SEEK WISE COUNSEL

Practical Lessons in Christian Living



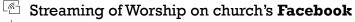
SERIES CONTINUES (REVIEW)

Part 1: Love Like Jesus [03-Mar-2024]

- Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church
- Agape: put their needs first!
- Part 2: Lead—God's Way [07-Apr-2024]



- A partnership, not a dictatorship
- Lead a Flock, not Drive a Herd
- Serve, not "lord"!
- Cornerstone, example and foundation for strong walls, not a stumbling stone
- Part 3: Seek Wise Counsel [07-May-2024]
 - Seek Biblical Wisdom
 - Imitate Christian Examples
 - Ask Godly Counselors



1. SEEK BIBLICAL WISDOM

Read/Search God's word for its wisdom!

Includes "wisdom about wisdom":

- Prov. 15:22 "Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed."
- Prov. 12:15 "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice."
- Prov. 15:5 "A fool despises his father's instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent."

THE WORD CONT.

- Prov. 18:1-2 "Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.
 - A fool takes no pleasure in **understanding**, but only in expressing his **opinion**."
- Prov. 26:12 "Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him."
- Prov. 28:26 "Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered."

COMMANDMENTS & EXAMPLES

Besides "wisdom **about** wisdom" there is deeper wisdom **embedded** in God's word!

- Psa. 111:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!"
- Prov. 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

God provides us the **owners' manual**, i.e., providing proper use and preventive maintenance of His creation:

- Commandments make our life better, obeying produces better life outcomes
- Biblical examples help us learn from others' best practices or bad mistakes

2. IMITATE GODLY EXAMPLES

- Look for examples of Wisdom being applied...
 - Where do you see biblical principles being consistently demonstrated? In whom?
 - What areas of life do these Christians appear to be exceeding or succeeding?
- mimeomai imitate, follow as an example, strive to resemble
- Root of English words Oxford
 - Mime to use gesture and movement without words in acting (of a play or role).
 - Mimic to take on the appearance of another for protection or camouflage.

IMITATE GOOD WORKS & FAITH

- 3 Jn 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.
- 2 Thess 3:7-9 For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.
- Heb 13:7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.

BE IMITATORS OF GOD, CHRIST, APOSTLES, THE CHURCH

- mimeotes an imitator, follower
- **Eph 5:1** Therefore be **imitators of God**, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
- 1 Thess 1:6-7 And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.
- 1 Thess 2:14 For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews...

BE IMITATORS

OF PAUL, FAITH, & PATIENCE (BUT BE CAREFUL)

- 1 Cor. 4:15-16 For though you have countless guides [paidagogos] in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me [Paul].
- **Heb 6:12** ... but **imitators** of those who through **faith** and **patience** *inherit the promises*.
 - · Older, more mature Christian ... "not a new convert"
 - Church leaders: those exemplifying the qualifications of elders and deacons, and fruits of the Spirit
- 1 Cor. 11:1 Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

3. ASK GODLY COUNSELORS

- Seek out advice from those who... have gone (successfully) through similar struggles before
- and, seek support from those going through similar struggles now (fellow-soldier, battle buddy)
- Share your struggles
- Ask things like:
 - What worked and what didn't?
 - Why did it work?
 - What would you do differently?
- (Be brave and) commit to mutual accountability

CHOOSING GOOD COUNSELORS

• Experience + success (expert?)

- Don't ask an atheist about salvation
- Don't ask the unmarried or divorced for marital advice
- Don't ask a parent of juvenile delinquent for discipline advice

Balance and **Independence** (from engineering):

- Productive Teams:
 - Multiple personality types, backgrounds, nationalities
 - Provide alternative opinions, yield more complete solutions
 - Balance competing needs: user, buyer, designer, builder, tester
- Peer Review:
 - Unbiased, no hidden conflicts of interest (e.g., no management)
 - Someone Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue

INVITATION CHALLENGE

- Are you spending enough time in God's word?
- Are you applying what you read to yourself, to your actions, to your responses?
- Where do you seek wisdom?
 - Are you planning without counsel?
 - Do you trust in your own mind?
 - Are you seeking advisers to ensure success or making major life decisions in isolation?
 - Do you heed reproof and sound judgement?
 - Do you fear the Lord?

CHALLENGE #2

- Who do you look up to?
- Who do you emulate?
- Are they imitating Christ?
- Do you ask for help, or try to do it alone?
- To whom do you go for:
 - Advice?
 - Experience?
 - Support?
 - Encouragement?
 - Accountability?
- Why? Are your reasons sound?

ISAIAH 11:2

The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.