

Lesson One — A Heart of Wisdom

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A Bible study should be just that — a study of the Bible! It should be so true to the Word of God that it transforms a person from the inside out. It should encourage and exhort a person to walk truer to God's Word than they have in the past, based upon their growing understanding. And it should give a person a greater passion for more knowledge and understanding of God's Word, which would naturally lead to a heart of wisdom.

After Jesus had taught seven parables in Matthew chapter thirteen, He asked His disciples if they had understood the things He had just taught. When they answered positively, He then said, "Every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old" (v. 52).

After understanding certain things in the Scriptures, it would only follow that a student of the Bible would go on to understand more and more things in the Word. And a Bible teacher should strive to teach his students more and more, reviewing things already understood and revealing more — teaching both "new and old" — out of the teacher's own "treasure" of growing knowledge and understanding. We must all strive to understand more as God leads us. Are you ready to strive together with me toward a better understanding of God's Word and His purpose for us?

Let's get started.

Day One — God's Word

As one seeks to gain a heart of wisdom, it is evident that the only way to do so is to study the Word of God. And in approaching a study of the Word of God, there are several things that are essential to understand. The most basic is the difference between the Word of God and the word of man. Actually the two are not to be compared, for there is no comparison! God's Word is the only thing to be considered at any moment in

this respect, for David says that God Himself esteems His own Word even *above His own Name*. Read it below. (Italicized print is added for emphasis.)

Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: *for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.* (KJV)

In your own words, how does God esteem His Word?

Read a couple of other Old Testament passages concerning the Word of God —

Psalm 12

6 The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.

What does this passage reveal about the importance of a literal translation, rather than a ‘thought for thought’ translation?

(That’s why I prefer the NASB! ☺)

Psalm 19 reveals what the Word of God can do in a person’s heart and life —

Psalm 19

- 7** The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.
- 10** They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
11 Moreover, by them Thy servant is warned;
In keeping them there is great reward.

Go back and underline the different names given to the Word of God.

Make a list of what the Word of God does in a person’s life (vv. 7-9):

After making these statements about the Word of God in Psalm 19, King David makes a summary statement of how sweet the Word of God is (vv. 10, 11). Reword his summary statement in your own words.

The most important things to understand when you study God's Word are *structure* and *the context of any passage within that structure*. The *structure* of God's Word is given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God has laid out His Word in a very specific way and for very specific reasons. God begins His revelation to man at a certain point and continues that revelation from that point. And if we do not study portions of Scripture according to the *structure of His Word*, we run the serious risk of missing important points altogether.

Also, understanding *the context* is vitally important to interpreting any verse correctly, but *not just* the context of a particular verse. While each verse has a context — the passage; that passage also has a context — the chapter; and that chapter has a context — the particular book in which it is found; and that book has a context — the Bible! Everything must be kept in context!

So to understand God's Revelation to man, we must see it according to the way in which He gave it — according to His structure. And we must understand any passage within its context, seeing that context within the structure. Thus, it becomes vitally important to understand the overall scope of Scripture as it is structured, so that *any part* — verse, passage, chapter, or book of the Bible — fits within the context of the overall scope and structure of the Bible. This is very important! And this is why a survey study is the foundation to all other studies in the Kingdom Series. (This concept will become clearer as we work our way through this study.)

So what is the Bible all about? Where does it begin? Where does it end? And what is in the middle?

Scripture has those specific things — a specific beginning, a specific ending, with particular points between the two. And God has laid it all out in a particular fashion. So for one to understand God's Word, one has to study it the way God gave it. For example, God begins in Genesis in a specified way for a particular reason. And He ends in Revelation with a specified end. And that which is given between those two points is given for particular reasons with intended meanings. Isaiah says that God gives understanding and insight by giving *a little from here* and *a little from there* (Isa. 28:9-13a). In other words, Moses speaks of the same things as John, who speaks of the same things as Jeremiah, who speaks of the same things as Matthew, who speaks of the same things as Jesus. On and on you could go, all giving information that leads to building the same overall picture.

