

# Being Christian Now



## Personal & Small Group Activity

Write what have you been taught is the difference between knowledge and wisdom. Come up with examples from life that shows the difference. Share your thoughts with others.

***“Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is knowing not to put it in a fruit salad.” Miles Kington***

## Large Group Activity- Read and Discuss

The dictionary defines wisdom as “the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting.” Knowledge, on the other hand, is “information gained through experience, reasoning, or acquaintance.” Knowledge can exist without wisdom, but not the other way around. One can be knowledgeable without being wise. Knowledge is knowing how to use a gun; wisdom is knowing when to use it and when to keep it holstered.

## Large Group Activity- Read and Discuss

Psalms 111: 10

Proverbs 9: 10; Proverbs 1: 7

Isaiah 33: 5, 6; Isaiah 55: 8, 9

## Large Group Activity- Read and Discuss

As Martin Luther said, it is a filial fear, the fear of a child who is in awe of his father and doesn't want to do anything that would violate his father and disrupt their loving relationship. In a word, this concept has to do with reverence, awe, and respect. When the writers of the Wisdom Literature say that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, they are saying that

the absolute, essential starting point if you want to acquire true wisdom is reverence and adoration for God.

Showing a contrast, the psalmist tells us, “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Ps. 14:1a). Wisdom is contrasted with foolishness. However, in the Hebrew literature, the term fool does not describe a person who lacks intelligence. To be foolish to the Jew is to be irreligious and godless. The fool is the person who has no reverence for God, and when you have no reverence for God, inevitably your life will show it.

## Large Group Activity- Read and Discuss

Everyone is exhorted to take care of his own affairs and to do faithfully and diligently that which is committed to him; there is indeed no virtue beyond that of obedience, attending to that which is given him to do. Such people are called wise men; the disobedient are called fools, even though they do not want to be, or be called, disobedient men or fools. Martin Luther (LW 35.259–260)

In turn Solomon calls folly all that which proceeds without God's word and works. A wise man, then, is one who guides himself by God's word and works; a fool is one who presumptuously guides himself by his own mind and notions. Martin Luther (LW 35.262)

## Large Group Activity- Read and Discuss

Isaiah 11: 2

1 Corinthians 1: 18-31; 1 Corinthians 2: 6-13

James 1: 5

## Closing- Read Together Ephesians 3: 14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Question: "What is wisdom? What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?"

Answer: Wisdom and knowledge, both recurring themes in the Bible, are related but not synonymous. The dictionary defines wisdom as "the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting." Knowledge, on the other hand, is "information gained through experience, reasoning, or acquaintance." Knowledge can exist without wisdom, but not the other way around. One can be knowledgeable without being wise. Knowledge is knowing how to use a gun; wisdom is knowing when to use it and when to keep it holstered.

God wants us to have knowledge of Him and what He expects of us. In order to obey Him, we have to have knowledge of the commands. But as equally important as having knowledge is having wisdom. Knowing facts about God and the Bible is not all there is to wisdom. Wisdom is a gift from God. James 1:5 states, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you." God blesses us with wisdom in order for us to glorify Him and use the knowledge we have of Him.

The book of Proverbs is perhaps the best place in the Bible to learn of biblical wisdom. Proverbs 1:7 speaks of both biblical knowledge and wisdom: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, / but fools despise wisdom and instruction." To fear the Lord is to start on the path to knowledge, and God can then begin to provide us with wisdom through Christ, who the Bible says is wisdom itself: "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Knowledge is what is gathered over time through study of the Scriptures. It can be said that wisdom, in turn, acts properly upon that knowledge. Wisdom is the fitting application of knowledge. Knowledge understands the light has turned red; wisdom applies the brakes. Knowledge sees the quicksand; wisdom walks around it. Knowledge memorizes the Ten Commandments; wisdom obeys them. Knowledge learns of God; wisdom loves Him.

Present day humans are ridiculed for constantly staring into their smartphone, but look at a photo from New York City in the 1970's and you'll see thousands of people walking around, faces planted into newspapers.

The point I'm trying to make is that lots of people seek knowledge. We like to appear smart and impress our peers. But is knowledge really what we should be striving for?

Let's take a look at wisdom.

Fewer People Gain Wisdom

If knowledge is knowing a bunch of stuff, wisdom is being able to retain and implement that stuff in practical applications.

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