



# Wisdom—A Prerequisite to Determine God’s Will

Can you remember when you wanted to know God’s will in a particular situation of life? Obviously, what you wanted was a specific answer but; in all probability, at that time you did not consider if you had prepared yourself to receive direction from the Lord.

The goal of this study is to highlight the *foundation* for knowing God’s will, and that prerequisite is to acquire divine wisdom as a habit of life.

*[This study is given in an outline format for quick reference and easy sharing with others.]*

**Proverbs 4:7**, Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.

**1 Corinthians 1:21, 24-25, 30**, For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe ... but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God ... For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. ... It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

## I. Wisdom: What is it?

- A. *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* notes the following definitions: intelligent, sensible, judicious, endued with reason and using it properly, skillful to judge, proficient in civil matters, ability to interpret dreams, prophesying, dexterity or skill in an art, counseling or understanding. From a more sinister point of view, “wisdom” also is used to describe crafty magicians or those skilled in the art of enchantment and divination.
- B. The *International Bible Encyclopedia* reminds us that natural wisdom is not trustworthy for the significant issues of life (**Proverbs 3:5, 7**: Lean not on your own understanding... Do not be wise in your own eyes...). In contrast, true wisdom begins and ends with God, and all wisdom centers on Him. (**Daniel 2:20-22**, Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. <sup>21</sup>He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. <sup>22</sup>He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.)
- C. According to *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, “wisdom” is the knowledge and the ability to make the right choices at the opportune time. The consistency of making the right choice is an indication of maturity and development. The opposite of “wisdom” is a “fool” or wicked person, one who stubbornly refuses counsel and depends on his own understanding. The beginning of “wisdom” is the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7), a missing characteristic of a fool.

See [\*The Most Difficult People in the World – Fools and Scoffers\*](#) and [\*There’s Nobody Worse than These People\*](#)

## II. Wisdom is practical and quite discernible.

The “fruit” of the Spirit is closely aligned with the “fruit” of wisdom. Notice the italicized text in the verses below.

**Galatians 5:22-23**, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.* Against such things there is no law. *[Emphasis added]*

**James 3:13-18**, Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. <sup>15</sup>Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. <sup>16</sup>For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. <sup>17</sup>*But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.* <sup>18</sup>Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. *[Emphasis added]*

## III. God’s Wisdom is abundantly and adequately revealed to believers in Christ

- A. On the one hand, God’s dealings with us and His world are not fully understood by our finite minds.

**Isaiah 55:8-9**, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

B. On the other hand, God has revealed everything we need to know in order to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

**2 Peter 1:2-3**, Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

C. God’s Son, Jesus Christ, is the perfect revelation of the Father.

**John 14:9**, Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”

**Hebrews 1:1-2**, In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

D. God’s Spirit resides in each believer to reveal the truths of God

**Romans 8:8-9**, Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.<sup>9</sup> You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

**John 16:13**, But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

E. God’s Word is completely adequate and totally sufficient to reveal God’s plan for Christ-like living.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**2 Timothy 2:15**, Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

#### IV. Growing in wisdom means growing in Christ.

A. We are to live everyday with Jesus as our focus, since He is the embodiment of God’s wisdom.

**Isaiah 11:1-3**, A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.<sup>2</sup> The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—<sup>3</sup> and he will delight in the fear of the LORD . . .

**Colossians 2:2-3**, My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

B. We are to model our lives after the example of Jesus.

1. We are to endure suffering, entrusting ourselves to our righteous Father.

**1 Peter 2:20-23**, But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.<sup>21</sup> To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.<sup>22</sup> “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”<sup>23</sup> When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

See [\*Trials...God’s Pathway for Growth and Grace\*](#)

2. We are to pray habitually.

**Luke 5:16**, But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

**Colossians 4:2**, Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**, Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

See [\*Prayer: A Viable Option or an Absolute Necessity\*](#) and [\*A Prayer Pattern to Help Structure Your Life\*](#)

3. We are to love one another as Jesus loved His disciples.

**John 13:34-35**, A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

See [The Two Greatest Priorities of Life and Are You a Loving Person? The Love Test](#)

4. We are to serve as Jesus humbly served.

**Mark 10:42-45**, Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

See [Servanthood—The Low Road to our High Calling](#)

5. We are to practice humility in our dealings and ministry with others.

**Philippians 2:3-8**, Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

See [Becoming a Christ-like Servant](#) and [Humility—God’s Path to Edification and Exaltation](#)

6. We are to be eager and willing to obey God in everything.

**Hebrews 5:8-9**, Although He was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, <sup>9</sup> once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

**John 14:21**, Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

- C. We are to grow in the knowledge of Christ

**Ephesians 1:17-19**, I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe . . .

**Philippians 1:9-11**, And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

See [It’s All About Jesus](#) and [God’s Motivation for Your Life](#)

