

**Pastor Tom Mortenson**

**Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York**

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**Practice, Process and Person**

**Wisdom - Part 3**

**Prayer:** *Father, we just again, we are again grateful and thankful that we can gather once again each week, that we have that freedom still. We just continue to thank you for the grace that you give us to come together. We pray also for the gift that you've given us in your word and for the ability that we have still to come together to open it and to seek for wisdom within it and especially, Lord, since we are looking at wisdom we pray for the presence of your Holy Spirit. Guide us into your word and make it of permanent value, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well as you know, we have been looking at this idea of wisdom and this is part three. We saw in part one that wisdom is really what we need to function in this world because God has told us that he's sending us out as sheep among wolves and the only way that we can successfully manage that role is through his wisdom. And we saw in part two where wisdom begins, that is it is rooted in the fear of the Lord. That's a reverential awe and knowledge that realizing who God is and who we are in relation to him. And today we're

going to look at part three in this series on wisdom to see what wisdom does, and here we're going to find that wisdom is in essence action.

Wisdom is not what you think; wisdom is what you do. It's easy to think of wisdom as something cerebral, something undertaken by old men who are stroking their beard, but that's not what it is. In God's economy, wisdom is not thoughts; it is actually deeds. A thought doesn't become truly wise or foolish until it moves out of the thought stage into the action stage. Until theory becomes practice, something we say, something we do, you can have countless foolish thoughts without being a fool as long as they stay in your mind, as long as those thoughts remain unexpressed. I know I've had many of them myself. The same is not true with our words and our actions. You can only have a limited amount of those before folks conclude either that you are foolish or wise. Forrest Gump actually said it well: Stupid is as stupid does. That really sums up wisdom as well. It's all about practice.

Wisdom is as wisdom does. In *James 3* he says: *Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.* Let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. I mean you can have all the wisdom of Solomon himself and if it stays up here in your brain, in your thoughts

alone, it's really nothing. So wisdom isn't theory; it is practice.

Secondly, wisdom is process. It's not something that descends on us in one fell swoop, it's something that grows in us over time or not. Dr. Ed Clowney says it well, he says this: "Wisdom begins in the fear of the Lord and ends in the knowledge of God, but in between wisdom calls us to walk with the Lord in the streets, the office, and the living room. Wisdom, like holiness, grows by obeying the Lord in the little things."

Well the simple fact is because wisdom is a process. You will find that as you obey God, your wisdom begins to grow, and it grows by a progressive revelation by the word of God in and by the Holy Spirit. I mean I know that sounds theological but let me just put it in street language. I mean I've often said the more that you hang around with Jesus -- actually as he puts it, the more you abide in him, the more like him you become, the more fruitful you become. Jesus said in *John 15*: "*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*" That fruitfulness is literally a process of taking on his wisdom and casting off my foolishness. We see this literally played out. We see this in these transformed lives that we watch as we look in the

disciples, in particular two, Peter and John. There's a description of them in *Acts 4:13* that illustrates this. It says: *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.* First of all, note that it was their boldness, that's their actions, their practice that catches the attention of their observers. And their observers were the ruling elders of Israel, the Sanhedrin, not exactly fans of Jesus or of his disciples. But even they couldn't help but see a profound difference in Peter and John and they instantly knew where it came from: They had been with Jesus.

The process of growing in wisdom comes about simply by putting yourself in the presence of wisdom personified and that's the Lord Jesus Christ. And you have to look at it from both ends of the spectrum. The more you abide in Christ, the more you will gain wisdom and lose foolishness. The more I obey God, the more progressively he unveils to me just what a fool I am. And sometimes he's gentle, sometimes he's subtle, other times he's brutally frank. But the process of growing in wisdom is always a process of recognizing my own foolishness.

I came to the Lord in 1973, and by 1974 God had finally succeeded in convincing me that there were areas in my life in which I was a

complete fool. In 1974 I said, Lord, what a fool I was in 1973. Well, I didn't realize that the sanctification, sanctification itself is a process that starts the moment we get saved but it continues on and on until we breathe our last. It's God's Spirit at work changing us uniquely into the image of Christ, and that process remains one of removing varying degrees of foolishness from our lives. The foolishness of a brand new believer, it's open, it's obvious. For me it was sex, drugs and rock 'n roll. God took care of that relatively quickly. The sanctification process, though, in which wisdom actually begins to grow, that continued on unabated but it grows more and more subtle and it requires more and more wisdom as God is determined to tackle each and every area of my life that still points to foolishness more than wisdom. And so by 1975 I found myself saying, Lord, what a fool I was in 1974. After awhile I just began to catch on, I mean, by the early 80's I was thanking God that he's changed me from the fool I was in the 70's, by the late 80's I was thanking God for changing me from the fool I was in the early 80's, and so it went through the 90's and now into the 21st century. I mean I now see foolishness as something that God wants to progressively strip away each and every day for the rest of my life. And sanctification is simply a life-long process in which God gets fools to transform themselves into men and women with the mind of Christ.

