

# ARE YOU WISE?

Are you wise? Some may reply to this question by informing us of their high IQs, or their high grade-point average in a prestigious university. However, one's scholastic achievements, while they may say something regarding your intelligence, may not actually reveal the measure of your wisdom. Wisdom is not synonymous with knowledge. One may fill his brain with knowledge of facts and figures that would enable the person to acquire a bundle of cash on the Jeopardy TV program, but still lack the wisdom in applying that knowledge. One who lacks wisdom is sometimes referred to as one lacking "horse-sense." There have been, throughout history, a host of fools highly esteemed for their knowledge. While the accumulation of knowledge on a number of topics may be admirable in any person, let's not be overly complimentary until we know how he or she commits that knowledge to commendable purposes.

In the Bible, James speaks of a wisdom he describes as being "earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15), because its fruit is "envying and strife...confusion and every evil work" (v. 16). This wisdom is "not from above," but is in contrast with "the wisdom that is from above," which is defined as "pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (vs. 17-18). It is for this latter wisdom that James admonishes us to pray: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God..." (1:5a). It is the wisdom to use the knowledge and abilities that we have, whether few or many, to live a life that is in honor of God and His word. The utmost lack of wisdom is to disregard, and even to deny, the existence of God. The psalmist David declared, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no god" (Psalm 14:1; 53:1). In contrast, Job, in reference to God, said, "And unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28).

In the conclusion of Jesus' "Sermon On the Mount" (Matthew 5-7), Jesus spoke the parable of the wise and foolish builders, saying that the wise man not only hears Christ's teachings, but also obeys Him, while the foolish may hear His word, but will ignore it, being disobedient (Matthew 7:24-27). As the foolish builder's house, built upon unstable sand, could not withstand the harsh weather, and would collapse, and the wise builder's house, built upon the solid foundation of stone would endure all of nature's tests, and continue to survive, even so, those who would build their lives on material things, ignoring Jesus' teachings, are doomed for destruction, while those who build upon the solid foundation of Christ's word will endure. The apostle Paul summarized the endurance of the Christ-honoring life when he wrote, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). It is folly, not wisdom, to seek any other.

What is your attitude toward Christ and His word? Would God count you as among the wise?  
—Ron