

# Walking In Wisdom

Teaching given by Peter Warren at FGPC, January – March 2016

## 1. Redeeming The Time

### Ephesians 5.15-17

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

We have several instructions in these verses which are very relevant to us today:

- **walk circumspectly** – this means that we walk accurately (straight, that is we don't wander to the left or right), carefully, diligently and purposefully. We are to watch where we walk lest we stumble.  
Our walk is one of the important themes in Ephesians, this statement is the sixth and last of these.
  - Ephesians 2.10 – walk in the good works God has prepared*
  - Ephesians 4.1 – walk worthy*
  - Ephesians 4.17 – walk not as the Gentiles walk*
  - Ephesians 5.2 – walk in love*
  - Ephesians 5.8 – walk as children of light*

“Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately...”  
(Amp)

- **Don't be as fools but wise** – walking circumspectly is the action of wise people. The foolish just aimlessly drift along or run off to the left and right, not looking where they are going. (*people on their phones*).

Luke 9.62

“But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” - Jesus taught this parable about those who don't watch where they walk are not fit for the kingdom. Why? Have you tried walking in a straight line while looking behind you. A farmer couldn't have a hired hand that wasn't able to plough straight. If we are going to be useful for the kingdom we need to walk straight.

- **redeeming the time** – the word redeem = buy back, ransom, rescue from loss.

We know this word in our Christian/Church talk – we've been redeemed.

- We've been bought with a price – the precious blood of Jesus.
- We've been rescued from being lost.
- We were slaves to sin and the devil, held in captivity but now we've been ransomed.

But what does this word mean in relation to time as Paul mentions it here in this verse. The important thought is that we rescue or recover our time from waste but using every opportunity to improve it and use it for greater things

- improving our walk with God
- doing good to ourselves and others
- serving God
- attending to the Word of God
- Sharing the good news/Gospel

“Making the very most of the time [buying up each opportunity]....” (Amp)

“Making the most of every opportunity...” (NIV)

“Make the best use of your time...” (J B Phillips)

There is a similar phrase to this in the Old Testament

Daniel 2.8

“The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm.”

The Chaldee word translated as 'gain' literally means 'buy'. We use this phrase in English 'to buy time' in order to squeeze a little more time in a situation or to prevent/put off something from happening.

- How much time do we waste?
- How much time do we spend doing things which have little or no eternal value?
- Can we squeeze any more time into our prayer life, study of the Word etc.?

You only redeem something that is precious and valuable. You were redeemed because you are precious and valuable to God.

Again Jesus told the parable of a man who bought a field in order to gain valuable treasure that was hidden in it - **Matthew 13.44**

Time is valuable, Time is short.

- ***Because the days are evil*** – The reason we need to ensure that we walk circumspectly, be wise and redeem the time is that the days are evil. Jesus is returning soon – what will He find His children doing?

There are many things in these days to divert and distract us. Many things jostle for our time (not always wrong things) and the enemy gives us these distractions because he knows that his time is short, and therefore we won't be about our rightful business if other things occupy our time. (**Matthew 24.45-51**; **Luke 12.35-40**)

Colossians 4.5

“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. ”

“Behave yourselves wisely [*living prudently and with discretion*] in your relations with those of the outside world (the non-Christians), making the very most of the time and seizing (buying up) the opportunity” (Amp)

- *Do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is* – The implication of this verse is that wisdom understands the will of God.

Do not be fools in the use of your time, and in your manner of life. Show true wisdom by endeavouring to understand what the will of the Lord is, and then doing it.

So how do we walk in wisdom? Where do we start?

### **Psalm 90.12**

“So teach *us* to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

We begin by following the instructions that we have just studied from the apostle Paul.

I believe this scripture is telling us exactly the same – redeem the time, that we make each day count for the kingdom of God

“Teach us to use wisely all the time we have.” (Contemporary English Version)

“Teach us to make the most of our time, so that we may grow in wisdom” (New Living Translation)

“Teach us to order our days rightly, that we may enter the gate of wisdom” (New English Bible)

“Teach us to keep account of our days so we may develop inner wisdom” (International Standard Version)

Doing this will give us a heart of wisdom.