You look at Psalm 73, you see a beautiful picture of painted of that process. *Psalm 73* is a Psalm of Asaph. This is a man, he says this, he says: *Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. You see, Asaph is bitter. He's bitter over the fact that it seems that bad things seem to happen to good people and good things seem to happen to bad people. And he continues for grow ever more despondent and bitter at the unfairness of it all. And I says in verse 16: But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. So he enters into the sanctuary of God and that is really to say that God gives him the ability to see things from God's perspective. So afterwards he says this in verse 21, he says: Thus my heart was grieved, and I was vexed in my mind. I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.*

Well true confession, I mean just like Asaph, I too have been there. I have done that. I mean how many times have I said to God I was so foolish and ignorant. I can also look at times when I was like a brute beast before God, angry and bitter, arriving at conclusions about God that time proved to be absolutely untrue. I

mean I've often wondered at God's patience knowing that oftentimes his will for us is to take us in places where we think that he is unfair or unwise or uncaring or unloving, only to eventually discover that all of those conclusions were foolish and ignorant. And the amazing thing is that doesn't mean that I won't go back to that very same well every time life throws me a curve ball, yet God continues to guide me with his counsel. This is something that the world just doesn't get; it doesn't understand how that works. *1 Corinthians 2:14* says: *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For "WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD THAT HE MAY INSTRUCT HIM?" But we have the mind of Christ.* We have the mind of Christ because God's Spirit is at work in our spirit, he's transforming us into the very image of Christ. And we soon begin to realize that God's wisdom is so massive and so profoundly huge that all of my human wisdom is simply foolishness to him. Hence the need for process, the need to grow wisdom. We tend to think of wisdom as an attribute or a quality, something that somebody is born with and that's simply not true with God's wisdom. And if wisdom is anything, it is a gift available to anyone who asks for it, but you gain it by process. As Isaiah says: *"For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line*

*upon line, here a little, there a little."* Again, notice how James frames this question in *James 3*. He says this, he says: *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.* He's telling us that gaining wisdom is a process that takes a lifetime because fools are quite capable of making an occasional wise choice and wise people are quite capable of making occasionally foolish choices. The reason why James refers to "deeds" plural and not to "a deed" singular is because a wise person is someone who has shifted the balance in his life so that more and more of his deeds represent the goodness and humility that comes from wisdom. Again -- quote -- *"let them show it by their good life by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom."* And again we're talking about wisdom as action. It always produces deeds and these are deeds done in humility, a humility that comes from knowing the wisdom you have you got as a gift. If wisdom ever makes you proud, rest assured it is not Godly wisdom.

We know wisdom starts with the fear of the Lord, that is who he is and who he is not and that it ends with the knowledge of God and that that is a life long process. So wisdom is practice, it's deeds, it's not thought; it's a process, it's a repeated revelation by God whereon layer and layer of man-centered foolishness is transformed by grace into the very image of Christ; and that leads



to the third and the most important part of how wisdom works, because thirdly, wisdom is a person. Practice meets process and process meets perfectly in the person of Jesus Christ because wisdom is Jesus Christ.

The reason why wisdom is not reducible to a simple technique or formula is because it's neither. It's a person. *1 Corinthians 1:29* says: *But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.* Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God. Like I said, wisdom is practice, it's deeds, not thoughts; it's a process, it's change over time; and finally it's a person. Jesus Christ is the mind of God fleshed out into a person. He is skillful living lived out to perfection. I mean that manger in Bethlehem was the first proof that God's wisdom is practice and not theory. It didn't just stay in the mind of God. It too produced an action when God's wisdom took on flesh. Wisdom as process is the revelation of who God is and Jesus is that process revealed in flesh. Again *Hebrews 1* says: *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.* What God is saying is that, you know, in the past God used every different means that he could to

communicate to us. He spoke to us through prophets, he spoke to us through miracles, he spoke to us through nature, he spoke through theophanies, theophanies where actually the Spirit of Christ physically manifested itself to individuals. God says I spoke to you that way in the past but now I've spoken to you in the most final way possible. Now I've given you my final word and that final word is Jesus, and that is to say God spoke Jesus to us. He's the most spectacular display there is of the wisdom of God.

