




SEEK WISE COUNSEL

Practical Lessons in Christian Living

3

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**.