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Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do! And whatever else you do, get good judgment

–Prov. 4:7, NLT

Need wisdom for daily living? Most of us do!

Wisdom is the predominant theme of the book of Proverbs. That's why it has been referred to as the "wisdom manual" for daily living. It's designed to provide common sense and skill in dealing with everyday problems.

Wisdom brings balance to our lives as we endeavor to live in this high-tech "information age." Acquiring it is top priority, our text says—"the most important thing you can do!"

Solomon begins the book by saying, "The purpose of these proverbs is to teach people wisdom" (1:2). In essence, he is saying: "I am writing so you can have a personal encounter with wisdom." He emphasizes the importance of wisdom by mentioning it more than 123 times in this one book.

The Hebrew word for "wisdom" is *hokmah*. It's a multifaceted noun that means "to have skill, intelligence, and sensibility, judicious prudence, to be endowed with reason." Wisdom is simply the ability to live skillfully in whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

King Solomon uses the feminine gender and first person to characterize wisdom. Why does he present wisdom as a woman? Some scholars lay the blame on his heightened preoccupation with women. However, since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God (see 2 Tim. 3:16), there must be a deeper purpose.

I believe the Holy Spirit is giving us a physical picture of spiritual truth. Think about it: From the natural standpoint

woman is appealing. So is wisdom. She is desirable and unique among the species. Wisdom also holds these qualities. In the creation account, woman is represented as the crowning of all God's creation—the completion of humankind. Wisdom too brings fullness and completion. It is principal, first and necessary.

Solomon refers to wisdom in first person to set forth the truth that wisdom is speaking directly to each of us. For example, in Proverbs 8:6-7, he writes: "Listen to me! For I have excellent things to tell you. Everything I say is right, for I speak the truth and hate every kind of deception."

By using first person, the Holy Spirit is making wisdom personal rather than presenting it as mere information or knowledge. Therefore, wisdom becomes intimate, real and animate. Wisdom takes on the nature of a close, personal friend.

Do you need wisdom? The book of Proverbs focuses on this topic more than any other book in your Bible. Why not avail yourself of it? Grab your Bible—and wise up!