And the whole redemptive story is about the unfolding of this wisdom from theory to practice when the word became flesh and then from practice to process as Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man until Jesus the person became the final expression of the wisdom of God. And you know it's a story that's been told so many times it runs the risk of losing its impact. We state the story over and over again. I want to state it a little bit differently this time.

You know, Genesis 3 tells us about this great victory that took place in the Garden of Eden. Unfortunately it was a great victory for the serpent. You see, in the beginning the serpent got both Adam and Eve to betray the entire human race, so I want you to think of this from Satan's side. I mean mankind was this brand new race of creatures created for one purpose and that was to bring

honor and glory to God. They were flawless. I mean untried but flawless. And they were the crown of God's creation. What a magnificent testimony they were to the wisdom of God. I mean these were no ordinary creatures; this Adam and Eve were spectacularly different from all the other animals because they alone possessed the imago Dei; they bore the very image of God. What a spectacular prize they would make. But if the serpent could just get these two bearers of God's image to rebel, to doubt God's wisdom and goodness, to trust in their own instincts instead of God's laws, then these very creatures who were created by God to bring him glory and honor would now bring him shame and disgrace. Furthermore since they were the very first of these new creatures they would curse virtually all of their offspring, thus dooming the entire race. Every one of these creatures would be a son or daughter of Adam and so each would be born with this fatal connection genetically and spiritually to a rebellion that took place in that garden. And so it would force a perfect God to curse a whole race that had now become imperfect. And God says as much in *Romans 5:12*. He says: *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.* God would be forced to curse the entire human race. Just imagine the smug sense of triumph that Satan must have felt. I mean in one bite of the forbidden fruit he single-handedly destroyed the greatest creature God had ever

created, or so he thought. What Satan had not bargained for was the wisdom of God. We look at *Genesis 3:14* where God says this, it says: *So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*

So right there in the garden God reveals a depth of wisdom that serpent could not have even imagined because God knew in advance every event that would unfold in that garden. And he knew that Satan had indeed won a very important battle but God in his wisdom knew that Satan had also lost the war. See, Satan could never imagine that God would find a way to satisfy his perfect justice and still preserve his people. And that the curse which had to fall would still fall not on the creatures who deserved it but on the very God that they rebelled against. I mean fast forward from the garden to the cross and you see evidences of the wisdom of God playing itself out in the form of the Lord Jesus Christ. There's so many, you can just pick them at random.

One for instance is he's wearing a crown of thorns placed on his head by a mocking band of soldiers who had no idea of the

significance of their actions or the wisdom that put it there. I mean I recently heard a rabbi speaking about that crown of thorns that was thrust onto Christ's head and he spoke about how brilliantly the Godhead had engineered this symbolic crown that identified Jesus as the king of a creation that had fallen cursed by Satan. If you remember, God had a specific role for thorns to play in laying out the curse of Adam and Eve's rebellion. This is what he said: *To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. So those thorns that the soldiers were handling, they became the symbolic crown that God used to show Christ willingly wearing the crown of our curse. The soldiers thought they had just found a new way to mock Christ. John 19 says: Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. Little did they realize they were forming a crown of the very symbols of the curse that God had placed on the earth. Little did they realize how perfectly that specific crown symbolized Jesus taking on the curse, wearing it, as our perfect representative.*

You know Pilate write the sign "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews," and he wrote it in three different languages because he was furious at having been boxed in by the religious leaders demanding Christ's crucifixion. He did it because he wanted to mock them. He wanted to say, hey, here's your king. Well, little did he realize that he was announcing to the whole world in three different languages just who this king, with his crown of thorns, just who this king really was. And when you think of all the exquisite detail that unfolded at the cross, you realize that no one but God in their wildest imagination possibly have pulled off a statement so lofty as that from people who thought nothing of Jesus. The cross is many different things but it is also, it is a display of the wisdom of God. The fact it was the wisdom of God that saw before the day Adam ever even moved, that God himself would be the just One and the justifier of his creatures and that he would receive the death penalty in our place.

Now I often ask people after I've presented the gospel to them and we discuss all of these different things, I ask them do you really think a human being could have made this up? It's way too wonderful, way too high, way too complex. I mean the whole story of redemptive history is one of this initial victory by Satan in the garden followed by an advance of God's kingdom and the retreat of Satan's. And it all culminates in the ultimate personal display

of wisdom which is the cross. Again *1 Corinthians 1:23: We preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.* See to those who get it, the cross is the literal display of the wisdom of God.