## **2. Wisdom Is The Principal Thing**

### **Proverbs 4.7**

“Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *Therefore* get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding”

This verse tells us that the principal thing is wisdom and that we should have it and not just have it but that we should go all out to get it. Wisdom is not something that is elusive or hard to obtain. James tells us that if we lack wisdom we should ask for it from

God and it will be given to us- “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given him” James 1.5

It will be given to us – that is a direct promise from God. The only conditions to our receiving wisdom are these:

- ask – we have to ask for it
- ask in faith – we need to ask God in faith, believing that we will receive it
- without doubting – without doubt, hesitation or wavering

Walking in wisdom requires more diligence because it is progressive. We do not receive all wisdom that there is when we ask Him but that which is needed and necessary for the moment. Again walking in wisdom requires faith on our part, step by step trusting God as He imparts wisdom to us.

We read in Proverbs “wisdom is the principal thing”. What does this mean?

The principal is the first, in place, time, order or rank. The principal is the chief, the captain, the head. It is the beginning and best, the choicest part.

Listen to the first phrase of this verse in some other translations:

*International Standard Version* - “Wisdom is of utmost importance...”

*Today's English Version* and *New Living Translation* - “Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do...”

*New Century Version* - “Wisdom is the most important thing..”

*Young's Literal Translation (1898)* - “The first thing is wisdom...”

*Bible In Basic English* - “the first sign of wisdom is to get wisdom”

*World English Bible* and *New International Version* - “Wisdom is supreme...”

*New English Bible* - “The first thing is to acquire wisdom...”

*New International Reader's Version* - “Wisdom is best, so get wisdom..”

*The Amplified Translation* - “The beginning of Wisdom is: get Wisdom..”

*The Message* - “Above all and before all, do this: Get Wisdom!”

How can we define wisdom?

My definition is this:

“the ability to judge and act on God's principles for righteous living”

The Amplified Bible gives us a definition of wisdom in Proverbs 4.11: “I have taught you in the way of skillful and godly Wisdom [which is comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God];”

But let us look at some of the words that have been translated as wisdom in the Bible. There are three main words in the Bible:

- *Chokmah* (#2451) - to be wise in mind, purpose and act. This Old Testament word tells us that wisdom is “*the knowledge and the ability to make the right choices at the opportune time*” Merrill F Unger & William White; Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words.

The first mention of this word is in relation to the making of the priestly garments for the service of ministry in the Tabernacle. Exodus 28.3 says “So you shall speak to all *who*

are gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest”

This gives us some insight to why we need wisdom – One of the primary purposes of wisdom is to enable us to serve and minister to God.

- *Sophia* (#4678) – A Greek word found in the New Testament which literally means 'to see through'. *Sophia* is 'the ability to discern what is happening and to look ahead with hope to a good end'. Thayer writes about this word - wisdom which is “**broad and full of intelligence; used of the knowledge of very diverse matters**”  
Joseph Henry Thayer; Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.
- *Phronesis* (#5428) – Another New Testament word which means 'understanding'. John B Lightfoot\* says that '*phronesis* is practical wisdom'. This is acting on what has been received and understood.  
\*W E Vine (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words) quotes Lightfoot under his entry for *Wisdom* but there is no reference to which of Lightfoot's works this quotation comes from.

Matthew 7.24

“**Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock**”

He who hears the word of God and acts on them is a wise person, acting in true wisdom.

So we can confidently say that true wisdom is the ability to accurately discern, judge and act on God's principles.

Wisdom directs the course of our lives: It

- affects our attitudes and behaviour
- directs our thoughts
- determines our choices
- controls our tongue
- guides our steps
- protects our ways

Of course Proverbs which extols the virtues of wisdom also connects it to the Word of God.

Proverbs 4.1-13

Proverbs 4.20-27

Proverbs 2.1-22

Proverbs 3.1-8

Proverbs 3.13-24

Proverbs 5.1-2, 7

Proverbs 7.1-4

### **3. The Beginning of Wisdom**

### **Proverbs 4.7**

*“Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding”*

We saw last time that wisdom is the principal thing – it is the chief, the first in place, time, order and rank. It is the beginning and the best.

