

Joke: A guy named Joe finds himself in dire trouble. His business has gone bust and he's in serious financial trouble. He's so desperate that he decides to ask God for help.

He begins to pray... "God, please help me. I've lost my business and if I don't get some money, I'm going to lose my house as well. Please let me win the lotto."

Lotto night comes and somebody else wins it.

Joe again prays... "God, please let me win the lotto! I've lost my business, my house and I'm going to lose my car as well".

Lotto night comes and Joe still has no luck.

Once again, he prays... "My God, why have you forsaken me?? I've lost my business, my house, and my car. My wife and children are starving. I don't often ask you for help and I have always been a good servant to you. PLEASE just let me win the lotto this one time so I can get my life back in order."

Suddenly there is a blinding flash of light as the heavens open and Joe is confronted by the voice of God Himself:

"Joe, meet Me halfway on this. Buy a ticket."

Fool's Gold Week 2: Dig Deeper

Wisdom is something many search for, but few find. Why is that? I think it's because so many look for it in the wrong places. And in order for us to find true wisdom, we must dig deeper than just surface level.

Take a moment and think about the places you have searched for wisdom in the past.

My guess is that you searched for it from a person you know or look up to. And to be honest, wisdom can flow through people, I too know some people that have given wise counsel, but also true is that ultimately people aren't the source.

God holds the keys to wisdom. And all we have to do is ask Him for it.

So I want to encourage you today to seek after God's understanding of wisdom. He has created all things and knows all things.

Welcome back, church! We are in week 2 of the series we started last week called "Fool's Gold." And my prayer in this series is for us to learn about wisdom. What is it? Where can we find it? How do we apply it?

And today, I want us to spend a few moments learning how to dig deeper in our pursuit of wisdom.

When people are looking for gold it can't be found simply by looking on the surface it doesn't work like that. You have to dig deep. You have to wade through rivers, pan it out, dig mines into mountains, etc. . . This is in part why gold was and is so valuable.

And today we are going to dig deeper together to find something even more valuable than gold. And once again we are not going to start in Proverbs even though that book is packed full of wisdom we are going to start off in the Book of Job.

It talks about a servant of God named you guessed it Job. Job was someone who was upright and sought to live a life in step with God.

But after Satan takes some things away from Job, Job and his friends have an ongoing dialogue about it. We are reading from a passage in Job 28, where he is speaking about wisdom and understanding. And starting in verse 12, here's what he says:

Job 28:12–23 (NIV): But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? 13 No mortal comprehends its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living. 14 The deep says, "It is not in me"; the sea says, "It is not with me." 15 It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed out in silver. 16 It cannot be bought with the gold of Ophir, with precious onyx or lapis lazuli. 17 Neither gold nor crystal can compare with it, nor can it be had for jewels of gold. 18 Coral and jasper are not worthy of mention; the price of wisdom is beyond rubies. 19 The topaz of Cush cannot compare with it; it cannot be bought with pure gold. 20 Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? 21 It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds in the sky. 22 Destruction and Death say, "Only a rumor of it has reached our ears." 23 God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells,

Now before I continue let me pause here and give a Scripture out of the book of wisdom Proverbs. . .

Proverbs 25:2 (NIV): It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.

I love that. . .

Hear this church this is important. God doesn't hide things from us, He hides them for us. Because His desire is for us to search it out.

God takes pleasure in us finding what He has hidden for us. And it's the glory of kings and queens, princes and princesses to search out the matter.

Illustration: talk about hiding a gift from your kids. Their excitement, your excitement when they find it.

That's why Jesus spoke in parables. Those that searched out what He was talking about picked up the mystery in the story.

Let's get back to Job. . .

Within that passage we read, there are a couple different things I want to highlight for us. Job tells us where to find wisdom. But, before we can know where to find it, we have to learn where it's not and what it's not. So first, where is wisdom *not* found?

In this passage, Job is talking to us about the source of wisdom. He makes it clear in verse 13 that wisdom is not found among the living.

The reason we can't produce wisdom on our own is because our understanding is limited and tainted.

1 Corinthians 13 tells us now we know in part.

In Genesis 3 Adam and Eve decided to disobey God and eat the fruit that they were told not to eat. Now I now the enemy was the one that tempted them.

He does the same to you and I that is why we must be on our guard all the time. They didn't use much wisdom. Because as I said we can't produce wisdom, grow wisdom or buy wisdom.

It's interesting to me that the Bible tells us earlier in the book of Job that he was blameless.

In fact, God Himself even says Job is, "the finest man in all the earth." But even this man was not the source of wisdom.

1 Kings 10:23–24 (NIV): King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. 24 The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God (who) had put in his heart.

Why because in 1 Kings chapter 3 Solomon asked for that. . .

