



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to James 1:22

Title: Spiritually-Wise Christians

Theme: Grasping the Wisdom of God

James 1:22: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”

Introduction: *Bible teacher and preacher Leslie Miller told of a time when he was in North Africa. One late afternoon he watched thousands of sheep come to a watering hole and drink until satisfied. After the sheep had all they could drink, a dozen shepherds walked off in different directions, singing or speaking in different ways. To the amazement of Mr. Miller the sheep broke off from the large group and began to follow each shepherd. The sheep actually rallied to the call of the shepherd they knew and trusted. Pastor Leslie never forgot the sight and he thinks of it often when he reads or meditates on the words of Jesus “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27)*

Proposition: *I would propose to you that Christianity is not made up of just the things we do or not do. It must be clear in our hearts and minds that Christianity is a relationship with God, Jesus and fellowship in the Holy Ghost. Grasping for the wisdom of God involves being attentive to Jesus’ voice, meditating on what He says, obeying His words that give life and enduring in His calling upon our lives.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just how does a child of God become a “Spiritually Wise Christian?”*

Transitional Sentence: *Spiritually Wise Christianity knows that this life down here is a battle and there is a constant battle going on within our spiritual hearts all the time. (Galatians 5:17)*

A “Spiritually Wise Christian” knows that there is a battle for the child of God’s heart, mind, and soul. There is that enemy the New American Standard Bible calls “...the flesh [which] sets its desire against the [Holy] Spirit.” (Galatians 5:17) The King James hits the source right upon the head when it translated this verse as, “For the flesh lusteth against the [Holy] Spirit.” (Galatians 5:17) “Lusteth” (*epithumeo*) meaning to have a yearning passion for. The practical application is that it has a pulling affect that grabs you and won’t let go. This causes the child of God or lost sinner to desire, to want, to crave, to hunger, to thirst, to grasp and actually take a hold of that which destroys or inhibits a healthy relationship with Christ.

(1 John 1:8)

(Genesis 4:7b)

Illustrations: Robert Robinson, “Prone to Wonder, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love.” Dr. Joseph S. Exel, writes about this conflict within man, “The battle of life are not mainly a fighting against adverse circumstances and external evils of this world. One of man’s greatest foes is what is in his own heart. There is a great conflict internal. Thus, life is warfare and the Christian a soldier who must surrender to the will of his Commanding Officer...”

Illustration: Dr. Murray Study on Rattle Snakes

(Galatians 5:16)

(James 1:13-15)

Are you “Spiritually Wise” like the apostle Paul and James were? Do you look at temptations as potential danger and call upon Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to deliver you from the lures of the sinful flesh?

Transitional Sentence: *What the apostle Paul is saying in Galatians is that there is no escape from the need to depend on God’s grace.*

(Psalms 129:23-24)

(Proverbs 14:12)

(Romans 7:7:)

(Hebrews 4:12)

Illustration: Dr. Jay Vernon McGee, The Word being a Mirror

Transitional Sentence: *After a man recognizes that sin is a real threat to him, he is willing to look into the perfect law so as to understand all that sin is; he then protects himself through being attentive to the law of God, meditates upon what the Bible says, obeys what Jesus has taught him and then endures through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

(Psalms 119:9-11)

“Pure” (*zakah*) gives the connotation of being cleansed from sin. The application is when the Christian reads the Word of God so as to keep himself blameless, to keep himself steadfast or to find the practice of godliness, he is doing a wise thing.

“The Wise and Foolish Builders”

(Matthew 7:24-26)

Like a wise builder of a house, the Christian will think ahead about what needs to be done in regards to his eternal state and for his on-going relationship with Jesus Christ. If the foundation of a house is not set on solid ground, it cannot handle the every day settling of the constant moving of the earth. The more solid the foundation of a house, the more powerful storm it can withstand. The solidness of a Christian’s relationship with the Lord Jesus will determine his ability to handle the ever-changing courses and storms of life down here.

William Barclay: “Knowledge only becomes relevant when it is put into action... Knowledge must become action; theory must become practice; theology must become life.”

Illustration: Royal Navy, “Obedience saves lives.” The whole of Scripture teaches that obedience to the Lord Jesus saves souls and keeps them on solid ground.

What causes so much turmoil in the lives of Christians and the church is that the children of God seem to forget that they live in a dangerous world. They forget while living in this sin darkened world, there needs to be that listening heart that is ever ready to hear that voice that calls out instructions, that heart that gives automatic and unquestionable obedience.

Every human being who has been exposed to God’s Word is a house that is being built on either solid ground or sandy soil. How a person builds determines his eternal destiny. How a person builds in this life makes all the difference between success or failure, life or death, reward or loss, acceptance or rejection, and standing or falling. With those facts before them, a wise Christian looks to the Master Builder’s blue prints and not his own.

(1 Peter 2:5)
(Ephesians 2:20)

Spiritually wise Christians know that it takes time, energy and surrender, thus they deny themselves until diligent study has been done with some plan of application being put in practice. They give up slumber to seek for God’s truths and they survive the storms of sickness, sorrow, suffering, disappointment, rejection, handicaps, loss, death, mistreatments, temptations and the list can go on and on.

(Romans 8:28-29)

Spiritually Wise Christians are given an ability to handle all that is thrown at them in stability.

In Closing: *Jim Berg wrote, “There is debate in Christian circles about whether we are suppose to concentrate on being a certain kind of person or doing certain kind of things. The truth embraces both. You are always going to be some kind of a person or another, and you are always going to be doing one thing or another. You cannot cease to be nor cease to do. The fact is you have to be a certain kind of person to do certain things.”*

Whose voice do you recognize, know and follow? “Spiritually Wise Christians” follow the voice of Jesus Christ who is most certainly the “Good Shepherd.” And He says, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27)

Let Us Pray!