### **Proverbs 4.11**

*“I have taught you in the way of skillful and godly wisdom [which is comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God];” (Amp.)*

Wisdom – as we are studying it – is the ability to accurately discern, judge and act upon God's principles for righteous and godly living.

We are to actively seek out wisdom because it is not something that automatically comes the older we get. There are those who are of a good age that are not wise at all and the same is true for the opposite. There are those young people who are very wise. This is because wisdom is not acquired through academic learning or even life skills – Proverbs gives us 9 chapters that tell us all about wisdom, extolling it's virtues, where to find wisdom and how to get it.

If anyone lacks or needs wisdom the Bible tells us that we should ask God for it: *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach”* James 1.5

Where do we begin in our quest or search for wisdom.

In Proverbs 4.7 we saw that it said *'we are to get wisdom.. and understanding'*

### **Proverbs 9.10**

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*

This is the fundamental principal part of wisdom. This shows who the real wise men are, and in what true wisdom lies; no man can be wise until he fears the Lord. You can be the greatest scholar, hold multiple academic degrees, be the best in your field or sphere, but if you don't know the Lord then your knowledge doesn't count anything.

We need to be careful who we listen to - many will offer advice on a situation but their 'worldly wisdom' may not be in line with the ways and purposes of God. I know of a man who will not employ any worldly trades people no matter how good they may be. If they don't know God they aren't good enough for the job in hand.

There is a great verse in Isaiah which I often preach from and it's found at the beginning of chapter 53, “Who has believed our report?” (Isaiah 53.1) - this is a question that God asked. Who is listening to and believing what He says.

Jesus said *“(14) I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own... (27) My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow Me”* John 10.14,27

Those who know Him hear His voice and follow.

### **The Fear of the Lord -**

The beginning of wisdom is having that holy reverence for God – the Bible calls it the Fear of the Lord.

“And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom, And to depart from evil *is* understanding.’” Job 28.28

This is not a petrifying fear (which comes from the enemy) but rather a reverence and awe for God, giving Him honour and worship.

“But to man He said, Behold, the reverential and worshipful fear of the Lord--that is Wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Amp.)

Isaiah 8.13

“The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; *Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread.*”

“The Lord of hosts--regard Him as holy and honour His holy name [*by regarding Him as your only hope of safety*], and let Him be your fear and let Him be your dread [*lest you offend Him by your fear of man and distrust of Him*].” (Amp.)

God is the author and source of wisdom. He says that He will put His fear in the hearts of His people.

“And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me”  
Jeremiah 32.40

That fear comes from knowing Him through relationship. The more we get to know Him and become acquainted with Him the more we love, honour and worship Him.

“Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.” Colossians 3.22  
Paul taught that fearing God was an act of submission to Him. He was teaching about family relationships – husbands loving their wives, wives submitting to their husbands, children being obedient to parents, fathers not provoking their children, servants obeying their masters.

He was saying here that we don't just obey or submit to please man but because we have that fear of the Lord.

This relationship that produces godly fear was the apostle Paul's principal aim -

“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,” Philippians 3.10

“*[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [which it*

*exerts over believers*], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [*in spirit into His likeness even*] to His death, ” (Amp.)

This is where wisdom begins – having that personal relationship with God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Then wisdom comes by being hearing, believing and acting upon what He tells us to do.

“The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*. His praise endures forever” Psalm 111.10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom but knowledge comes by doing His commandments.

God spoke to Joshua and told Him not to deviate from the word of God – this would make him successful.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” Joshua 1.8

good success – to be prudent, circumspect, wise and prosperous

“the book of this law doth not depart out of thy mouth, and thou hast meditated in it by day and by night, so that thou dost observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then thou dost cause thy way to prosper, and then thou dost act wisely” (Young's Literal Translation 1898)

“And the book of this law shall not depart out of thy mouth, and thou shalt meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest know how to do all the things that are written in it; then shalt thou prosper, and make thy ways prosperous, and then shalt thou be wise.” (Brenton's English Septuagint)

## **Wisdom Hears and Does the Word of God.**

James 1.22-25

If you don't put into practice what you have heard you are being deceived by yourself – anyone can be fooled and deceived but it takes a real fool to deceive yourself. Doing and continuing in what you have heard produces blessing

Matthew 7.24-27

Jesus said that a wisdom (a wise man) hears and does the Word. Foolishness hears the Word and does not do it.

