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SERMON TITLE: The Reward of Prioritizing God's Wisdom
SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 2:6-15
DATE January 29, 2023
Online service at www.fpcd.org/live

Read also John 1:1-5; Matthew 5:17-19

Where do you seek truth?

If you search the internet for "What is truth?" you get something like this:

- "This is about us, together." ("we are truth" at www.wearetruth.com)
- From Wiktionary: Truth is the state or quality of being true to someone or something, like *Truth to one's own feelings is all-important in life.*
- The truth is what is.
- From John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" from Great Odes from 1819: "Beauty is truth and truth beauty,— that is all/ Ye know on earth and all ye need to know."¹

Do you seek truth in your own ideas or thoughts? As you can see, there are a variety of definitions.

Sometimes people justify their behavior or decisions by saying, "this is my truth," as if they are accountable to no one. This is largely accepted, that truth is determined by my judgment of what is right, and especially what is right for me.

Truth, then, is subjective.

The concept of seeing truth as "my truth" or "your truth" as opposed to "The Truth" defines truth as reality according to my own will or desires or experiences.

If my will, desires, or experiences define truth, then my wisdom, which is based on truth, is limited to my own scope.²

But Paul tells us:

"God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, God uses our proclamation to save those who believe. For we preach that Christ was crucified, for Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. . . . This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans," (1 Cor 1:20b-21, 25).

What guides your path—worldly wisdom or Godly wisdom?

John the Apostle writes, "Grace and **truth** came through Jesus Christ" (Jn 1:17). John opens his gospel describing Jesus Christ as "the Word:" "In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn 1:1).

John is saying Jesus is God's Son come to earth; Jesus is fully divine. Jesus wasn't "adopted" by God when he came to earth. his divinity extends back to before the world was created. As such, *the Word gave life to everything that was created, and nothing that was created was created except through him, and his life brought light to everyone* (1:4). That is a massive statement.

"Grace and **truth** came through Jesus Christ."

And yet humans struggle against Jesus as truth. People justify their behavior or decisions by simply declaring, "this is my truth."

That is not a wise way to live.

The result is "everyone does what is right in their own eyes," just as in the barbaric times of the Judges when God's people had no king (Judges 17:6). There were no established standards, ethics, justice, or leadership. And as a result, no wisdom.

But God began raising up leadership that would prioritize God's wisdom. One of those kings was Solomon. When he became king, he requested this of God:

"Now, O LORD, you have made me king instead of my father, David, but I am like a little child who doesn't know his way around. And here I am in the midst of your own chosen people, a nation so great and numerous they cannot be counted! *Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong. For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?*" The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom (1 Kings 3:7-10).

God gave Solomon wisdom as he requested. He shares that with us.

Note—we do not have the wisdom or understanding in and of ourselves either. You may say, *Of course I know the difference between right and wrong!*

Yes, all of us have some understanding of right and wrong—we are made in the image of God. And, you have been influenced

1. All websites accessed January 24, 2023.
2. Wisdom is defined as "the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting." <https://www.gotquestions.org/wisdom-knowledge>

by coming here to worship God, studying the Bible, and praying. Yet still,

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way” (Is 53:6). Handel wrote a choral piece in *Messiah* with that verse. Let’s hear it. VIDEO

Have you ever driven off the freeway illegally when in a standstill traffic jam?

It is a universal problem that we humans cannot hold to the truth. It plays out on the freeway, in the courtroom, on the street, and in our homes all around our world. **It is true that without the Lord, you will only have “your truth.”**

I’m telling you a little secret . . . though I love you all . . . your personal truth is not good enough! But here’s the good news—God’s truth **IS** good enough, and there is reward in seeking God’s wisdom—and not living by truth that you have made up, or have compromised with the culture. Let’s hear about it.

READ Proverbs 2:6-15

V. 6

For the **Lord** grants wisdom. God’s knowledge and understanding come through the WORD—Jesus! Remember? *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God? And the Word came and dwelled among us.*

V. 7

Approach God just as you are. Be honest! God grants the honest person a treasure of common sense. Isn’t it great to be around someone with common sense? Approaching God with honesty means you are authentic and transparent. Popeye said, “I yam what I yam and that’s all what I yam.” God respects that. Do you approach God being who you are?

God gives a shield of victory to those who have moral ethics. You are going to win with morals.

V. 8-9

Seek to do the right thing! You will be rewarded. God guards and protects those who seek to be just and faithful. Do you seek to do the right thing? Or take a shortcut, or turn to your own way? Seekers of righteousness gain rewards. Why? Because life offers many detours, but if you say “I don’t want a shortcut—I want to learn to refrain from going astray!” Then Jesus, who is alive, active, and cares will put his wisdom right there in your path to help you.

When things look bad or like they are not going to work out in the way you want them to, DO NOT WAVER! **Seek wisdom!** And you will find it.

V. 10-12

The Promise: If you seek it, “Wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will fill you with joy. Wise choices will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe. Wisdom will save you from evil people.”

When you do not prioritize God’s wisdom, many people will try to deceive you. You will find them in bars, at work, at school, on the

street, the internet and media, and in discouraging words that tempt you to give up and take the shortcut!

Here is how to recognize evil people:

- Their words are twisted.
- They turn from the right way to dark paths.
- They take pleasure in doing wrong.
- They enjoy evil.
- Their actions are deceitful.
- Their ways are wrong.

Watch for it; scrutinize; pray; boldly ask God for wisdom. God is generous and will give it to you. In fact, Jesus is so close and if you ask with confidence, he will give it to you right away, with joy.

NO PROBLEM IS BEYOND OUR LORD’S WILLINGNESS TO HELP!

Do not be divided in your heart. Seek god’s wisdom today. Do not be a wandering sheep! **GAIN GOD’S VICTORY!** It takes discipline and commitment, but it will come easily if you seek it. **IT IS YOUR REWARD!**

AMEN