From the first prediction in Genesis 3 that the Christ -- that Christ will crush Satan's head while Satan is bruising his heel, we see this steady progression of the kingdom of God and a steady retreat of the kingdom of Satan. I mean we see it in the redemptive history of Israel through all of the patriarchs of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through the captivity in Egypt and the great exodus followed by all of those wars and kingdoms and judges and exiles and a return and it's all pointing towards one end and that end is to produce the ultimate son of David who would be the Christ, the Messiah.

And as Christ enters into flesh we see Satan beginning to grow desperate as he moves through Herod to slaughter all of the babies that are under the age of two and we see the angel making a countermove moving Jesus to Egypt. And once again we see the kingdom on offense and Satan's kingdom on defense until we get to the place where Jesus's public ministry is about to begin and where does it begin? What a strange place to begin. Mark's gospel tells

us right after Jesus was baptized the Spirit of God drove him where? Into the desert. Why a desert? Well Matthew's gospel tells us why. *Matthew 12:43* says: *"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none."* So what we have here is Jesus taking the battle directly to where Satan lives, in the desert. And there there's a confrontation between Satan himself and the Christ. And just think about that confrontation. I speak all the time about these battles that take place between these two kingdoms, the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. This was the advanced meeting of the two champions of both kingdoms. Well Jesus prepares for it by going forty days without food. Satan starts off by trying to hone in on what he thinks is Jesus's apparent weakness. So we see Satan's desperate attempt to get Jesus to somehow break character by relying on his power to turn stones into bread to feed his hunger, by relying on his deity to protect him lest he dash his foot against his stone or his earthly ambition as he promises Jesus every earthly kingdom in space and time if Jesus would only bend the knee to him, Satan. Three times we see Jesus's absolute reliance not on his heart or his mind or his strength but on the wisdom of God's word. Three times Jesus declares: *"It is written," "it is written," "it is written."*

So as we trace the arc of Jesus's public ministry we see an



ever-growing desperation on the part of Satan as he realizes that he's up against a vastly wiser foe. We see Jesus actively refusing Satan's attempt to get the people to turn him into a king while he resolutely presses forward towards the cross. We see Peter telling Jesus that he will never go to the cross and we see Jesus responding not to Peter but to who? To Satan himself. He tells Peter: *"Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."* Jesus knew exactly what he was doing. Peter was clueless.

And when Jesus sees the end approaching and he knows his time is ripe for the cross, he says in *John 12:31*: *"Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out."* I mean it's all unfolding exactly according to plan laid out in the garden and it's all heading to this ultimate contest which is obviously the cross, and there all the wisdom of God is put on display for all the universe to see. And once again we see that wisdom, it's not theory, it's practice, and it's nothing less than a person. And once again the wisdom of God absolutely confounds the wisdom of this world. The cross becomes the ultimate victory of light over darkness, the complete satisfaction of justice and mercy but again, according to the world it was anything but.

John Stott in his book *The Cross of Christ* makes this observation. He says: "Of course any contemporary observer who saw Christ die would have listened with astonished incredulity to the claim that the crucified was a conqueror. Had He not been rejected by his own nation, betrayed, denied and deserted by his own disciples, and executed by authority from the Roman procurator? Look at him there, spread eagled and skewered on his cross, robbed of all freedom of movement, strung up with nails or ropes or both, pinned there and powerless. It appears to be total defeat. If there is victory, it is the victory of pride, prejudice, jealousy, hatred, cowardice and brutality. Yet the Christian claim is that the reality is the opposite of the appearance. What looks like (and indeed was) the defeat of goodness by evil is also, and more certainly, the defeat of evil by goodness. Overcome there, he was himself overcoming. Crushed by the ruthless power of Rome, he was himself crushing the serpent's head (Genesis 3.15) the victim was the Victor and the cross is still the throne from which He rules the world." And once again: *We preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

And what's unique about the wisdom of God is that it looks nothing like the wisdom that we're used to. Part of genuine wisdom is

identifying what is real and lasting and what is weak and foolish. By every human metric the cross looked like absolute foolishness. From the disciples' standpoint it was the end of everything, a complete and utter defeat. And you know why? Well it's because the disciples were still in process. And again if we take the definition of wisdom as being first practice instead of theory, we certainly know that the cross was, by definition, God's greatest practice. We also know that process is what takes us from foolish and ignorant to wise and understanding, and that the process itself takes time and the teaching power of the Holy Spirit and that's just what we find when we come to the wisdom of the cross but we know that's not how the world see sees it. Again: *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

