THE 7 PILLARS OF WISDOM

**DATE: 11/18/2015 pm**

**TEXT: Proverbs 9:1; James 3:17**

**INTRODUCTION**

It is a great compliment when someone remarks …

*“That person is a very wise person”*

We interpret this to mean that the person is intelligent, careful, farsighted, and has good judgment

All of which are very desirable traits to possess

Think of someone you consider a wise person

What characteristics does this person possess that causes you to think that way?

We are already learning that the Bible speaks a lot about Wisdom

**Quote:** Vines Expository Dictionary says the Hebrew word "wise" means *"a mastery of the art of living in accordance with God's expectations."*

This definition goes beyond society’s definition

Wisdom is a trait we should value and desire in our lives

What Is the Source of Wisdom?

The Bible clearly provides the answer to this question

**Job 28: 20, 23, 28 *– “Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?” “God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof” “And unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding”***

**Proverbs 9:10 *– “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of Wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding”***

The ***“fear of the LORD”*** refers to awe, reverence, honor, and respect (God wants us to rely on Him)

The Book of Proverbs has provided us with numerous contrasts between a person who is Wise and someone who is Foolish

And from these various passages we soon discover that Wisdom is essential for a successful life

Especially a successful life in serving God

**Proverbs 4:7 - *“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding”***

Now let’s look at our text this evening … **Proverbs 9:1**

***“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars”***

Pillars speak of the super structure of a building

But all good buildings begin with a solid Foundation

The Foundation is that part you really don’t see

That part that is out of sight, below ground

But none-the-less is the most essential part to holding up the building / super structure

The Foundation of the House of Wisdom is again …

***“the fear of the LORD . . . the beginning of wisdom”***

One does not please the Lord through much study and the acquisition of much wisdom

*The fear of the Lord* is the very ***“beginning of wisdom”***

The Foundation

Without a reverent trust in the God of creation and redemption, there can be no true Wisdom

**I Cor. 3:11 – “*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ”***

Then, built upon this foundation and supporting all the superstructure of the “house of wisdom” are seven pillars, or columns

The Question is … what are these?

The answer might to be found in the NT book of wisdom

The Book of James, (**1:5**) where it is said that - ***“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God”***

Then, ***“a wise man and endued with knowledge . . . [will] show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom”* - James 3:13**

The Seven Pillars of Wisdom seem to be listed in **James 3:17 –**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first (1) pure, then (2) peaceable, (3) gentle, and (4) easy to be entreated, (5) full of mercy and good fruits, (6) without partiality and (7) without hypocrisy”***

(Explain how structures were built with 7 pillars)

The first in the list or central column, carrying more weight than any of the other columns, is *purity*

Then there are six outside pillars

One is *peaceableness;* the next is *gentleness;* then comes *reasonableness* ***(“easy to be entreated”)***

The next phrase, ***“full of mercy and good fruits,”*** speaks of *helpfulness*

The term ***“without partiality”*** actually means *principled,*

And then the final pillar is *sincerity* ***“without hypocrisy”***

Thus a life of Wisdom is a life founded upon the fear of the Lord and supported by genuine *purity, peaceableness, gentleness, reasonableness, helpfulness, principles*, and *sincerity*

Such a house will never fall!

Let’s pray and look at these …

***“7 Pillars of Wisdom”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. “PURITY” – v.17a**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure …”***

When we practice God's Wisdom there are several characteristics that show up in our life

The first of which should be Purity

God’s Wisdom is Pure

Notice James says ***“first”,*** a*bove all else,* that this Wisdom is ***“pure”***

The word ***“pure”*** carries the idea of *being free of contamination or defilement*

It is the doctrine of holiness

God still commands His children to live holy

**I Peter 1:16 - *“Be ye holy; for I am holy”***

God takes our holiness seriously

**II Corinthians 7:1 – *“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God”***

This is something that we are to be perfecting in our lives

There always will be the battle between the Flesh / Spirit

The word *“****perfecting”*** carries the idea of *finishing, completing, and fulfilling*

**II Peter 3:11** reads – *“****Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness”***

Purity is to be one of the dominate characteristics of the believer's life

Paul warned in **I Timothy 5:22 -** ***“…neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure”***

James connects Purity with Biblical Wisdom

If we are truly Wise we will seek to be Pure in our Walk

**II. “PEACEABLE” - v.17b**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable”***

Real Wisdom promotes Peace

In **v.18** James says – ***“And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace”***

Jesus said in **Matt. 5:9 –** *“****Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God”***

Some folks never seem to be at peace

Turmoil follows them everywhere they go

-- They fight with family

-- They fight with friends

-- They fight with those in the church

-- They have trouble at work

They have no peace

The problem isn’t with everyone else, but with their own troubled heart!

