

WORDshop: Session 11 – More Wisdom

Jeremiah 17:5-10, *“This is what the LORD says: **“Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from the LORD. They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in the barren wilderness, in an uninhabited salty land. “But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit. “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? **But I, the LORD, search all hearts and examine secret motives.** I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve.”***

Colossians 2:20-23, *“You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, “Don’t handle! Don’t taste! Don’t touch!”? Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person’s evil desires.*

When I realized that this verse was literally how my Weight Watchers journey had played out, I really began to question where I was putting my trust. I felt like I had been stuck and miserable for over 35 years, yet I was still turning to a constantly changing, ever more entangling program to try to find my freedom. Ultimately though, no matter how closely I followed the plan, no matter how “good” I was, I was still tormented. The constant desire for food was still there. The constant focus on food was still there. My desire, time and attention have been fixed on the things of the flesh, instead of the things of the Spirit.

Hebrews 13:8-9, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So do not be attracted by strange, new ideas. Your strength comes from God’s grace, **not from rules about food, which don’t help those who follow them.**”*

As I have begun to believe and understand this passage, in the context of my food and weight battle, I see that the Word really is alive and powerful and applicable to every area of our lives. I don’t need more of man’s weight loss plans or food science, I need more of God’s grace. I need to be led by his Spirit. I need to seek Him in ALL. Following man’s rules for 35 years not only did not help me, but had me more ensnared than ever; more frustrated; more discouraged; more defeated. I finally realized that I needed God’s wisdom in this area of my life, as much as any other, and that His wisdom does apply to ALL areas of my life.

Proverbs 8:1-36, *“Listen as Wisdom calls out! Hear as understanding raises her voice! On the hilltop along the road, she takes her stand at the crossroads. By the gates at the entrance to the town, on the road leading in, she cries aloud, “I call to you, to all of you! I raise my voice to all people. You simple people, use good judgment. You foolish people, show some understanding. Listen to me! For I have important things to tell you. Everything I say is right, for I speak the truth and detest every kind of deception. My advice is wholesome. There is nothing devious or crooked in it. My words are plain to anyone with understanding, clear to those with knowledge. Choose my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than pure gold. For wisdom is far more valuable than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with it. “I, Wisdom, live together with good judgment. I know where to discover knowledge and discernment. All who fear the Lord will hate evil. Therefore, I hate pride and arrogance, corruption and perverse speech. Common sense and success belong to me. Insight and strength are mine. Because of me, kings reign, and rulers make just decrees. Rulers lead with my help, and nobles make righteous judgments. “I love all who love me. Those who search will surely find me. I have riches and honor, as well as enduring wealth and justice. My gifts are better than gold, even the purest gold, my wages better than sterling silver! I walk in righteousness, in paths of justice. Those who love me inherit wealth. I will fill their treasuries. “The Lord formed me from the beginning, before he created anything else. I was appointed in ages past, at the very first, before the earth began. I was born before the oceans were created, before the springs bubbled forth their waters. Before the mountains were formed, before the hills, I was born—before he had made*

the earth and fields and the first handfuls of soil. I was there when he established the heavens, when he drew the horizon on the oceans. I was there when he set the clouds above, when he established springs deep in the earth. I was there when he set the limits of the seas, so they would not spread beyond their boundaries. And when he marked off the earth's foundations, I was the architect at his side, I was his constant delight, rejoicing always in his presence. And how happy I was with the world he created; how I rejoiced with the human family! "And so, my children, listen to me, for all who follow my ways are joyful. Listen to my instruction and be wise. Don't ignore it. Joyful are those who listen to me, watching for me daily at my gates, waiting for me outside my home! For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord. But those who miss me injure themselves. All who hate me love death."

Proverbs 3:5-8, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones."*

Has the battle with weight ever felt like a sickness? It did for me. One day, after time in the Word, I realized that I needed healing for my body in this area, and the Word says I can have it!

How do we get wisdom?

- Cry out for it. (Proverbs 2:3)
- Seek it. (Proverbs 2:4)
- Ask for it. (James 1:5)
- When you ask, be in faith, do not waver – believe! (James 1:6)
- Love and prize wisdom. (Proverbs 4:6-8)

James 1:5-8, *"If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do."*

Where do we find Wisdom? God is the source of ALL wisdom.

- The Word.
- Teaching of the Holy Spirit

How do we know we have wisdom?

- We fear (reverence) God. (Proverbs 9:10)
- We love correction. (Proverbs 9:8-9; 12:1&15)

What are the benefits of wisdom?

- health/healing (Proverbs 3:7-8, 4:22)
- long life (Proverbs 3:2, 3:16, 3:18, 4:10)
- riches (Proverbs 3:16)
- protection (Proverbs 4:6)
- greatness (Proverbs 4:8)
- honor (Proverbs 3:16, 4:8)
- disciplined and successful life (Proverbs 1:3)
- living in peace, untroubled by fear of harm (Proverbs 1:33)
- you will find the right way to go (Proverbs 2:9, 3:6, 4:11)
- you will be filled with joy (Proverbs 2:10, 3:13)
- your life will be satisfying (Proverbs 3:2, 3:17)
- happiness (Proverbs 3:18)
- loving yourself & prospering (Proverbs 19:8)

Engage and apply:

- Has any diet plan ever solved the problem, or has it merely treated the symptoms?
- Is holding on to man made rules about food/dieting actually hindering what God wants to do for you, in His wisdom?
- Do you need healing in this area?
- Have you ever given God as much consideration in this journey as you have WW or some other plan?
- Who/what are you looking to as your salvation in this battle?
- What wisdom of man do you need to release?