

Applying God's Wisdom

We become wise, or exercise godly wisdom, when we first acknowledge God's exclusivity.

(Proverbs 9:10-12; James 1:5)

Solomon asked God for wisdom to lead His people. That wisdom built a great empire. When Solomon abandoned the exclusive worship of God, his empire began to weaken – he was no longer ruling wisely.

Have you made a decision to worship Jesus exclusively? Why or why not?

The wisdom that God gives is based upon a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a moral code of right and wrong.

(James 3:13-18; Exodus 20:1-17)

Wisdom is more than knowing how to do something, or how to behave in our work or social relationships. Wisdom begins with morality; understanding the difference between right and wrong, and doing what is right.

Think of those whom you consider wise – are they moral people? What kind of character do they have? Now look at your own life. What kind of character do you have – are you a moral person as defined by the passages above? Explain.

When we do the right thing we demonstrate we *know* wisdom. If we maintain exclusive worship of God, and a moral life, the gift of godly wisdom will not fail us.

Do you want to attain godly wisdom? The first step is to receive Jesus and worship God alone. God requires exclusivity in worship. He is the author of true wisdom, rooted in a moral lifestyle.

Are you ready to make a commitment to worship God exclusively, through His Son Jesus Christ? Pray a prayer to God right now, making that commitment, and ask Him to empower you to fulfill it for the rest of your life.

How will you pursue the exclusive worship of God?

Solomon & Jesus: Knowing Wisdom, Doing Right

The Bible regards David as Israel's greatest king. David unified his nation, securing them against their enemies, and advanced the rule of God's Law. David made Israel a true political power.

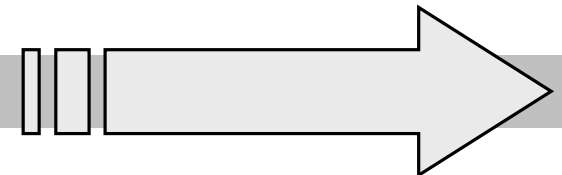
The reign of David was eventually overshadowed by his son Solomon, who was regarded as the wisest of all kings. He used his wisdom to build a great empire of power and prosperity – without conquest or violence. Israel became so prosperous that the Bible records that Solomon made silver as common as stones. It was Solomon who also built the first great temple for God in Jerusalem.

Though Solomon's empire far exceeded David's – his father is still regarded as the greatest king. Why? Because David followed the Lord with his whole heart – unlike his son, Solomon.

King Solomon began his reign well; his early years were years of wisdom and success, but his later years saw his kingdom begin to splinter as his wisdom failed him. Solomon was the first king to sow the seeds of idolatry that would eventually destroy the kingdom.

Why did Solomon's wisdom fail him? Because he abandoned a single principle that made his great wisdom possible in the first place.

In this study we will discover the symbiotic relationship between the exclusive worship of God, wisdom, and morality.



Solomon: The Wise King

Read: I Kings 3:5-15; 5:29-34

Solomon's wisdom was based upon the nature of his relationship with God – that God is a God of exclusivity.

(I Kings 3:12-14, Proverbs 1:7)

King Solomon ascended the throne at a young age. He knew his knowledge and experience was limited, so He asked God for wisdom to lead His people.

Solomon did not attain wisdom from his family, or from the false gods of the people around them. God's promise of wisdom was predicated upon keeping God's commandments (V.14).

Later in his life Solomon worshipped false gods. What effect do you think this would have on his relation with God, and his values (morals)?

Solomon's wisdom was based upon a moral code of right and wrong.

(Compare: I Kings 3:6 with verse 7; Psalm 111:10)

In I Kings 3:6 Solomon acknowledges that his father, David, walked in "truth and righteousness, and uprightness of heart." Then he acknowledges in verse 7 that he does not have his father's wisdom. "I am but a little child."

Solomon equated having wisdom with morality and following God. How do you think wisdom, morality, and following God are related?

Solomon knew wisdom, but did not always do the wise thing. Solomon's wisdom failed him when he abandoned the exclusive worship of God, and acted immorally.

(I Kings 11)

Solomon's wisdom brought him great wealth, power, and prestige – but it was also a trap. When Solomon was comfortable and secure in his wisdom, he forgot to acknowledge God exclusively, and eventually turned away from him. In I Kings 11:6-7 we can see Solomon's morality beginning to slip. Ashtoreth was a goddess of lust, Chemosh was a god of destruction, and Molech was a god that demanded burnt sacrifices of children.

When Solomon abandoned God, his wisdom left him and he began living according to the false religions of the nations around him. His kingdom faltered, and never recovered. How could Solomon have saved his kingdom? What wise course of action should he have taken?

Jesus: The Wisdom of God

Jesus' wisdom is based upon His exclusive nature as the one and only Son of God.

(Matthew 12:42)

Jesus is greater than Solomon, not because He has more wisdom, but because He is the wisdom of God in human form. Jesus did not simply attain wisdom; He is the author of all true wisdom. Jesus has more wisdom than Solomon, because it was Jesus that gave Solomon his wisdom.

Solomon worshipped false gods, but Jesus is the Son of God who Himself deserves our worship. If we will worship Jesus exclusively, what do you think will be the effect on our lives?

Jesus' wisdom was based upon His character as God's Son. Jesus character may be defined as "All that is morally right, in human form."

(I John 2:29; 3:4-6; I Peter 2:21-23)

We sometimes think of sin as wrong things we do, and doing right as avoiding sin. However, doing the right thing is more than simply avoiding sin. Doing right means practicing what is right. Jesus always practiced righteousness. Just as David and Solomon's wisdom sprang from their uprightness of heart, so too Jesus' wisdom came from his perfect, sinless nature. Because Jesus is perfect in moral character, His wisdom is also perfect.

What kind of character do you think you have? Examine your life. Would you like to have true wisdom and righteousness?

Jesus knew wisdom and always did the right thing. As a result, His wisdom never failed, and His reign as the Truly Wise King will last forever.

(Matthew 12:42; John 8:29; Colossians 2:3)

Solomon's wisdom brought him great wealth, power, and prestige – but Jesus' exercised His wisdom without wealth, power, or prestige. Jesus' wisdom gave Him something far more valuable – people. Because Jesus always does the right thing, and His wisdom never fails, His kingdom cannot be diminished, unlike Solomon's.

Read the passages above and summarize them into a single statement about the nature of Jesus Christ.