**Isaiah 57:20, 21 –** *“****But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked”***

There are some folks that we can't be at peace with, but it ought not to be our fault

**Romans 12:18 –** *“****If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men”***

**Hebrews 12:14 – *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”***

**III. “GENTLENESS” – v.17c**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,”***

True wisdom is ***“gentle”***

The believer will face many trials in Life

And God's Wisdom teaches us to be patient in our testing

Gentleness is characteristic of a successful servant

Paul said in **II Timothy 2:24 – *“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient”***

The word *gentle* carries the idea of being *yielding, unassertive,* or *merciful*

It is not always having your own way

Another definition says that it means *gentle in relation to a kindly, patient disposition of spirit*

One writer says the following about the man who is gentle

*“He knows how to forgive when strict justice gives him a perfect right to condemn. He knows how to make allowances, when not to stand upon his rights, how to temper justice with mercy, always remembers that there are greater things in the world than rules and regulations”*

Gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit

**Galatians 5:22 *– “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith”***

In essence, Gentleness is Grace in Action

True Wisdom will have compassion even when it has the right to condemn

**IV. “REASONABLE” - v.17d**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated,”***

This is an interesting phrase

It means to *be reasonable about a matter*

It describes someone who has a willingness to listen to reason and be practical and sensible about a matter

Jesus was our best example

Anyone could come to Him at any time and He was ready to hear and help

-- The lepers could come

-- The Syrophenician woman

-- Sinful women came to Him

-- Even a self-righteous Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus came to Him and found Him easy to be entreated

**V. “HELPFUL” – v.17e**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits,”***

The word ***“mercy”*** carries the idea of *having feelings of pity, compassion and kindness*

It carries the idea of having a desire to tenderly draw someone under your care and tend to their needs

James also mentions *“****good fruits”***

Fruit is the result of showing mercy

Mercy opens the door for us to help and influence others for Christ

People will respond more positively to mercy quicker than they will to criticism

**Jude 22, 23 –** ***“And of some have compassion, making a difference:” “And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh”***

God's Wisdom motivates us to build up rather than tear down

**VI. “PRINCIPLED” - v.17f**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality,”***

The wise person is *impartial*

His judgments are based on principle rather than personality

He shows no partiality or favoritism to anyone

God is no respecter of persons

The word means *unwavering*

It carries the idea of not being divided and vacillating back and forth

A double minded man

Wisdom does not treat one person a certain way …

And someone else another way

When God's Wisdom is guiding our life we will be *impartial*

A lot of folks have trouble with this, especially when it comes to themselves and their families

They can’t / won’t see their own flaws (very subjective)

**VII. “SINCERITY” - v.17g**

***“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy”***

The opposite of Hypocrisy is Sincerity

Being honest and genuine

*Hypocrisy* is the act of disguising oneself and hiding or operating under a false appearance

Noah Webster defines a hypocrite as - *One who pretends to be what he is not; one who has the form of godliness without the power, or who assumes an appearance of piety and virtue, when he is destitute of true salvation*

The word *hypocrite* was originally a theatrical term

It was used in the Greek and Roman theaters to describe an actor

A lot of professing Christians fit the definition

They put on a great show!

Jesus dealt firmly with the hypocrites in **Matt. 23:1-13**

Wicked men pretending to be holy and righteous

They were leading people to hell by just putting on an act of religion

There is no place for such a lifestyle and Wisdom rejects it

**CONCLUSION**

God’s 7 Pillars of Wisdom

My prayer is that they are evident in your life

If not, then maybe we need to make some changes