## **4. Wisdom Gives Attention To God's Word**

Last time we noted that wisdom flowed out of having a personal relationship with God and being obedient to His commandments. We finished the session by reading some verses in James 1, Matthew 7 and Joshua 1. Let us remind ourselves of these verses:

### **Joshua 1.8**

God spoke to Joshua and told Him not to deviate from the word of God – this would make him successful.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” Joshua 1.8

good success – to be prudent, circumspect, wise and prosperous

“the book of this law doth not depart out of thy mouth, and thou hast meditated in it by day and by night, so that thou dost observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then thou dost cause thy way to prosper, and then thou dost act wisely” (Young's Literal Translation 1898)

“And the book of this law shall not depart out of thy mouth, and thou shalt meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest know how to do all the things that are written in it; then shalt thou prosper, and make thy ways prosperous, and then shalt thou be wise.” (Brenton's English Septuagint)

In Brenton's English translation we read the words '*that thou mayest know how to do all the things*' – that's wisdom. Knowing what to do is one thing but knowing how to do it is something completely different.

This was one of the ways that Moses was set apart from the congregation of Israel – the Bible records in Psalm 103.7

“He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.”

- The children of Israel saw the mighty acts and miracles that were performed. They knew God as their provider and supplier – but for the most of them that's all He was. They didn't know Him and enjoy that fellowship with Him, one of the main reasons they kept yearning for Egypt.
- But Moses, he knew the ways of God. He had a relationship with God, he fellowshiped with God, through which God gave him wisdom to lead His people. This is the know-how.
- The word 'ways' literally means 'a road or path, course, journey, direction and manner' figuratively it can be interpreted as the course of life or mode of action.

In Joshua we read also that these 'ways' or know-how come from keeping continually in the word – keeping it before their eyes and meditating on it without deviation. This in turn will make one wise or to act wisely.

In the New Testament we read that a refusal to hear and act on the word is described as foolishness

### **James 1.22-25**

- Be a doer of the word not just a hearer. Put into practice what you have heard.
- If you don't put into practice what you have heard you are being deceived by yourself.
  - anyone can be fooled and deceived but only a fool deceives himself.

- Doing and continuing in what you have heard produces blessing – the required result. This is the way of wisdom.

### **Matthew 7.24-27**

- Again in this parable Jesus taught that a man with wisdom doesn't just hear the word of God but is a doer of the word. He puts it into practice. The way he judges and acts on the word is like building a house on a firm foundation.
- Foolishness does the opposite – it doesn't act on the Word. It does whatever it pleases or whatever sounds good.

Let us turn again to the Proverbs – because here we see exactly the same instruction.

### **Proverbs 4.20-27**

This passage is one of my favourites. Solomon begins by saying “[give attention to my words, incline your ear to my sayings](#)” (vs20)

What is he trying to say here? - twice in this verse he says similar things as if to underline and emphasise the importance of the theme.

- Attend – listen, hear, pay attention, take note and mark well. A good definition of this word is 'to prick up the ears'.
- Incline – stretch, spread, turn and bend towards .

God's word needs our undivided attention – no distractions. We need to be hearing what is said.

(vs21) “[Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart](#)”  
These are exactly the same thoughts that we read from Joshua

(vs22) “[For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh](#)”  
Acting on the word of God produces life and healing for the body and soul.

(vs23) “[Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life](#)”  
Guard and keep your heart. Set a sentry at the door of your heart. It is from the heart that all the issues, thoughts and actions of life flow. Matthew 12.34-37  
Psalm 119.11 “[Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You](#)”

(vs24) “[Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you](#)”  
We have just read in Matthew that men will give an account of every idle word they speak. Idle is something that is unproductive, it is perverse.

