

**REVIEW:**

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss last week's sermon. What do we learn from the sermon last week about wisdom?

**INTRO TO THE TEXT:**

Chapter 28 of Job is a poem about wisdom. Up to this point we have read about Job's suffering and the inappropriate responses of his friends, those "miserable comforters". Here in chapter 28, in the context of Job's suffering, we have an interlude about wisdom and how we can find wisdom in suffering.

**READ:**

Job 28:9-15, 20-28.

**ANALYZE THE TEXT**

1. What do verses 9-15 tell us about where we look for wisdom and how it can or can't be obtained?
2. Read v20-22. Why do you think wisdom is hidden?
3. What are the characteristics of God that make him know where wisdom can be found and what wisdom is (verses 23-27)?
4. Verse 28 says that the fear of the Lord is wisdom. What do you think it means to fear the Lord?

**A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER**

Tim Keller points out that we need wisdom in order to make important decisions. Neither knowledge and facts alone *nor* morality and following God's rules alone are enough to make big decisions. Many of life's questions (should I move, should I take this job, should I speak up, should I marry) don't have morally right or wrong consequences (either choice could be moral). Similarly, making a list of facts about a decision won't affirm our decision. We also need wisdom.

In Proverbs, wisdom calls out to anyone who will listen. *Proverbs teaches us that wisdom involves (1) knowing ourselves, (2) knowing when to speak and make decisions, and (3) knowing that life is very complex.* We often fall into a trap of thinking that if we do what the Bible asks and try really hard, then our lives will be good. But Job was a good man and he still suffered. Life is complex

and there are not simple answers. And sometimes the wisdom of the world is not the wisdom of God. To the world's standards, Job was a wise man in how he allocated his assets, raised his family, and was a part of his community. Yet, he lost it all.

Job's story shows us we cannot rely on the wisdom of man. Instead we need to rely on true wisdom, the **fear of the Lord**. Based on the Hebrew, Keller teaches that fear of the Lord equates with **reverence, stillness, wonder and awe**. Think of what it is like to be on the beach at sunset, listen to great music, take in the view from a mountain peak, read a great book, or view your favorite painting. At those times you want to be still, listen, and take it all in and revere the moment. Job is teaching us to fear God in the midst of our suffering, to say to God, "I am going to be still and listen for you, look for you, wait for you, all the while being in awe of what you have done." Though we may not know what God is doing (or allowing Satan to do), the fear of God, to live in awe and respect of our creator, will lead us to live wisely.

**APPLY:**

1. In what ways does our culture (movies, books, advertisements) encourage us to seek wisdom?
2. These verses teach us that wisdom is hidden and concealed and only a rumor of it reaches us. When you examine your life, by what is wisdom hidden? Can you remove those barriers that conceal wisdom? If so, how?
3. Self-delusion and pride often prevent us from being wise. Do you have more answers than questions? Do you talk more than you listen? Do you believe accomplishments make you wise?
4. What attributes of God draw you to him as the source of wisdom? Compared to Job, we have the privilege of knowing God's ultimate plan through Jesus. How is God's wisdom made known through Jesus (Ephesians 3:10-13)?
5. How will you change your life to encourage a "fear of the Lord"?

**MEMORIZE:** Job 28:28 "And he said to the human race, 'The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.'"

**Suggestions for Further Reading:**

Proverbs 9:9-12, 10:8, 11:2, 17:24, 19:20, 26:12, 28:11