- D. We have a lifetime to plumb the depths of the fullness of Christ

Advocate, Almighty, Alpha and Omega, Amen, Anointed, Apostle, Arm of the Lord, Author and Finisher of our faith, Beginning and end of the creation of God, Beloved, Blessed and only Potentate, Branch, Bread of life, Bridegroom, Bright and Morning Star, Brightness of the Father's glory, Captain of the Lord's host (army), Captain of Salvation, Carpenter, Carpenter's son, Chief Shepherd, Chief Cornerstone, Chosen of God, The Christ (Messiah), Christ Jesus our Lord, Christ of God, Christ the chosen of God, Christ the power of God, Christ the wisdom of God, Christ the Son of God, Christ, Son of the Blessed, Commander, Consolation of Israel, Cornerstone, Counselor, Covenant of the people, Dayspring, Day Star, Deliverer, Desire of all nations, Door, Emmanuel, Ensign, Eternal Life, Everlasting Father, Faithful and True, Faithful Witness, First and last, First begotten, First begotten of the dead, Firstborn, Foundation, Fountain, Forerunner, Friend of sinners, Gift of God, Glory of Israel, God (deity), God blessed forever, God manifest in the flesh, God of Israel-the Savior, God of the whole earth, God our Savior, God's dear Son, God with us, Good Master, Good Shepherd, Governor, Great Shepherd of the sheep, Head of the *ekklesia* (body), Heir of all things, High priest, Head of every man, Head of the corner, Holy one of God, Holy one of Israel, our Hope, Horn of salvation, I AM, Image of God, Israel, Jehovah, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, Jesus, the Son of Joseph, Judge, Just man, Just person, Just One, King of Israel, King of Saints, King of Kings, King of Glory, King of Zion, King over all the earth, Lamb, Lamb of God, Last Adam, Lawgiver, Leader, Life, Light, Light everlasting, Light of the world, Light to the Gentiles, Living Bread, Living Stone, Lion of the tribe of Judah, Lord of Lords, Lord our righteousness, Lord God Almighty, Lord from heaven, Lord Jesus Christ our Savior, Lord of glory, Lord of Hosts (armies), Lord, mighty in battle, Lord of the dead and living, Lord of the Sabbath, Lord over all, Lord strong and

mighty, Lord your redeemer, Man Christ Jesus, Man of sorrows, Master, the only Mediator, Messenger of the covenant, Messiah the Prince, Mighty God, Mighty one of Israel, Mighty one of Jacob, Mighty to save, Minister of the sanctuary, Most holy, Most mighty, Offspring of David, Only begotten (one and only, unique), Only wise God, our Savior, Overseer, our Passover, Potentate, Power of God, Physician, Precious Cornerstone, Priest, Prince, Prince of Life, Prince of Peace, Prince of the kings of the earth, Prophet, Propitiation (expiation, our Sin-offering), Rabbi, Ransom, Redeemer, Resurrection and the Life, the Redemption, Righteous Branch, Righteous Judge, Righteous Servant, Righteousness, Rock, Rock of Offense, Root of David, Root of Jesse, Rose of Sharon, Ruler in Israel, Salvation, Sanctification, Sanctuary, Savior of the body (*ekklesia*), Savior of the world, Scepter, Second Man, Seed of David, Seed of the woman, Servant, Servant of rulers, Shepherd, Shepherd and Overseer of souls, Shepherd of Israel, Shiloh, Son of the Father, Son of God, Son of Man, Son of the Blessed One (God), Son of the Highest One, Son of David, Star, Sun of Righteousness, Surety (Guarantee), Stone, Stone of Stumbling, Sure Foundation, Teacher, The Way, True God, True Vine, Truth, Unspeakable Gift, Which is, which was, which is to come (equivalent to YHWH), the Eternal One, I AM THAT I AM, Wisdom, Wisdom of God, the Witness, Wonderful, Word, Word of God, Word of Life

#### IV. Growing in wisdom is rooted in obedience to God's Word

##### A. Disobedience to the Word produces delusion, not wisdom

**James 1:22-25**, Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. <sup>23</sup>Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror <sup>24</sup>and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. <sup>25</sup>But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

##### B. Consistent obedience to the Word produces wisdom

**Hebrews 5:12-14**, In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! <sup>13</sup>Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. <sup>14</sup>But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

#### V. Growing in wisdom is something for which we pray

##### A. God, the source of wisdom, has linked our receiving wisdom to specific prayer

**Psalms 25:4-5**, Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

**Psalms 86:11**, Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

**Colossians 1:9-10**, For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.

##### B. God grants us wisdom when we pray in the midst of trials

**James 1:2-8**, Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. <sup>4</sup>Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. <sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup>But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup>he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

#### VI. Each day, evaluate the following:

Can you say that your daily focus for living is Christ? [**Philippians 1:21**, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain.] If living for Christ is the primary focus of your life throughout each day, then how hard is it, really, to acquire divine wisdom and to know God's will?

Can you say that all your thoughts, words, and actions are aimed at reflecting the Person of Jesus Christ and are in accordance with the Word of God? If your thoughts, words, and actions are biblically oriented and Christ-centered, then how hard is it, really, to acquire divine wisdom and to know God's will?