

WISDOM: A PERSPECTIVE ON PERCEPTION

Proverbs 23:17-18; Jeremiah 15:15-19

We have a serious need for wisdom, for seeing things from God's perspective if we are to live in an abiding relationship with the Holy Spirit. Our capacity to recognize and relate to our union with God's Spirit is greatly enhanced by a godly perspective on life.

- Wisdom: the key to our future:
 - **Without an understanding of the fear of the Lord and God's perspective we get cut off from our hope and lose touch with God's plans for us.**

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:7 NASB

¹⁷Do not let your heart envy sinners, but *live* in the fear of the Lord always. ¹⁸Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

Proverbs 23:17-18 NASB

¹³My son, eat honey, for it is good, yes, the honey from the comb is sweet to your taste; ¹⁴Know *that* wisdom is thus for your soul; if you find *it*, then there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off. ¹⁵Do not lie in wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; do not destroy his resting place; ¹⁶For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in *time of* calamity.

Proverbs 24:13-16 NASB

For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 2:6 NASB

- Vital Operational Issue

¹⁵You who know, O LORD, remember me, take notice of me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. Do not, in view of Your patience, take me away; know that for Your sake I endure reproach. ¹⁶Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts. ¹⁷I did not sit in the circle of merry-makers, nor did I exult. Because of Your hand *upon me* I sat alone, for You filled me with indignation. ¹⁸Why has my pain been perpetual and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will You indeed be to me like a deceptive *stream* with water that is unreliable?

¹⁹Therefore, thus says the LORD, "If you return, then I will restore you— Before Me you will stand; and if you extract the precious from the worthless, You will become My spokesman. They for their part may turn to you, but as for you, you must not turn to them.

Jeremiah 15:15-19 NASB

- Jeremiah's joyful discovery (**v16**)
 - Jeremiah discovered words from God (could it be he found them because he was looking?)

- He ‘ate them.’ He received, partook of and responded to the word of the Lord.
- God’s Word became his joy and delight because he discovered and connected with his true identity.
- Jeremiah’s joy discovery: I am called by Your Name, O Lord of Hosts.
- Jeremiah’s delight stemmed from his relationship with God, not his reputation among men.
- If your joy and delight come from knowing Him then He is free to use your life and your gifts in any way He chooses.
 - No posturing
 - No projecting
 - **Causing others to believe things about you that are not based in reality. The Bible uses the term ‘clouds without water.’**
- This is wisdom...divine perspective...I am a son of God! Amen!
- Jeremiah’s error (**Jeremiah 15:17-18**)
 - Jeremiah had heard and spoken God’s proclamation of judgment to Israel.
 - Circumstances and comrades were not kind to Jeremiah and they were ‘getting to him.’

***Pivotal Principle:** Never let perceptions brought on by circumstances and incomplete information steal your perspective.

Perspective: a specific point of view in understanding or judging things or events. The ability to see things in their true relationship to other things.

Perception: the mental grasp of objects, qualities, etc. by means of the senses; awareness; comprehension.
- Jeremiah’s accurate perspective (gained afresh in **v16**) was being occluded by the pressures of the proclamations he made for the Lord and the difficulty of his surroundings and his perceptions (and misperceptions) were dragging him away from intimate connection with the Lord.
- God’s redemptive response to Jeremiah:

Therefore, thus says the Lord [to Jeremiah], “If you repent [and give up this mistaken attitude of despair and self-pity], then I will restore you [to a state of inner peace] So that you may stand before Me [as My obedient representative]; and if you separate the precious from the worthless [examining yourself and cleansing your heart from unwarranted doubt concerning My faithfulness], you will become My spokesman.

Let the people turn to you [and learn to value My values]— but you, you must not turn to them [with regard for their idolatry and wickedness].

Jeremiah 15:19 AMP

- We need perspective, seeing things from God’s point of view, true wisdom to protect us from unenlightened perceptions.
- How often unwarranted suspicions and mistaken tones of distrust seek to cloud our thinking.
- A divine perspective is essential to our hope and staying in relationship with God so His plans for our future (**Ephesians 2:10**) are not subverted.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10 NASB

- Always weigh what you think you see and hear by the weight of what you have seen and heard and have known to be true.
- Biblical Examples of the battle between perspective and perception.
 - Naaman – Naaman’s perception of the prophet’s methods nearly caused him to miss the power of the prophet’s ministry.

5 Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man was also a valiant warrior, *but he was* a leper. ²Now the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman’s wife. ³She said to her mistress, “I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy.” ⁴Naaman went in and told his master, saying, “Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel.” ⁵Then the king of Aram said, “Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” He departed and took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand *shekels* of gold and ten changes of clothes.

⁶He brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, “And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy.” ⁷When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending *word* to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me.”

⁸It happened when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent *word* to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Now let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.” ⁹So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots and stood at the doorway of the house of Elisha. ¹⁰Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh

will be restored to you and *you will* be clean.” ¹¹ But Naaman was furious and went away and said, “Behold, I thought, ‘He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.’” ¹² Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, “My father, had the prophet told you *to do some* great thing, would you not have done *it*? How much more *then*, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped *himself* seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child and he was clean. **2 Kings 5:1-14 NASB**

- **V11** Behold I thought...His perspective (**v3** the prophet would heal him of his leprosy) caused him to travel to the prophet to get healed but his perceptions nearly sent him home full of leprosy.
 - Job – Job says (**v21**) after hearing of the disaster to his family, “The Lord gives and the Lord takes away, blessed by the name of the Lord.”

⁸The LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” ⁹Then Satan answered the LORD, “Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.” ¹²Then the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

Satan Allowed to Test Job

¹³Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, ¹⁴a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁶While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁷While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁸While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, ¹⁹and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ²⁰Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return

there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

²²Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God. **Job 1:8-22 NASB**

- **V22** He did not sin nor blame God...his perspective ruled his perception.
- Mrs. Job’s perception “curse God and die.” Job’s response, “Thought He slay me I will hope in Him.” (Perspective wins over perception)

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ²The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.” ³The LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.” ⁴Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face.” ⁶So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.” ⁷Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. ⁹Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” ¹⁰But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Job 2:1-10 NASB

“Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him.

Job 13:15 NASB

- **Romans 8:5-10**

⁵For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to *do so*, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. ¹⁰If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

Romans 8:5-10 NASB

- **V5** – Set your mind on things of the Spirit (perspective).
- **V6** – The mind set on the flesh is death (separation) but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace (union).

- **VV 7-10** – Our spirit is alive because of righteousness so we can have and maintain a righteous perspective that is not swayed by unrighteous perception.

- **Philippians 1:9-11**

⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; ¹¹having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11 NASB

- A “love that sees” is not easily blinded by circumstantial evidence.