

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn how to build up the Christian Church. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one resource of the God of the Bible. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

In this twelfth series, the Bible teaches five truths about God's resources. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: GOD'S WISDOM. We will meditate a new Bible passage, memorise a new Bible verse and then review the previously memorised verses together.

(S)      **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is James 1:5. Let me read James 1:2-5. "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials (temptations) of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him".

The memorisation verse is: God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5.

(T)      **First. Christians need godly wisdom because of trials and temptations.**

One. What are trials?

We all encounter trials or temptations. These are the trying assaults of evil in their various forms on our lives. This present world is a battle-field where the powers of good and evil clash. We all encounter both internal and external temptations. Our sinful nature makes it possible for both internal and external temptations to drive us into sin. For example, a straying thought about sexual lust is as great a temptation as a provocative prostitute. Temptations come unplanned and unexpected. The strength of temptation lies in the fact that we never know what is going to happen next!

Two. What is the purpose of trials and temptations?

God uses trials and temptations to develop our faith and to train our character. God sovereignly allows trials and temptations in our lives in order to test our faith in him. For example, we may say that we believe that God is our heavenly Father who cares for us. But as long as we remain untested on this point, our faith falls far short of deep conviction. *The testing of our faith develops conviction!* Every time we resist a temptation through depending on God's grace and help, our faith grows stronger and our Christian life becomes more constant. We trust more in God and we persevere more in life. We have deeper convictions and we are more stable (steadfast) and constant in our Christian life. After many tests, God approves our faith as genuine. And after many tests, our character is characterised by perseverance. Only on the battlefield of trials and temptations to sin, Christian faith grows and Christian character develops. Faith and perseverance are especially two characteristics of Christian maturity in this life on earth and of Christian perfection in the life to come. That is the reason why Christians ought to welcome trials and temptations and to regard them as a joy. We do not enjoy the trials and temptations, because they are rather painful at the time we encounter them. But we rejoice in the rich harvest of faith and character that trials and temptations produce!

(S)      Three. What is wisdom?

Because we encounter many different kinds of trials and temptations, we need to make many different kinds of decisions how to endure trials and how to resist temptations. Because we are only people and not God, we often lack wisdom how to behave on this battlefield of trials and temptations. Therefore, the Bible says that we must pray and ask God for wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to apply our knowledge to the problems of life (1 Ki 3:16-28). Wisdom is the ability to speak appropriately to every given situation (Lk 21:15). Wisdom is the ability to see the meaning and significance of things in life (1 Cor 1:21). And in our context, wisdom is to see life with its trials and temptations as a school of developing faith and character.

Four. How do we receive wisdom?

We receive wisdom by *praying* for wisdom! God's nature is to give and he delights to give us what is the very best for us. God promises to give us *his wisdom* when we pray. God will give us wisdom *generously*, that is, far more than we asked and far more than we can imagine! God will give us wisdom *without finding fault*, that is, without holding any of our past sins against us.

Nevertheless, the way in which we pray is important. In James 1:6-8 God says that we must pray *without doubt*. When we continue to doubt if God really wants to help us and we remain indecisive whether to trust God or not, we will fall

into despair. If we are not secure with God, then we are not secure at all! God demands that we pray with faith and with single-mindedness.

**(T) Second. Godly wisdom contrasted with worldly wisdom.**

**One. Godly wisdom can only be learned in the context of worldly wisdom.**

James 3:13-18 says, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 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. Peacemakers who sow in peace, raise a harvest of righteousness”. The Bible teaches that there are two kinds of wisdom: *The wisdom of the earth* produces all the divisiveness and worthlessness of sin, but *the wisdom of God* brings a harvest of righteousness. In James 3:13, James says, “Let the wise person show his wisdom by his good conduct. Let him show whatever he does is done in wise meekness (humility)”. James tells us what kind of people we ought to be whatever we do! Whatever we do, we ought to be meek. *Meekness* means gentleness in which vehemence, violence and outbursts of anger is subdued. It means being considerate towards God and people under all circumstances. It is that kind of wisdom that puts an end to jealousy, selfish ambition and disorder (16). It is therefore very clear that wisdom can only be expressed in the context of relationships. For example, only when there is somebody who is jealous of other’s affections and accomplishments, can I learn to be forgiving and *merciful*. Only when there is somebody who is selfish and ambitious and causes divisions, can I learn to be a *peacemaker*. Only when there is somebody who is authoritarian and demanding, can I learn to be *yielding and gracious*, rather than standing on my rights. Wisdom is needed in all human relationships! Wisdom is learned only in human relationships!

**(S) Two. Godly wisdom promotes relationships among people.**

Wisdom is pure, that is, *keeping clear from hurting others* through jealous self-concern. Wisdom is peace loving, that is, *keeping away from strife* with others and *making peace* with the opposition. Wisdom is considerate, that is, *yielding* wherever yielding is possible rather than standing up for one’s rights. It is *being gracious* by not pressing the letter of the law. Wisdom is submissive, that is, not necessarily easily persuaded, but certainly *willing to yield to persuasion* when convinced that he must change his mind. Wisdom is full of mercy, that is, *being conscious of the other’s needs and helplessness*. It is *being willing to forgive* the wrongs of the opposition and quick to welcome him back into the fellowship. Wisdom is full of good fruit, that is, *always committed to good results* like building others up instead of tearing them down. Wisdom is impartial, that is, *refusing to favour* the rich, powerful or famous. It is being *unwavering in doing what is right* in God’s eyes to everyone without respect for persons. Wisdom is sincere, that is, it *does not pretend to be two different people at the same time*, with an outward life maintained for the sake of appearance, but with a different inward life kept secret.

