

What True Wisdom Is

Proverbs 23:12 We leave our study of Isaiah and prophetic scriptures about the Messiah and look briefly into Proverbs. This proverb gives the secret to effective Bible study: Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge.

The Bible is the manual for life, and it gives the instructions for living a blessed, meaningful life, a life that glorifies God. If you are like me, I often read instructions, and then I try to short-cut the instructions. I get myself into a real mess when I do this. There is no short-cut to effective Bible reading. First, we must listen carefully to what the passage says, and then we need to do what it says. Faith without works is dead. The words of life are in the Scriptures, but it is up to us to ignite that seed of life so that it blossoms into a mature tree of righteousness. We are the plantings of the Lord. Unless we allow the water of the Holy Spirit to satiate our souls daily as we read God's Word, we will miss out on the transforming and renewing of our minds by the Word of God, and our hearts will not be changed. We must also listen to the Lord and come to know Him intimately.

We live in an age where knowledge has increased dramatically. God has been gracious to my husband and me. He has given us the opportunity to be mother and father-like ones to four very brilliant young people—Christina, our Chinese daughter; Vladimir, our Russian son; Misha, who lives in our apartment (at the age of nineteen Misha was a full professor in a college, and now at age 23 she has two masters degrees); and Daniel, who is living temporarily with us while he awaits entering Emory University as a junior. He entered college at fifteen and has already worked two years on Wall Street. Vladimir graduated with highest honors from Georgia Tech, and now is working with Price Waterhouse. We were sitting at the

table with Misha and Daniel the other night, and my husband and I were overwhelmed with the knowledge of these two brilliant young people. All my husband and I could add to the conversation was to nod our heads and say "Wow!" We were impressed with the fact that knowledge has increased in these last days and most people know a lot more than we do. This keeps us humble. I kidded with our house guests and said, "Now I know the plan of the Lord. It is to send as many brilliant people as possible into this home to help us get our own act together. We need all the mental assistance we can get at this age."

This proverb exhorts us to apply our ears to the words of knowledge. There are a lot of intellectual fools who know many facts, but they have not come into the knowledge of the one fact that will affect them eternally. That fact is that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. We know a professor who has so much knowledge, but in God's sight he is a fool because he does not believe God exists. The Bible says that it is a fool who does not believe in God. When we read the Bible we must understand that we are not just gaining more knowledge about God. The goal is to know Him intimately, not just know about Him. I trust you have experienced this.

**READ: Isaiah 51:1-18:7; Galatians 1:1-24; Psalm 58:1-11;
Proverbs 23:12**