(vs25-27) “[Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you.](#)  
[\(26\) Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. \(27\) Do not turn to the right or to the left; remove your foot from evil](#)”  
Another reminder that we should deviate from the Word of God – we are not to turn to the left or the right but stay focused.

(vs26) “[Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established](#)”  
We are to meditate in the word so that our ways are established. This is the same word as we saw in Psalm 103. God's word will chart our course of life or mode of action.

No wonder the wise king could say “My son, give attention to my words, incline your ear to my sayings” - This is the beginning of wisdom, fearing God and attending to His Word.

## Proverbs 3.1-8

## 5. Seeking Out Wisdom

### Proverbs 2.1-11

#### Receive My Words

“My son, if you receive my words....” (vs1)

In our quest for wisdom we need to first receive the word of God and accept it as the word of God.

Remember Jesus said that the man who “hears these sayings of Mine and does them...” (Matthew 7.24) is like a wise man.

Verse 6 states “For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding”

#### James 1.22

But just hearing the word of God is not enough – James tells us that those who are just hearers are deceiving themselves. In His teaching about the two house builders Jesus said “[whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them...](#)”.

Action follows the hearing of the word, in this case putting it into practice, doing what it says. James describes this as active faith in chapter 2 (2.14-26) where *faith* is used as believing the word and *works* is used for the action.

But in **James 1.19-21** we have the full application of wisdom:

- swift to hear –
- slow to speak – Proverbs 10.19 says “[In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise](#)” and in Proverbs 6.2 “[You are snared by the words of your mouth; You are taken by the words of your mouth](#)”
- slow to wrath – because wrath does not produce the righteousness of God which is a result of wisdom (Proverbs 2.10-13, 20-22)

So then, James writes, we need to “[lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness](#)” – we need to repent and turn from an unrighteous lifestyle.

- The writer to the Hebrews said the same thing in another way: “[...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us..](#)” (Hebrews 12.1)
  - *weight* – a burden, anything that holds us back and restrains us.
  - *sin which ensnares* – the sin that trips us up, causes us to stumble – by getting wrapped around the feet.

And “[receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls](#)”.

- receive – to grasp, take hold of; get; give ear to and embrace.
- meekness – in humility and gentleness of spirit.
- implanted – that which is able to germinate and grow
- save – this word has a wide application when used (forgiveness, health, peace) but primarily means to deliver and preserve

This is the heart of wisdom – wisdom as we have read in Proverbs 2.8,12 brings deliverance and preservation.

### **Treasure My Commands**

In the very first lesson a few weeks ago we began by saying that we only redeem something that is precious and valuable.

The same is true for things we treasure – we give them prominence of place, maybe on a shelf or in a display cabinet – we value and appreciate them. We spend our time admiring them or using them.

Solomon instructs his son to 'treasure his commands' (vs1)

He says that we should seek out wisdom 'as silver, search for [wisdom] as hidden treasures' (vs4)

“Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her”  
Proverbs 3.13-15

“My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart” Proverbs 7.1-3

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Luke 12.34

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.” Matthew 13.44-46

“...my heart stands in awe of Your word. I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure.” Psalm 119.161-162

Do we treasure the word of God like David did? Do we earnestly seek after it, search it out?

## **6. What Would Jesus Do?**

### **Proverbs**

We finished in my last session talking about treasuring the Word of God and one of the Scriptures we looked at was this one:

“...my heart stands in awe of Your word. I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure.” Psalm 119.161-162

There is something about David that was different from others mentioned in the Bible – He touched on it in that psalm, that is his great love for the word of God and the importance he placed on inclining his ear to what God had to say.

David treasured the word of God. Do we treasure the word of God like David did? Do we earnestly seek after it, search it out?

We are going to come back to David and look at some instances from his life where he treasured the word of God. But first, we are going to go to the gospels and look at Jesus.

Some time ago, a man called Charles Sheldon wrote a book called “In His Steps” it was a best selling book and it is from this book we get the now popular question “What Would Jesus Do?” or WWJD. Many people have used this question as a means for direction as they seek out wisdom.

