

In this week's sermon we discussed what our future looks like, and rather than being occupied with playing harps on clouds, we saw that the bible indicates that creation will be remade, and that we will have a part in remaking it. The bible states that all of creation groans waiting for the sons of God to be revealed, and it is hard to think of why that would be the case if we don't play a part in the glorification of creation. Our future jobs, therefore, require wisdom and discernment. Let's get started this week in building the skills required for our future vocation.

Day 1

Seek the Kingdom

Wisdom is an interesting concept in that it touches on many things we have a solid grasp on, yet the understanding of just what wisdom is remains elusive. I believe that wisdom is the ability to achieve kingdom outcomes. What I mean by that, is that wisdom is more than just facts and knowledge, although those are important to wisdom. Wisdom does entail having the heart of God, but that alone doesn't complete our understanding of wisdom. Wisdom has a moral component to it, but it is more than morality. In the Old Testament, the ability to discern good and evil was a kingly task, and was the basis for wisdom. When you put it all together, wisdom is the ability to take your knowledge and facts, have the heart of God in desiring to build the kingdom of goodness, and apply the right methods to achieve progress in building that kingdom in the area God has given you dominion over. In order to accomplish this, it is imperative that we are seeking the kingdom of God. We must be contemplating, pursuing, and building the kingdom as we live out each day to the glory of God. Do you wake up each day considering how that day might be used to grow God's kingdom? Do you have a desire to see God's kingdom grow? Do you understand what area God has given you authority over, and what part you play in growing the Kingdom? All of these things are important to meditate on today as you seek God's kingdom.

Verses: Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 4:20, Romans 14:17-18

Prayer Topics: Heart, Intent, Discernment

Day 2

Be Humble

In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve decided to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and so decided to pursue wisdom. This seems like a good thing on its surface, but in fact was a grave sin. Rather than pursue wisdom by being obedient to God, they decided to pursue it on their own. When obedience to God is taken out of the equation, what is left is to try to define good and evil on your own, without reference to Him. This is the supreme act of pride, and always ends in a great fall. To

get back on the track of true wisdom, it is necessary to be like Christ. Rather than holding on to His equality with the Father as a member of the trinity, He humbled himself to be a servant, and did only what the Father desired. He served both the Father and humanity, and humbly accepted the cross when it was clear it would achieve the loving desires of the Father for the salvation of humanity. He put himself aside, and instead made the loving sacrifice to save us and institute the kingdom of His father. Humility is vital to the gaining of wisdom, as we see in Solomon's desire for wisdom. Rather than asking for wealth or some other commonly sought reward, he speaks of the greatness of leading God's people and his own smallness for the task, and humbly asks for wisdom. Humility allows us to be teachable, which is the only way of gaining wisdom. Are you humble? Are you teachable? Do you embrace correction and rebuke? Can you readily admit you are wrong? Are you glad when someone shows you up and teaches you something you do not know? Embrace humility, for it really is the pathway to wisdom.

Verses: 1 Peter 5:5-6, Romans 12:16, Philippians 2:3

Prayer Topics: Relatability, Gentleness, Submission

Day 3

Gain Experience

I once read a book titled, "Shop Class as Soul Craft", and although it is a strange title, I found the book completely fascinating. The author of the book was a PHD educated "think tank" worker who dropped out of the intellectual world to open a motorcycle repair shop. This was not just an exercise in downward mobility, but an act of frustration over the limits of purely intellectual work. Throughout the book, the author shares the valuable lessons learned in doing manual labor, lessons that cannot be learned without the real-world experience that is absent in purely intellectual pursuits. The main point is that the real world doesn't really care about your theories. You can build up a completely satisfying mental model of the world, but reality has complexities that will make a mockery of your intellectual exercise. When faced with this conflict between the actual and the theoretical, most people retreat into their theories rather than humbly learning from the failure that the real world offers. The author of the book did the opposite, and advanced into the world of the real, and threw his pretty but completely wrong theories out the window. There is no substitute for experience, and if we are to be ready for our eternal vocation of kingdom building, we must start to get experience now. It is not enough to go on the internet or watch tv and think you know how the world works. Build something that glorifies God, and, if you are humble, he will teach you how to be useful in the kingdom. What will you start to build today?

Verses: Philippians 4:9, James 1:22-23, 1 Timothy 4:12-16

Prayer Topics: Learning the right lessons, Insight, Practice

Day 4

Be Transformed

One of the most amazing things to me is the fact that although I share nothing of substance with my past self, I am still me. What a completely baffling and amazing thing that is, and what a hope for the future. In order to fulfill my eternal calling, I will need to be completely transformed. I need a body that does not age, get sick, and die. I need a wisdom that is far beyond what I possess now. I need a complete transformation, and that is what God is working in me even now. To be ready for eternity, I must embrace the transformation that God is working in me, and participate rather than impede it in its progress. Am I making progress each day in the transformation God desires for me? How will this happen today? What methods does God employ to remake me as a person? How does my effort at building the kingdom play into God's transformation of who I am? What leads to more transformation, success in building the kingdom or failure? What role does my attitude play in my transformation? How does God use the Holy Spirit to transform me? All of these questions are excellent things to ponder today as we seek to be transformed into the priests and kings God wants us to be.

Verses: 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 3:2-3, Colossians 3:10

Prayer Topics: Renew, Growth, Perspective

Day 5

Walk with the Wise

How do I grow wise so that I will be useful in building the kingdom for all eternity? I should walk with the wise. Scripture tells us that the person who walks with the wise grows wise, but that the companion of fools comes to ruin. I must seek out in my life people that are good at growing the kingdom. I must be humble enough to see my limitations, and discerning enough to know when others are better at things than I am. I must possess the desire to increase my wisdom because I desire to grow the kingdom, and I must be diligent enough to pursue relationships rather than just take what comes along. I must try to bring something to the table so that the wise person wants to spend time with me. I must be willing to learn, grow, and change, so that the wise person sees the kingdom growing in me and is encouraged to continue to invest in me. I must put myself in places where I will run into wise people, and avoid the fools that populate a not insignificant percentage of the planet and offer fun at no cost. How can you begin to invest today in finding and walking with the wise?

Verses: Luke 6:40, Hebrews 13:17, Ephesians 5:21

Prayer Topics: Company, Exchange, Respect