We will strive to study the Bible in this way — a little from here and little from there — beginning at the beginning, and working our way through to the end, surveying the whole Bible, back and forth, until the picture is clearly drawn, all the while striving to keep passages in context, and seeing it within the God-given structure of the whole.

We'll end here today. I am so excited for you to begin this journey. I pray that it changes your life!

Is there anything you would like to say to God? If so, write it out here.

Day Two— A Seeking Heart

Christians are to seek the Lord with their whole heart. Anything short of that would cause one to come up short in his/her understanding. It is a good idea to often ask the Lord to give you a greater desire to know Him, and to ask Him for a heart of wisdom.

Here are a few of the many places in the Old Testament where the Lord tells His people to seek Him. An important thing to notice is that He is talking to redeemed people, not to the unredeemed.

Deuteronomy 4:29 But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.

1 Chronicles 16:10 Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad.

1 Chronicles 16:11 Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face continually.

1 Chronicles 28:9 As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

Psalms 119:2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, Who seek Him with all their heart.

Isaiah 55:6 Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

Jeremiah 29:13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Does anything strike you about these verses? If so, what?

Now look at a few of the New Testament passages —

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Matthew 6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

Luke 11:9 And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

NOTES:

What do you think it means to seek the Lord? What would it look like? How does one do it?

Hopefully, you mentioned that reading, studying, and hearing God's Word is essential to seeking God. A person cannot seek God apart from His Word. *It would be impossible!*

If you were to seek the Lord with your whole heart, what changes would you have to make in your life to do it?

Are you willing to make those changes?

The longest chapter in all of Scripture esteems God's Word throughout. Psalm 119 has one hundred and seventy-six verses divided into twenty-two sections, each giving different facets of what God's Word does in a person's life. This Psalm is printed in your Appendix (pg. 289). As time allows, read through the entire Psalm (or if time does not allow, choose a section or two), and write your impressions of what God's Word can do in a person's life according to Psalm 119.

See you tomorrow.

Day Three — Moses' Heart

Today we will be looking at a man who earnestly sought after God. The man is Moses. We want to glimpse the heart of Moses. The author of the Book of Hebrews writes of Moses' parents, then of Moses —

Hebrews 11

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. 24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

From this passage, what can you see about Moses' parents' hearts?

And what can you see of Moses' heart (v. 25)?

What did Moses 'consider' in v. 26?

According to the passage, why did he do this?

Most likely you know the story of Moses — the reed basket, his sister Miriam, the Pharaoh's daughter, the murdered Egyptian, the flight into the wilderness, his Gentile bride, the burning bush, the return to his brethren. This is not to mention the ten plagues, the Passover, the parting of the Red Sea, the sunken chariots and washed-up bodies of Pharaoh's army. Those words and phrases should be enough to evoke very vivid pictures in your mind. But we want to see more than just the images of these pictures. What kind of heart did Moses have?

Subsequent to all the events depicted in the words of the previous paragraph and at the age of 80, Moses made an interesting request of God. Imagine what Moses already knew of God, and what he is about to ask of Him. Read about it below —

Exodus 33

7 Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And it came about, that everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp. 8 And it came about, whenever Moses went out to the tent...

According to v. 7, what would be the purpose for one to go outside the camp to the tent?

...whenever Moses went out to the tent that all the people would arise and stand, each at the entrance of his tent, and gaze after Moses until he entered the tent. 9 And it came about, whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the LORD would speak with Moses. 10 When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent. 11 Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

(Notice Joshua's heart, too. We'll come to Joshua later.) Now for Moses' request:

12 Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, Thou dost say to me, 'Bring up this people!' But Thou Thyself hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Moreover, Thou hast said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.' 13 Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight, let me know Thy ways, that I may know Thee, so that I may find favor in Thy sight. Consider too, that this nation is Thy people."

Moses reminds God of what He had said previously said to him. Of what does he remind God specifically at the end of v. 12?

Then what does he ask of God in v. 13?

Compare what God says of Moses at the end of v. 12, and what Moses requests of God in v. 13. What do you think of this comparison?

And all of this from a man who had already seen the things mentioned in the paragraph at the middle of the previous page!