Then others have taken some things that Jesus did and built doctrines on them perhaps without regard for other things. Let me give you some examples:

- In John 13 we read that Jesus washed His disciples feet. Is this a practice that believers are meant to adopt just because Jesus did it? I don't think so – this was part of the culture and custom and was observed at that time. Yet there are churches that have built a whole doctrine over foot washing.
- Another custom prevalent at the time of Jesus was the segregation of men and women in the synagogue – this spilled over into the church. Paul wrote that 'women should keep silence'. Many have taken this verse of Scripture and built a doctrine around it which says women can't do anything in the church. This was sad by Paul because of the segregation and it wasn't good for the women to call out during the service to their husbands.
- The same is true when it comes to things like evangelism or praying for the sick. There are many who follow patterns and 'steps' because Jesus did them. Again they build doctrines and set up traditions that say 'this is the way it's done..' because Jesus did it that way.

So What Would Jesus Do? Let's look at the Scriptures....

We are going to examine and compare some scriptures that show us what Jesus did when some blind people came to Him for healing.

In **John 9.6-7** we read of a man that was born blind.

“When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.”

Everytime we pray for a blind person are we to make a clay and rub their eyes because that's what Jesus did? Is the clay key to the healing? On this occasion maybe, but not necessarily.

The blind man at Bethsaida had a similar experience but there were some differences.

**Mark 8.23-25** “So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw

anything. And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking." Then He put *His* hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly".

This time Jesus didn't make a clay He just spat on his eyes and laid His hands on him. Because this is the second time Jesus used spit to heal the blind – the key must be the spit. Not necessarily – don't make this a doctrine.

### **Where's the spit?**

In Galilee, two blind men came to Jesus.

**Matthew 9.28-30** "And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened....."

This throws a spanner in the doctrine of the spit – where is it? Why didn't Jesus spit on them? He didn't follow the pattern He just touched their eyes and asked them if they believed. Maybe the key isn't spitting maybe it's touching the eyes? Not necessarily..

### **Luke 18.40-43**

Another blind man came to Jesus.

"So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God...."

Here Jesus gives a word of command – Receive your sight! No mention of spit, no clay, no touching the eyes. Why?

Jesus did not follow patterns – just because He did something one way didn't necessarily mean it was right to do the same thing on another occasion.

So What Would Jesus Do?

Jesus only did the things He heard from His Father.

"I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me" John 5.30  
(and also John 8.28-29)

Although not actually mentioned in these readings, Jesus inclined His ear to hear what the Father was saying and He followed that. He didn't follow patterns or traditions, He didn't necessarily keep to culture or customs – He touched the unclean, the leper, the dead. He did however, take time to find out what the Father wanted Him to do in any given situation.

### **What Did David Do?**

David never assumed or second-guessed what God would say he always took time to find out what the word of the Lord was for that moment. Even when it seemed obvious what he should do he still took the time to inquire of God.

**1 Samuel 23.2-4** (1-5)

The Philistines came and attacked Keilah and stole grain from the threshing floors. Instead of immediately going after them, David took time to inquire of God. Then again when his men were afraid, he inquired again to be certain.

### **1 Samuel 30.8 (1-10)**

While David and his men were away fighting the Amalekites came to Ziklag, the place where they were camped, and burned it with fire and took away all their possessions, women and children. Those of his own group turned and blamed him for the attack and were ready to stone him. Instead of retaliating David took time to find out what the Word of God was for the situation.

### **2 Samuel 2.1 (1-4)**

The news of the death of Saul and Jonathan grieved David. He knew that he had been anointed as king, years before. Instead of rising up and taking the throne he took time to seek God as to what he should do next. The word of the Lord came to him to go to Hebron where he was crowned king of Judah.

### **2 Samuel 5.19-23 (17-25)**

The Philistines come against David in the Valley of Rephaim. He inquires of God to see if it is right to attack them. It is and he does.

A while later the Philistines come up again in the same place. Most would have just gone down and attacked them again, but not David. He took time to ask of God, and this time God told him not to attack them but to employ a different strategy – wait for the moving of the spirit of God in the treetops. David followed the wisdom that inquiring of God gave him and a great victory was won that day.