Job shows us that we can still gain wisdom and grow in wisdom, even though we can't create it on our own. God gives it.

Which leads to what I mentioned a few moments ago. . .

And Job shows us the true worth of wisdom in chapter 28. He says wisdom cannot be purchased with silver or gold, and that the price of wisdom is far beyond rubies.

The thing we are searching for, wisdom, cannot be bought with a price because it is priceless. And many in our world today desire to have wisdom and understanding, but they do not understand money cannot buy wisdom.

It's not in the clearance rack at Walmart.

It's not a blue light special at K-mart

It's not available through next day shipping.

And for all the inventory that Amazon has, you won't find bottled up wisdom available in the search bar.

To highlight this let's consider Matthew 19, where we read the story of a rich man coming to Jesus and asking him this simple question, "What must I do to receive eternal life?"

Matthew 19:16–22 (NIV): Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" 17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments." 18 "Which ones?" he inquired. Jesus replied, " 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, 19 honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" 20 "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" 21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

This rich man was saddened because he was told to sell all he had.

Maybe for the first time in his life, he realized money and the possessions he owned could not give him what he actually wanted.

In the same way, money can't buy wisdom, nor can any amount of possessions be traded in exchange for wisdom. It must be gained through a process of faith and trust. Asking and believing. And In what or in whom, you may ask, can I obtain this true wisdom.

That brings us to our final point:

In the final verse of our passage from Job 28 we read these words, “God alone understands the way to wisdom, He knows where it can be found.” (Job 28:23)

God is the one who created all we see around us. He created everything.

Acts 17:28 (NIV): 28 ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

And God holds the keys to finding wisdom. And what must we do to get it? Simply ask Him for it.

STORY: Talk about a time when you asked your parents for something and they didn’t give it to you.

There’s a verse about asking in Matthew 7. This is Jesus speaking in His Sermon on the Mount, and here is what He says:

Matthew 7:7–11 (TPT): 7 “Ask, and the gift is yours. Seek, and you’ll discover. Knock, and the door will be opened for you. 8 For every persistent one will get what he asks for. Every persistent seeker will discover what he longs for. And everyone who knocks persistently will one day find an open door. 9 “Do you know of any parent who would give his hungry child, who asked for food, a plate of rocks instead? 10 Or when asked for a piece of fish, what parent would offer his child a snake instead? 11 If you, imperfect as you are, know how to lovingly take care of your children and give them what’s best, how much more ready is your heavenly Father to give wonderful gifts to those who ask him?”

Jesus invites us to ask God for things, and He doesn’t even limit what we ask for. And sometimes He will even give us what we

want not just what we need. But our wants can't be out of selfishness, revenge, greed, or fame.

And, I do believe that as we grow closer to God, we will understand more of His will for our lives. And will begin to see what He desires we have and ask for the things that He desires we have.

And one of these things is wisdom.

In order to find wisdom, we have to go beyond a surface level in our faith. We must be willing to dig deeper in our relationship with God.

Maybe for you, this looks like spending more time in prayer this week, asking God for things and thanking Him for what He's given you.

Maybe for someone else, this looks like spending more time in God's Word this week. When you do, you learn more about who God is and who God says you are.

These steps take us beyond a surface level relationship with Jesus Christ and into a more full and intimate relationship with Him.

Developing this kind of intimate relationship takes time, it's a process.

Have you ever heard someone say that faith is a marathon not a sprint? It's a long process, it's difficult, and it takes persistence.

And we need to learn to trust the process.

Faith is a process, and we must learn to trust the divine creator of the cosmos to lead and guide us according to His will.

We need to learn to ask believing that the Lord is willing and able to supply all my needs according to His riches in glory.

We need to develop a prayer life and a consistent rhythm of getting alone with the Lord. In these times of solitude we can bring our questions, concerns, literally everything to Him in boldness and confidence.

Hebrews 4:16 (NIV): 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

This is how we dig deep, how we press in, and how we obtain wisdom.

In the book of James it says,

James 1:5 (TPT): And if anyone longs to be wise, ask God for wisdom and he will give it! He won't see your lack of wisdom as an opportunity to scold you over your failures but he will overwhelm your failures with his generous grace.

This truth goes back to the passage I just shared with you from Matthew 7. God is a good Father who wants to give His kids what they need. Not everything we want, but everything we need.

And if you need wisdom, He says you can ask Him freely. He won't look for any fault in you, He will give you the wisdom you need and He'll give it generously.

Consider spending more time in prayer this week.

Dig into the word, into the gospels, and into the Proverbs.

Seek wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

And remember, faith isn't a sprint, and there will be seasons that are more difficult than others. But God is faithful to see you through, and faithful to give you all you need for the journey.