

THE SOWER
ARTHUR CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Have you visited our web Site lately? (www.arthurchhofchrist)

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

IN THE 1700s, author and philosopher Thomas Paine, made a classic statement: *“Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it.”*

--TribBits, Decatur Tribune

GOD IN OUR IMAGE?

The Bible teaches that God made man in His own image (Gen. 1:26), but man seems intent on making God into man’s image. The modern man cares less about agreeing with God and conforming to His laws than he is about imposing his own standards that are more politically correct.

The Bible presents God as the one supreme being, Creator of heaven and earth,, and all therein (Acts 17:23-29; 14:15). He is the living God, with ears to hear and hands to help. This God is holy, almighty, all-wise, all-powerful, and ever present. (See such scriptures as Mark 12:29; 1 Timothy 6:15; 1 Peter 1:15, 16 and 1 John 4:8.) Further, God is “Judge of all,” but also the Savior of men who come to Him through Jesus Christ (Romans 2:16 and Titus 3:4-6). He is the one God of both the Old and New Testaments.

All of this being true, yet He is not the God everybody feels comfortable with. Some dislike His laws. Some do not want to answer to anyone for their deeds, even to the One who knows their hearts. To such, God and His standards are conceived to be out of date. Still others would prefer to serve a god tailor-made by denominational and cultic creeds and dogmas, rather than the one true God whose truths are set forth by inspired apostles and prophets in holy Scripture (1 Timothy 3:16-17).

Let’s cease trying to make God into our image. It just won’t work!

--Ron

SMILE A WHILE: A SERIOUS QUESTION

At Hebrew School, the Rabbi finished the day's lesson. It was now time for the usual question period.

"Rabbi," asked little Melvin, "there's something I need to know."

"What's that my child?" asked the Rabbi.

"Well, according to the Scriptures, the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, right?"

"Right."

"And the Children of Israel beat up the Philistines, right?"

"Right."

"And the Children of Israel built the Temple, right?"

"Again you are correct."

"And the Children of Israel fought the Egyptians, and the Children of Israel fought the Romans, and the Children of Israel were always doing something important, right?"

"All that is correct," agreed the Rabbi, "So what's your question?"

"What I need to know is this," demanded Melvin, "What were all the grown-ups doing?"

--Source unknown, from the Internet

"**HAPPINESS** doesn't depend on what happens outside of you, but what happens inside of you; it is measured by the spirit in which you meet the problems of life."

"**PRAYER BASICS**" will be today's message, and probably for the next Sunday or two as well, with James 5:13-18 as the reading.

PRAY FOR: Ron McConkey has been having some health problems, including glaucoma. Also: Ruby Bradd (Clinton; cancer); Wayne Polk (Shelbyville minister; hardening of leg-arteries and other health issues); the increasing hostility shown especially toward Jews and Christians, with efforts being advanced to depict Judeo-Christian standards (based on Scripture) politically incorrect, intolerant, and sometimes even contrary the law and the Constitution.

