**Changed Into His Image**

***Lesson Eight: Searching for Wisdom – Prov. 4:7-8***

**Introduction**: So far in our study, we have seen the power of our sin nature and how it needs to be restrained. We are in the section of Changed Into His Image that centers on the renewal of the mind. To be like Christ, we must have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5).

In the first sermon of His public earthly ministry, Jesus preached that a man must have two specific heart responses to His words in order to be wise (Matt. 7:24-27). First, wisdom is found in the context of a relationship with Him: the hearer’s response to *His* words. Second, Jesus teaches which actual responses to His words will make a man wise: hearing and doing.

These two responses are the primary disciplines of wisdom and thus, of a Christlike, renewed mind. How a person responds to His words will determine the *stability* of their life and thus the *usefulness* of his or her life. Build your life on the rock by hearing and doing what Jesus has said.

By the end of this lesson you should be able to:

* Define “wisdom” and be able to distinguish between the “helicopter view” and the “dashboard view.”
* Explain what will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
* State the two basic disciplines contained within the master discipline of hearing.
* Describe biblical meditation.

1. **What Is Wisdom?**
   1. Some view wisdom as having the view from a helicopter over traffic.
      1. Wisdom is compared to the view of the rush-hour traffic, from the traffic helicopter above.
      2. It is thought that with wisdom, life should be equally understandable.
      3. A quick survey of the Scriptures reveals that most of God’s servants never knew much of His plan at all.

Examples: Joseph, Daniel, Job, etc.

* + 1. Wisdom, then, is not the view of the road from the helicopter above the traffic snarl.
  1. A more accurate description is the view from the dashboard.
     1. A better illustration of wisdom is to view it as a skill exercised by a driver caught in the middle of the traffic snarl.
     2. He does not have to know why his car blew a tire, but he needs to know how to skillfully get his vehicle to the side of the road.
     3. He does not have to know why the lane ahead of him is barricaded, but he must know how to skillfully merge into the next lane.
  2. “Wisdom is not having God’s perspective of the whole matter before us, but having God’s perspective about what next response will honor Him while keeping us still usable to Him.” (Berg 167).
  3. The Judgment Seat of Christ will examine our usefulness or fruitfulness for God.
  4. Since wisdom is essential to usefulness, we need to consider how you may obtain wisdom.
  5. Solomon made it clear that the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10). What is involved in fearing the Lord? Study the following chart to understand the biblical path to wisdom.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The Goal** | **Wisdom**  **(The Mind of Christ)** | | | |
| **The Master Disciplines** | **Hearing** | | **Doing** | |
| **The Basic Disciplines** | **Attention**  Choosing to listen to God | **Meditation**  Choosing to think like God | **Obedience**  Choosing to obey God | **Endurance**  Choosing to persevere for God |

1. **Four Types of Hearers – Luke 8:4-21**
   1. The indifferent hearer
   2. The impulsive hearer
   3. The infested hearer
   4. The ideal hearer
   5. If you desire to be the type of hearer that receives God’s Word, consider the two basic disciplines of hearing: attention and meditation.
2. **The Basic Discipline of Attention**
   1. Biblically, hearing means first of all that we are choosing to listen to God.

Illus. Spiritual Junk Mail - Because believers are in a relationship with God, there should be a difference between the way we treat God’s Word and the junk mail that comes to our lives. (Pg. 172).

* 1. God designed man to listen to someone for direction in life (Gen. 2:16-17).
     1. That direction was to come from God, as Adam fellowshipped with Him in the garden.
     2. When Adam started listening to the serpent he was given a constant flow of information opposed to God.
  2. “If we are to move out of the ‘foolishness’ of our own heart and develop a renewed mind, we must make it a habit of life, a discipline, to listen to God than to our own heart” (Berg 173).
  3. “The cornerstone of wisdom is a dependent and submissive heart that shows itself by giving its attention to God and to spiritual leaders” (Berg 174). Notice a sampling of verses that call our attention to God and godly leaders: Prov. 1:8; 2:1, 6; 3:1, 5; 4:1; 5:1; 6:20; 8:1).

1. **The Basic Discipline of Meditation**
   1. The goal of biblical meditation is to think like God.
   2. Remembering God’s words is tied to our relationship with Him.
   3. We remember information that is important and often rehearsed. The same can be true with our memorization of God’s Word.
   4. Anyone who knows how to worry knows how to meditate.
      1. A worrier takes one thought and looks single-mindedly at that thought from every possible angle, examining every possible implication and palliation of that thought.
      2. Biblical meditation involves the same process, but the reflective thought must be on the truth from God and not on a lie from our own heart or from Satan.
   5. Because of the supreme importance of God’s Word, we should make an intense study of it. (James 1:21-25; Prov. 2:1-6).

Illus. Someone who is searching for a contact lens has the type of intensity we need in our study of God’s Word. (pg. 178).

1. **Application for Life Change**
   1. Pursue wisdom. Be faithful in church attendance and Bible reading.
   2. Remove distractions that keep you from giving full attention to God.
   3. Commit yourself to daily meditation on the Word so that you are not a “forgetful hearer.”