

## INTRODUCTION

In our search for wisdom, we are journeying through the book of Proverbs. Wisdom affects human experience at every level, so we are studying it, layer by layer. ***Last week, it was in terms of the mind.***

We see the signs of wisdom in how we think, but as it was said last week, ***wisdom does not start in the mind of a person.*** Its root is somewhere deeper. Proverbs would say it starts where we are looking today. It starts in the heart. ...But...

### ***Biblically, what is the “heart?”***

When we use the word “heart” in a figurative way, we are talking about what’s *inside* a person; what’s at the core. But how does Scripture use the word “heart?” ...Let’s take a look. ***Scripture says the heart is...***

- ***A deep look into the mirror***

Prov 27

**19. As in water face reveals face, so a man's heart reveals the man.**

***Water is water***, it reflects every face equally. The difference comes in the quality of the face reflected.

In the same way, ***life is life***. If you pour evil and dark things into life, you get evil and dark things out of it. If you pour good things, as a whole, good things are born out of it.

To know the real nature of our heart, ***we just need to “check the water.”*** What’s reflected in the situations, actions and results of our life?

That’s why Proverbs gives us this advice:

Prov 4

**23. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.**

- ***The very essence of what you are to the core***

Prov 23

**7. for as he thinks in his heart, so is he. ...**

A heart is more than a reflection of what we are, it ***IS what we are***. It is the essence of the person. It is the ***seat of our will***. It is the ***motivation*** of our intellect. It is what drives the direction of our actions. It is our ***nature***.

- ***Every heart is divinely tested***

Prov 17

**3. The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the hearts.**

In general, that is what the heart is; the essence of what we are; our core; reflected in the physical life around us; observed by a God who is Spirit.

But that just sets us up for the question: ***What is a wise heart and what is an unwise heart?*** There are a number of ***qualities we know***, but it wouldn't hurt to be reminded of them. And there are some rather ***unexpected qualities*** that are revealed in this Word of God. ...So let's make the best use of our time by looking at...

## **DISCUSSION**

**IN YOUR OWN WORDS, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF "THE HEART"?**

### **THREE UNEXPECTED QUALITIES OF THE WISE HEART**

#### **1. THE WISE HEART IS HUNGRY**

Prov 2

- 2. so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding;**
- 3. yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding,**

Some people are ***naturally curious***. Others are naturally outgoing. Ever meet someone like that? Everyone they meet is their friend. ***What makes a person like that?*** It doesn't start with the intellect; it starts somewhere deeper; in their nature.

The same is true of the wise heart; ***there is an innate hunger inside to know***. –To know the truth; to know the best approach to the issues of life. A wise heart starts with this kind of hunger. The thing to keep in mind though, is...

***~The wise heart is hungry, but with a healthy appetite***

Prov 15

- 14. The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge [*"hadar" lit.; to glorify, honor*], but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.**

Perhaps you've met this type of person. ***They ask the right questions, but for some reason go to the worst sources*** for the answers. Christians can be especially prone to this. ***Just a quick hint: If you want to find the best Christian sources; see what a good Bible college is reading in their courses and look into those authors.***

## **DISCUSSION**

**BESIDES THE BIBLE, WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER GOOD SOURCES TO FEED YOUR "HEART"?**

## 2. THE WISE HEART IS WOUNDED

Prov 20

30. Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, as do stripes the inner depths of the heart.

We would tend to think the opposite. If a heart is wise, we'd expect it to avoid the wounds of mistakes. So **why is the wise heart wounded?** Every person makes mistakes. Everyone ends up with wounds. It is a question of what we do with those wounds; or **more precisely, what we allow those wounds to do to us**. For example, those wounds can be...

*~Our road out of childishness*

Prov 22

15. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

This has to do with appropriate discipline for our children. It's hard to see our child wounded, even for correction, but to **avoid correction brings a serious consequence**: they never grow out of their childishness.

And it **doesn't stop with children**, as a matter of fact, as we move into adulthood, the lessons get harder and sometimes, so do the blows. It has to do with our broken human nature, but the sad fact is; **we need the wounds to grow up and to grow wiser**. However, there is good news for the wise heart...

*~The wise heart is "curable"*

Prov 14

30. A sound [marpe': medicine; curable] heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.

**Wisdom is self-healing**. When inside, we forgive, we are healing ourselves. When we learn satisfaction with what God has given us, it is a medicine.

