angels and in children's song. Let the praises be to Jehovah, For his name alone is high, Far above the earth and sky.

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