So it turns out that the whole battle between the kingdoms is about foolishness. Each side defines it in very different ways. God says: *For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.* Why is God's foolishness wiser than men and his weakness stronger than men? Is it? Well it depends a hundred percent on your perception of the cross. Was it real and lasting or was it weak and foolish? You see the cross is the ultimate divider of mankind, and where you stand on the cross decides whose wisdom you're going to place your bets on. God says:

*For it is written: "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND BRING TO NOTHING THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRUDENT." You see, how you relate to the cross puts you on one side of the divide or on the other. The world sees the cross as weak and foolish; God sees the cross as powerful and wise. If you see the cross as weak and foolish you see Jesus either as this nonexistent figment of somebody's imagination or a minor historical figure of no significance. You see the cross as powerful and wise, you see Jesus as the wisest figure who's ever lived and the cross as a stunning exercise of wisdom. And no amount of argument, no amount of persuasion is going to change your perception because all of this is spiritually discerned. Again God puts it this way, he says: *Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. And those who are wise enough to correctly perceive the cross realize that this wisdom comes to them not out of something that they've earned but as a gift from God. Again God puts it this way, he says: For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God**

*chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."*

I mean if you get that last statement, you see it brings home exactly what wisdom is. First it's not theory but practice, and that practice is defined by the cross. It's an action that God took to leave heaven, take on flesh, live a perfect life and then take that perfect life to the ultimate contest which was the cross. And secondly it involved process, an ongoing work of revelation through the word as written through the word as incarnate flesh and through God's Holy Spirit. We see Jesus spending thirty-three years growing in the process, growing in wisdom and stature from an infant born in a manger to the ultimate sacrifice offered on our behalf. And finally we go from practice to process to person as God presents Jesus as the ultimate expression of skillful living perfectly executed. I mean you might say, okay, well that's interesting, but what does that have to do with me? Well, I take you to 1 Peter 2. God says this, he says: *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.* We already know Jesus

acknowledged our need for wisdom when he told us he was sending us out as sheep among wolves and that we were to be as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves. Here we have Jesus as our perfect example as the ultimate Lamb of God who went out and engaged the ultimate wolf in battle from day one, how he repeatedly advanced his kingdom until ultimately he defeated him at the cross. So Jesus knows all about being a sheep among wolves. And he is our example that we should follow in his steps.

And so his life shows us how we can obtain the wisdom we need to live lives that we've been called to. That wisdom is available to us just as it was available to Jesus by the power of God's word, God's Spirit and prayer. So to conclude, we see that wisdom is deeds; it's practice, not theory; that it is a process, a progressive revelation of the transforming power of God; and lastly that it is a person, the man Christ Jesus who displayed the ultimate expression of wisdom at the cross. And that really is the point of the whole exercise. Wisdom is a person. So the way to wisdom is not through technique, it's through relationship. Again let me repeat that. The way to wisdom is not through technique, it is through relationship. And now you may say, wait a minute, didn't last week you just say that the way to wisdom is three things: You need to lack it, you need to ask for it, you need to believe you've received it; isn't that a technique? Well, think

about it. If it's a technique, it's a technique based on relationship. Jesus is speaking about a person. Sensing his need for wisdom, praying for it, then having the faith to believe that he or she is going to receive it and all of that only can occur within the context of a relationship. You see the wisdom of Jesus Christ is so vast, so immeasurably beyond measure that no technique is ever going to be able to capture it. Well then how do I get wisdom? Well you get it by doing. By deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. You get it by viewing all of life in a context shaped by the fear of the Lord. You get it by allowing the word of God to progressively strip you of what is foolish and replace it with what is wise. That's what being transformed by the renewing of your mind is all about. You get it by drawing near to wisdom personified and that is the Lord Jesus Christ, by allowing his wisdom to become yours. And when you boil it all down, wisdom is nothing more than having the mind of Jesus inside. It's thinking like he thinks, it's seeing like he sees, it's hearing like he hears, it's feeling with the very heart of Jesus. Having a sanctified gut is another way to put it. It's having an instinctual sense of God's way just like Jesus had, because that is our goal. That is Christ's gift to us. The scripture captures it in *Colossians 2:2*. It says: *My goal 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. Let's pray.*

*Lord, I just want to thank you and praise you for who you are. I just thank you for the gift of wisdom, for the gift that is, it's practice, it's action, it's something that you do, not that we think; it's process, something that the Holy Spirit is working on us over time; and finally, it's a person. Lord, we just thank you for the absolute wisdom contained in the most skillful life ever lived, that is His life. Lord, thank you for His grace, thank you for His wisdom, and we praise you in Jesus' name. Amen.*