But envy, dissatisfaction, bitterness; those things **decay a person to the core**. They are the product of an unwise heart. We all receive wounds; our nature determines how they will heal.

## DISCUSSION

DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE IDEA THAT THE WISE HEART IS WOUNDED? WHY OR WHY NOT

CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE WISE HEART IS "CURABLE"?

## 3. THE WISE HEART IS NOT SELF-CONFIDENT

That is to say: ***It is unwise to trust one's own heart as the prime reference***

**Prov 28**

**26. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.**

Even among Christians, we often hear the advice: “*Follow your own heart. Just believe in yourself.*” Yet ***Scripture seems to be saying the exact opposite, why?*** -Because, since the time of Adam...

***~The human condition of the heart is flawed***

**Jeremiah 17**

**9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?"**

Israel was following its heart at the time of Jeremiah and what happened? It brought the judgment and wrath of a loving and just God down on them!

***We have to use our minds.*** And it is ***unwise to go against our personal convictions.*** But ***if our flawed nature is our prime reference***, it is like following a compass that only works half the time. It will take us somewhere we really don't want to go.

And even if we want to improve that condition...

***~The human heart is not "self-cleaning."***

**Prov 20**

**9. Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"?**

If we only have dirty water to work with; how can we truly clean? We need an outside source!

***~But that is not to say the wise heart has no confidence at all, quite the contrary.***

**Prov 28**

**25. He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the Lord will be prospered.**

We looked at the original word for “trust” last week. One of the ***meanings is "confident."*** If ***our foundation is something, or someone who is absolutely perfect***, that is a good reason for confidence.

***When we do make mistakes, when some parts of our lives collapse*** or in times we're not quite sure which way to go; it is a ***real source of confidence to know the foundation will always hold.*** Our life isn't like a house of cards, and that is ***not something we can say if the fickle and imperfect human heart is in control.***

## **DISCUSSION**

**SHOULD A PERSON FOLLOW THEIR OWN HEART? WHY OR WHY NOT**

## CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHY THE BIBLE DOES NOT TEACH WE SHOULD FOLLOW OUR OWN HEART?

### SOME OTHER QUALITIES AND THEIR COMPARISONS

***The wise heart is hungry, wounded, and not self-confident.*** Those aren't qualities we'd expect to hear. In fact, they sound more like liabilities; that is until we ***realize God's reasoning behind them.*** –Then to the wise, they make all kinds of sense!

***Now let me quickly summarize qualities we most likely know, but could use some reminding:***

The wise heart ***sees straight while the foolish heart is perverse*** or in literal terms, twisted. The result will be the wise heart experiences the delight of God and the respect of people. But the twisted heart ends up despised by everyone. (*Prov. 11:20; Prov. 12:8*)

The wise heart ***finds satisfaction in what God's blessings and direction***, but the foolish heart is never satisfied and always filled with its own ways; desires and plans.

The wise heart ***is humble***, that is to say, it has a really clear view of what it really is and is not. The foolish heart is proud, and that pride ultimately leads to a fall. (*Prov. 18:12*)

The wise heart ***knows peace***, but the foolish heart fills itself with violence. (*Prov. 24:2, 17; Prov 28:14*)

A foolish heart may ***seem by times, to be going along pretty well***, but ultimately, it comes to a thoroughly bad end. On the other hand, the ***wise heart may weather wounds and challenges, but*** the ultimate outcome is good.

It is what was said in the beginning:

**Prov 4**

**23. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.**

### CONCLUSION

Scripture ***describes wisdom*** at the heart level. It shows ***how much is to be gained*** with a wise nature and how much is lost without it. But it also points out we cannot create it on our own. ***So the question remains, how do we get it?***

This is the end of the message, and I ask you to listen extra closely to the ending and answer; because it isn't in my words, but is completely in God's Words:

**John 3**

6. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7. "Do not marvel that I said to you, `You must be born again.'

**John 6**

63. "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

**Acts 1**

8. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses...

**Acts 5**

32. "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

## **DISCUSSION**

**PUTTING SCRIPTURAL TEACHING INTO YOUR OWN WORDS, HOW DOES A PERSON ACQUIRE A WISE HEART (NATURE, CORE, ESSENCE)?**