### **2 Samuel 21.1 (1-14)**

David inquired of the Lord to find out why the land had been suffering famine for three years. He heard from God, put things right and then God answered the prayers for rain (v14).

## **7. The Revelation of the Death & Resurrection**

### **1 Corinthians 1-2**

#### **2 Timothy 2.8-15**

“Think over these things I am saying [*understand them and grasp their application*], for the Lord will grant you full insight and understanding in everything. Constantly keep in mind Jesus Christ (the Messiah) [*as*] risen from the dead, [*as the prophesied King*] descended from David, according to the good news (the Gospel) that I preach.” vs7-8 (Amplified)

“Be grasping the meaning of that which I am saying, for the Lord will give you understanding in all things. By remembering Jesus Christ raised out from among the dead, from the ancestry of David according to my gospel [*good news*]...” vs 7-8 (Wuest's Expanded Translation)

“Reflect upon what I say; the Lord will always help you to understand. Keep before your mind Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David, as told in the Good News entrusted to me” vs7-8 (Twentieth Century New Testament)

We are told to constantly remember and keep in mind two things. These are two principals of our Christian faith....

- **Jesus was the seed of David** – this is telling us that God became man, born of a woman. He was the Son of God but He became the Son of Man, who lived a sinless life and died for us (see [Philippians 2.5-8](#)).
- **Jesus was raised from the dead** – according to the prophecies contained in the Word ([Psalm 16.10](#)). The resurrection is our guarantee that God is faithful to His word ([Acts 13.30-33](#)).

This is what we often understand as the good news or the gospel – the message that Paul preached.

### **1 Corinthians 1.18-30**

[“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”](#) vs18

This message of the cross (death and resurrection) is regarded as foolish to the world – but for those in Christ it is God's power for salvation – it is the wisdom of God. The message of the cross (and indeed the whole of God's word) makes us wise for salvation ([2 Timothy 3.15](#))

It is written in Scripture – (vs19)

[“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”](#) (quoted from [Isaiah 29.14](#))

What the world calls wisdom God calls foolishness. What the world regards as foolish God calls it wise.

The world says it is foolish to believe in God – but God declares that only a fool says there is no God ([Psalm 14.1](#))

The world regards the message of the death and resurrection as foolishness – God calls it wisdom, it is His power that makes us wise for salvation.

vs21-25:

- earthly wisdom fails to recognise and know God (v21)
- God in His wisdom chose that through the foolishness of preaching (the message of the cross) to save those who trust and believe in Him (v21)
- Jesus Christ is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God (v24)
- the foolishness of God is wiser than [the wisdom of] men (v25)

(vs30) Christ became for us wisdom - that's why He said the wise hear and do what He tells them ([Matthew 7.24](#)). That [wisdom] gives us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

### **2 Corinthians 2.1-16**

(vs1-5) Paul didn't preach with eloquent words, excellence of speech or wisdom (of men) – he only proclaimed Christ crucified (the message of the cross) – the wisdom (and power) of God.

(vs7-8) Paul preached and proclaimed the wisdom of God, which was once hidden but has now been revealed and it is for our glory.

The wisdom of God procures for us righteousness, sanctification and redemption and there's something else – our glory. This has been foreordained from the beginning -  
“But rather what we are setting forth is a wisdom of God once hidden [*from the human understanding*] and now revealed to us by God--[*that wisdom*] which God devised and decreed before the ages for our glorification [*to lift us into the glory of His presence*].”  
(vs7 Amplified)

**RAPTURE - our RESURRECTION**

This wisdom had to be kept a mystery, hidden away, because if it was made known they never would have crucified the Lord

But now the wisdom of God is made manifest and revealed to us.

(vs9-16)

Isaiah wrote (Isaiah 64.4, 65.17) that this wisdom was kept hidden  
“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love him” (vs9)

(vs10-13) But God has revealed this wisdom to us through His Spirit – for the Holy Spirit searches the deep things of God and reveals them to us so that we may know the things given to us by God.

Jesus said that this is what the Holy Spirit would do - **John 16.12-14**

(vs14) The things of God are foolishness to the world because they need to be spiritually discerned.

(vs16) But we have the mind of Christ – **that's walking in wisdom!**

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