

AN APPEARANCE OF WISDOM

PART 3: WISE IN OUR OWN EYES?

"MORE HOPE FOR A FOOL"



DO YOU SEE A MAN WHO IS WISE IN HIS OWN EYES?
THERE IS MORE HOPE FOR A FOOL THAN FOR HIM.

(Proverbs 26:12 ESV)

THESE HAVE INDEED AN APPEARANCE OF WISDOM ...
(COLOSSIANS 2:23A ESV)

How do we avoid having only an appearance of godly wisdom that is in fact not wisdom at all?

Where do we begin? / What do we not do?

DO NOT LOOK TO YOURSELF FOR WISDOM.

1 **DO NOT LOOK TO YOURSELF**

A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERSON WHO IS WISE IN HIS OR HER OWN EYES ...

What does it mean to be wise in our own eyes?

- (Proverbs 26:12 ESV) Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Wisdom is about making right choices based on right thinking. To be wise in our own eyes means that we believe we have the ability and the resources within ourselves for right thinking and right choices. But what does our text say about the person who believes this? There is more hope for a fool than for this person.

Who is the fool that is referred to?

- (Psalm 14:1 ESV) The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.

Here the fool is one who in his inmost being refuses to acknowledge the existence of God. It seems then fair to say that the person who is wise in his own eyes does not deny the existence of God as the fool does, but this “wise” person denies the necessity of absolute dependence on God for right thinking and right living.

What do we learn in the following admonition to not be wise in our own eyes?

- (Proverbs 3:7 ESV) Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

Simple—Do not be wise in our own eyes. And ... two more things we learn from the use of parallelism in the text: 1) that we are to turn from our sinful pride to reverence for the LORD, and 2) that being wise in our own eyes is an evil from which we are to turn away.

- (Isaiah 5:21 ESV) Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!

“Woe to those” ... a grave danger of which we are severely warned by Isaiah.

What happens in the minds and hearts of those who do not heed this warning and who do not honor God as God or give him thanks?

- (Romans 1:21–22 ESV) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools.

They become useless in their thinking while their hearts—intellect, emotions and will—become darkened. They have become fools but they think they are wise.

REVERENCE (*vb.*): to consider or treat with profound awe and respect; treat with deep respect and honor.

PRIDE: a high or inordinate opinion of one’s own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, whether as cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing, conduct, etc.

2 **LOOK TO THE LORD ... ONLY ... FULLY ...**

A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERSON WHO FEARS THE LORD ...

**WHAT IS OUR STARTING POINT?
HOW DO WE MOVE PAST APPEARANCES TO WISDOM?
WHERE DO WE BEGIN?**

- (Psalm 111:10 ESV) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. **His praise endures forever!**

The beginning of wisdom ... If we desire to learn how to live in a way that pleases God, then we begin by bowing down before him in worship and awe. We honor God as God. We revere him.

So beginning is good, but how do we come to a good understanding of the fear of the LORD?

We practice “the fear of the LORD.” And how do we actually practice reverence for the LORD?

- (Proverbs 3:5–7 ESV) Trust in the LORD with **all your heart**, and do not lean on your own understanding. **6 In all your ways** acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. **7 Be not wise in your own eyes**; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
 1. Trust him with all our heart and do not trust our own understanding.
 2. Trust him—acknowledge him for who he is—in all our decisions for life.
 3. Trust him and demonstrate the deep respect he deserves.
 4. Turn away from evil—sin.

We trust God fully and completely. **We live according to what is true—that God is God in all the ways of our lives.**

What is the occasion for the psalmists praise? Why does he exclaim: “His praise endures forever!”

Because praise is what happens when you come into the presence of God before the throne of God. Honor God as God in all areas of our lives, and he will reveal himself to us in his greatness and majesty in all areas of our lives. And, again, praise is what happens when you come into the presence of God.

What does this text say the fear of the LORD is?

- (Proverbs 1:7 ESV) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Reverence for God is the beginning of receiving the necessary, divine information we need for godly living. Fools despise the knowledge of God. It doesn’t “seem right” to them; it doesn’t “fit” their world as it is

incomprehensible to the only world with which their natural minds are acquainted. You can neither accept nor understand information from God if you are blind to the existence of God.

- (1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV) The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

What does this text say the fear of the LORD is?

- (Proverbs 8:13 ESV) The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

Reverence for the LORD will show itself in a hatred of evil. It seems here that evil is specifically our actions and words resulting from pride and arrogance.

An amazing blessing ... truly a gift from God ...

- (Proverbs 14:26 ESV) In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

This is the gift of God. In the fear of the LORD we come upon the knowledge of the holy. And we only come to holy knowledge in the holy place of worship before him.

Now our spiritual location is right. **Now** we taste the goodness of the LORD. **Now** we have strong confidence in a mighty and majestic God. **Now** this blessing of strong confidence is a powerful testimony to our children.

- (Psalm 28:8 ESV) The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed.
- (Psalm 46:1 ESV) God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
- (Psalm 18:2 ESV) The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- (Psalm 62:2 ESV) He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

“HIS PRAISE ENDURES FOREVER!”



MORE HOPE FOR THE FOOL

... doing wrong is like a joke to **A FOOL**
... the way of **A FOOL** is right in his own eyes
... **A FOOL** is reckless and careless
... **A FOOL** takes no pleasure in understanding
... whoever trusts in his own mind is **A FOOL**
... the **FOOL** walks in darkness ...

THAN FOR THE PERSON WISE IN HIS OR HER OWN EYES

References for above ... (Proverbs 10:23, 12:15, 16, 18:2, 28:26; Ecclesiastes 2:14) ... (Proverbs 26:12)

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