Continuing in Exodus 33 with God's response —

14 And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest."

15 Then he [Moses] said to Him, "If Thy presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. 16 For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Thy sight, I and Thy people? Is it not by Thy going with us, so that we, I and Thy people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?"

17 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight, and I have known you by name."

18 Then Moses said, "I pray Thee, show me Thy glory!"

19 And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" 21 Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; 22 and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

Can you imagine this moment for Moses? He had seen God's power in the events previously mentioned, and now again he was personally dealing with God, desiring to know God more intimately, saying, "Show me Your glory!" After certain preparations were made (preparations which were spelled out by God for Moses to do), God placed Moses in the crevice of a rock and God passed by him. The Lord spoke these words as He passed by —

Exodus 34

5 And the LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD. 6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed,

"The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished,

visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”

8 And Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship.

Write out what God said to Moses —

What was Moses' response to God after revealing His glory to him?

What kind of commitment did Moses display in his desire to know the Lord?

We'll close here for the day. Perhaps you would want to end your study time today telling the Lord that you, too, desire to know Him more. Continue to ask Him to reveal Himself to you. This should be your prayer throughout this study (throughout your whole life, really).

Day Four — Seeking God with all your Heart

Pray for your study time today. Call upon the Lord. Ask Him to show you great and mighty things. Make this the diligent request of your heart.

Did you notice in yesterday's homework how available God was to Moses? I hope that was an encouragement *to you!*

Yes, God had a special and specific purpose for Moses. But are you aware that He also has a special and specific purpose *for you?* God is not a respecter of persons. That is to say that He loves all of His children, and has very special things pre-determined for each one of us to do. Read what Paul told the Church at Ephesus —

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Rewrite this passage in your own words, making it personal.

God waits patiently for us to come to Him with a sincere heart. He wants us to *diligently seek* Him. To call upon Him before He reveals more and more to us. Remember what the writer of Hebrews said?

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

According to this verse, what two things must a believer believe *in order to please God*? And what do these things mean?

Do you understand and believe *both* things?

Let me ask you something. Are you ready to *seek the Lord with your whole heart*? You may not even know what this means exactly, or you may not be sure that you are ready, but do you have a deep desire deep to know more of Jesus? A desire to know Him more intimately? If you do, He will begin the wonderfully sweet process of revealing more and more of Himself to you as you seek after Him. If you are not sure that you are ready for this, then ask Him to fill you with the desire to know Him better. Just open your heart to Him and ask Him to fill it with passion.

Let's study a few verses about seeking the Lord. If you are working at Level III, look up the definition of the words which has its Strong's number indicated by the brackets < > in the Appendix. Then write out what you learn from each verse in the space for NOTES. If there are no words to look up in the Appendix, simply re-phrase what the verse says and/or write out what it means to you.

Jeremiah 33: 3 'Call <07121> to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great <01419> and mighty <01219> things, which you do not know.'

NOTES:

call <07121>

great <01419>

mighty <01219>

2 Chronicles 16:9a For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.

NOTES:

Deuteronomy 4: 29 But from there you will seek <01245> the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search <01875> for Him with all your heart and all your soul.

NOTES:

seek <01245>

search <01875>

Isaiah 55:6 Seek <01245> the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

NOTES: (Same word as found in Duet. 4:29.)

Psalms 25:14 The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant.

NOTES:

After this very limited glance at some of the ‘seeking’ verses in the Old Testament, let’s look at a few in the New Testament.

In this passage from Luke chapter eleven, Jesus answers His disciples’ questions as to how they should pray. He repeats His answer, obviously wanting His disciples to get the message. Then Jesus continues to explain that just as earthly fathers desire to give good things to their children — things essential for our physical well-being, so does our Heavenly Father desire to give us good things — things essential for our spiritual well-being, if we but *ask*, *seek*, and *knock*. Study the next passage and write what you learn.

Luke 11

9 “And I say to you, ask <154>, and it shall be given <1325> to you; seek <2212>, and you shall find <2147>; knock, and it shall be opened to you. **10** “For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. **11** “Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? **12** Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? **13** “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

NOTES:

ask <154>

given <1325>

seek <2212>

find <2147>

Jesus told His disciples to ask, seek, and knock. What would He want them to ask for? To seek for? To knock for? He continues His discourse, telling them exactly what they are to seek for! A few verses down, He spells it out —

Luke 12:31 But seek <2212> for His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you.