**(T) Third. Ways how people may gain Godly wisdom.**

**One. God does not give wisdom to proud people.**

Isaiah 5:21 warns, “Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight”. And Proverbs 11:2 warns, “Disgrace comes with pride, but wisdom comes with humility”. God resists proud people, who are wise in their own eyes and refuse to accept advice from others, but he gives grace and wisdom to those who are humble (1 Pet 5:5). The first prerequisite for acquiring wisdom is let go of your pride and own wisdom.

**Two. The God of the Bible and the Bible are the Source of all wisdom.**

Isaiah 28:29 says that God the Father is “wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom” and Isaiah 11:2 says that “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding and counsel” rests on Jesus Christ. Proverbs 9:10 says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”. All real wisdom begins by having a personal relationship with God. The stronger your relationship with God, the wiser you become!

How does God give wisdom to his people? James 1:17 says, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father ...” and James 1:5 says, “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should *ask* God ...” Psalm 19:7 says that *the Word* of God makes simple people wise and Matthew 7:24 teaches that putting God’s Word into practice is wise. The second prerequisite for acquiring wisdom is to have a personal relationship with God, to read and apply the Bible and to pray to God for wisdom.

**(S) Three. God gives wisdom to you by means of other people.**

God does not give wisdom to people who want to be a loner or completely independent from other people. All the following Bible passages teach the importance of associating with other Christians and learning from them.

You acquire wisdom *by making friends with wise people*. Proverbs 13:20 says, “He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm”.

You acquire wisdom *by being teachable and eager to receive instruction* from wise people, including your parents. Proverbs 1:1-6 and 10:14 teaches that he who learns from wise and discerning people, becomes wise and discerning, and Proverbs 13:1 says, “A wise son heeds his father’s instruction”.

You acquire wisdom *by listening to advice and by accepting good advice*. Proverbs 12:15 says, “The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice” and Proverbs 19:20 says, “Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise”.

You acquire wisdom *by listening to a rebuke and by accepting correction*. Proverbs 15:12 and 9:8 say, “A mocker resents correction; he will not consult the wise”. “Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you”. Ecclesiastes 7:5 adds to this, “It is better to heed a wise man’s rebuke than to listen to the song of fools”.

Finally, you acquire wisdom *by even accepting punishment* when you deserve it. Proverbs 29:15 says, “The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother”.

In summary, you acquire wisdom when you let go of being wise in your own eyes, when you have a strong relationship with God, and when you remain teachable, accept advice, rebuke and correction.

**(T) Fourth. Purposes why God gives wisdom.**

One. You need wisdom to avoid evil.

Proverbs 14:16 says, “A wise man fears the Lord and shuns evil, but a fool is hot-headed and reckless”. Proverbs 2:12 says, “Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked and perverse men”. Deuteronomy 16:19 and Ecclesiastes 7:7 teach that you are wise when you refuse to be involved in bribery and extortion.

Two. You need wisdom to choose the right life-style.

Proverbs 14:8 says, that wise people give thought to their ways. In 2 Corinthians 1:12, Paul and Timothy testify that they have conducted themselves in this world and especially in their relationships, not according to worldly wisdom, but according to God’s wisdom. Proverbs 10:1 says that wise children bring joy to their parents. You need wisdom to choose how you will live in this world.

Three. You need wisdom to discern right and wrong.

Ecclesiastes 7:25 teaches that wisdom searches out the scheme of things and understands the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly. And Ecclesiastes 8:5-6 teaches that the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure. For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter! You need wisdom to discern the right thing to do, the right time to do it and the right procedure to do it.

**(S) Four. You need wisdom to have self-control.**

Proverbs 19:11 teaches that a wise man has patience and can overlook an offence. And Proverbs 29:8 teaches that a wise man turns away anger. Proverbs 23:4 says, “Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint”. And Proverbs 20:1 says, “Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise”. Therefore, you need wisdom to show self-control in relating to difficult people, in making money, and in limiting your alcohol consumption.

Five. You need wisdom to give good answers to people.

Proverbs 29:11 teaches, “A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control”. Proverbs 26:4-5 teaches, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes”. You need wisdom from God to know when to talk and when to remain quiet. In Luke 21:15 Jesus promises, “I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict”. You need wisdom from God to be able to answer those who persecute you.

Six. You need wisdom to do God’s ministry.

Colossians 1:28 and 3:16 say that teaching and admonishing ought to be done in wisdom. Proverbs 11:30 says, “He who wins souls is wise”. Matthew 24:45 teaches that the servant who faithfully does what Jesus has assigned him to do, is wise. You need wisdom from God to faithfully fulfil the tasks Jesus assigned you to do.

**(T) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. The topic today is “God’s wisdom” and the reference is James 1:5. Let us memorise the Bible verse together. Then let us take turns to say that part of the verse alone without looking at the Bible or notebook.

- (T+S) God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God.
- (S) God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God.
- (T+S) God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault.
- (T) God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault.
- (T+S) God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5.
- (S) God's wisdom. James 1:5. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5.

(T) **POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED**

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks.  
Series "God's greatness", verses 4-5 and series "God's resources", verses 1-3.

- (S) God is all-knowing. Hebrews 4:13. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4:13.
- (T) God is all-powerful. Jeremiah 32:17. "Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you". Jeremiah 32:17.
- (S) God's presence. Hebrews 13:5-6. Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you". So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" Hebrews 13:5-6.
- (T) God's Word. Psalm 119:105. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105.
- (S) God's strength. Isaiah 41:10. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10.

(T) **POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and build Christ's Church" and Internet on [www.dota.net](http://www.dota.net)

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".