NOTES:

seek <2212>

In the Gospel of Matthew, it explicitly says that not only are we to seek His kingdom and His righteousness, but Matthew shows what priority it should take in our lives! “But seek *first* His kingdom...” (6:33).

It must be understood that these verses are verses that are written to people who have already been redeemed! In other words, the verses found in *both* the Old Testament and the New Testament are written to God’s redeemed people. These words concerning seeking God are addressed to people who are already saved. This indicates that there is more to our walk with God, than simply our salvation — we have been saved for a purpose. It is essential to understand what that purpose is!

How is God calling you to seek Him? What will it take? Will you give Him the time necessary?

We’ll call it a day for now.

Day Five — A Heart of Wisdom

Today we want to look at more information about the wisdom that God desires to give *to any Christian who will diligently seek Him*.

Since we have only this one passage to study today, observe it *thoroughly* by reading it several times. Find the repeated key words, make lists of any repeated words or phrases that you notice. Then ask WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW, making good notes in the margins. (It may be helpful to look over the sheet in your Appendix that explains HOW TO DO THOROUGH OBSERVATION [pg. 297].)

The passage is double spaced for study purposes. After you have done your own thorough observation of the passage, then answer the following questions.

1 Corinthians 2:6-3:4

6 Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; 7 but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; 8 the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 9 but just as it is written,

“THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”

10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able,

3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? 4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not mere men?

NOTES:

For whom is this message of wisdom (v. 6a)?

What *time reference* does this passage refer to (vv. 6-8)? What detail does it give about those times? You may need to think this through carefully.

What do you learn about this “hidden wisdom” (v. 7ff)? List all the facts.

From the information in this passage, can any Christian have an understanding of this hidden wisdom? If so, how?

This wisdom is not that which deals with the initial knowledge of Christ as Savior, nor with the elementary things concerning His saving us from our sins (*cf.* Heb.6:1-3). This knowledge deals with the “deeper things” of God (v. 10). (See also I Cor. 1:13, 20, 28; 3:19; 14:2; II Cor. 1:12; Eph. 4:13; 6:24; Php. 3:15; Heb. 5:14; Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:5, 9; Col. 1:26; II Tim. 1:9.)

Many people have said that “there are no deeper things of God.” But a statement like that doesn’t square with our passage today, nor with the passages listed in the parenthesis above. Some have even suggested that this whole idea of digging deeper into God’s Word is “gnosticism.” It is not! Digging into God’s Word (mining truths as for gold) is all about seeking Biblical wisdom concerning the things that God desires us to understand. This is where *seeking* comes to the forefront.

Please let me say this clearly. This message is **not** only for a select few! The message concerning God's plans and purposes for the ages is *for all the redeemed of God* — each and every one of us! God gives every believer the opportunity to know and understand His plans and purposes for the ages. But these things are like GOLD! They must be mined through hard work — *diligent study!* The understanding of these things is not instantly infused in a person the moment he or she puts their faith in Christ. If that were the case, then why the Bible? Why this *big Book*? But God desires us *to diligently seek Him*. And you know what? He *deserves* that!

Today's passage in I Corinthians deals with *mature knowledge*. This type of knowledge would never be for people who do not know Jesus Christ. The reason is simple — a person without the Spirit of God living inside of him does not have the *ability* to understand the things of the Spirit, nor would he have burning desire within his soul to do the kind of seeking this wisdom requires. This is something that is attained as a person grows up in their salvation, growing from the milk of the Word to the meat of the Word (I Pe. 2:2; [cf. I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12,13]). This is hard work, but the blessings that come as a result will be worth far and above the effort put forth. You wait — you'll see!

And that we shall do! Seeking is essential!

We'll talk more about this wisdom in class. Continue to pray for yourself and for others who are in the study. I am sure you are being bombarded!

Why don't you close your study time in prayer today. Use this passage in Psalm 90 as a springboard for a bit of meditation and prayer —

Psalms 90

12 So teach us to number our days, That we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom.

See you in class.