

The Need for Wisdom and Discernment in the End-Times



By Steven J. Hogan

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To be successful, you need wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge and experience to make wise decisions that lead to positive results. It's not just having knowledge, but rightly applying it in your daily life. Synonyms for wisdom are discernment, insight, judgment, prudence, and common sense. In every area of life, you need wisdom. Whether you are working at a job, married, raising a family, communicating with a person, staying healthy, making good decisions, investing money, shopping, detecting liars, knowing why things are happening, you must have wisdom.

What I have said applies to both Christians and non-Christians. But this post is for believers, and God knows you need wisdom that is spiritual in nature. He wants you to apply the truth of His word, to apply spiritual knowledge, so you can possess spiritual wisdom. It's what you must have to be godly, to spiritually grow, to live the Christian life. You need it to understand salvation, obey God, love others, get victory over sin, share the gospel, fulfill your ministry, have good relationships, be fruitful, be encouraged, encourage others, disciple others, be a good steward, raise godly children, recognize the devil's lies, discern truth from error, make the best decisions, and understand the end-times, Christ's coming, glorification, and the kingdom ages.

How do you get spiritual wisdom and discernment? You must be a Christian, and God must give it to you. That is, only true believers can be spiritually wise. Prov. 9:10 tells us, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding"* (Prov. 1:7, Job 28:28, Ps. 111:10). A true Christian fears God – he knows God, and he respects Him, honors Him, and obeys Him. He is humble, and he admits his sin, and receives God's mercy. He has a relationship with God whereby He recognizes Him as his Lord, and himself as His creation, child, and servant.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, understood this. She said, *"My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant... the Mighty One has done great things for me; and holy is His name. And His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear Him."* Luke 1:46-50

What are some other keys that help unlock the door to God's wisdom?

* Know that wisdom is from God's word, and that you need to seek Him, to cry out to Him, and He will give it to you. *"My Son, if you will receive My words and treasure My commandments within you, make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart for understanding... if you cry for discernment... if you seek her as silver... then you will discern the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives*

wisdom." Prov. 2:13, Ps. 119

* Meditate on God's word, think about it, feed on it, and learn from it every day. Josh. 1:8, Ps. 1:2, Ps. 119:15

* Stay away from bad people and bad influences, from that which is evil, harmful, defiling, from that which is foolishness and is not wisdom. *"My son, do not walk in the way with them"* (Prov. 1:15). *"Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways."* Prov. 5:7-12, Prov. 7:24-27, Ps. 1:1

* Listen to and learn from good Biblical teaching. Neh. 8:5-12, 2 Tim. 3:16-17, 2 Tim. 4:1-2

* Be filled with the Spirit, One who is your teacher. John 14:16-17, 16:13; Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16

* Learn from trials – *"It was good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes."* Ps. 119:71

* Learn from life experiences, whether it's yours or others. Deut. 8:1-6, Prov. 1:8-9, Phil. 4:8

* Learn from those living a godly life. Paul said, *"Join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us."* Phil. 3:17, Ps. 71:17-18

* Be in a gospel preaching, truth-teaching, God-loving, people-loving, sin-hating church. Rev. 2:8-11, 3:7-13

Now that we are in the end-times, it's imperative to have wisdom, to know what will be taking place and how God wants us to live. But many Christians don't know what God says about the end-times, and aren't even interested. Part of the problem is that many pastors don't seem to care, and don't recognize the urgency of the hour.

Or it may be that a pastor and the people in his church have different opinions as to what will be taking place, which means some of their opinions are wrong, are error. And they agree to disagree so as to keep the *"peace"*, so as to have *"unity."* But they don't seek God and study His word to find the one truth, His specific knowledge and wisdom about

the end-times, Christ's coming, and the kingdom ages. God tells us, *"Wisdom is supreme; therefore, get wisdom. Thought it cost you all you have, get understanding."* (Prov. 4:7). *"Let the reader understand"* (Matt. 24:15). The reader is referring to Christians, and so you must get wisdom, you must understand what end-times' Bible prophecy is all about, and how it applies to you and all Christians.

Many present-day statements of faith on Christ's coming say, *"He will bodily and visibly come again in glory to judge the living and the dead."* This is true, but way too simplistic, especially when there are over 1,000 verses on the future. You find many 2nd coming truths in Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Micah, Joel, Zechariah, Matthew, Mark, Luke, Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Ephesians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter, and Revelation, and in other books. Sadly, the devil has perpetrated many lies, propagated many wrong ways of thinking, with the result that many pastors and churches are deceived. God does not want this – He wants wisdom and understanding, not confusion! And when God's word is rightly and carefully studied, then key issues regarding the future can be understood. *"Be diligent to present yourself to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."* 2 Tim. 2:15, Ezra 7:10, 1 Tim. 5:17

Both pastors and Christians must wake up and study these 2nd coming passages. Now's the time to do it, to discover what He has written in His word, to get knowledge and wisdom on this needed and relevant subject. Churches teach on justification and sanctification, but they must also teach on glorification and the kingdom ages. This is what Paul said in 2 Tim. 4:1-2 – *"In view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: preach the word."* In every church, *"John the Baptists"* should be wisely and passionately preaching 1st and 2nd coming truths. Luke 3:2-20

Matt. 24 warns us 3 times about error in the end-times. *"See to it that no one misleads you... Many false prophets will arise and mislead"*

many... False Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance" (vss. 4, 11, 24). Jesus warned us about 2nd coming errors 2,000 years ago, and now we are hearing them. Paul also gave a 2nd coming-error warning, "Let no one in any way deceive you" (2 Th. 2:4). God does not want you to be deceived, to be led astray – He wants you to be discerning, wise, and righteous, now and in the future. "Get wisdom! Get understanding!... The path of the righteous is like the light of the dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day." Prov. 4:5, 18

God also wants you to have wisdom with regards to the way you live, to how you conduct yourself in these end-times. **Have faith** – *"When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" (Lk. 18:8).* **Fix your hope on Christ** – *"Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13).* **Love one another** – *"The end of all things is near... above all, keep fervent in your love for one another" (1 Pet. 4:8).* **Be holy** – *"What sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God" (2 Pet. 3:11).* **Be sober** – *"Let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober" (1 Th. 5:6).* **Be in fellowship** – *"Not forsaking our own assembling together ...encouraging one another... as you see the day drawing near." Heb. 10:25*

Pray – *"The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer" (1 Pet. 4:7).* **Serve God** – *"You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God" (1 Th. 1:9).* **Wait for Christ** – *"Wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus" (1 Th. 1:10).* **Preach the gospel** – *"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14).* **Persevere** – *"Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints" (Rev. 13:10).* **Do not fear** – *"Do not fear what you are about to suffer... Be faithful until death" (Rev. 2:10).* **Be an overcomer** – *"To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life" (Rev. 2:7).* **Be fighting**

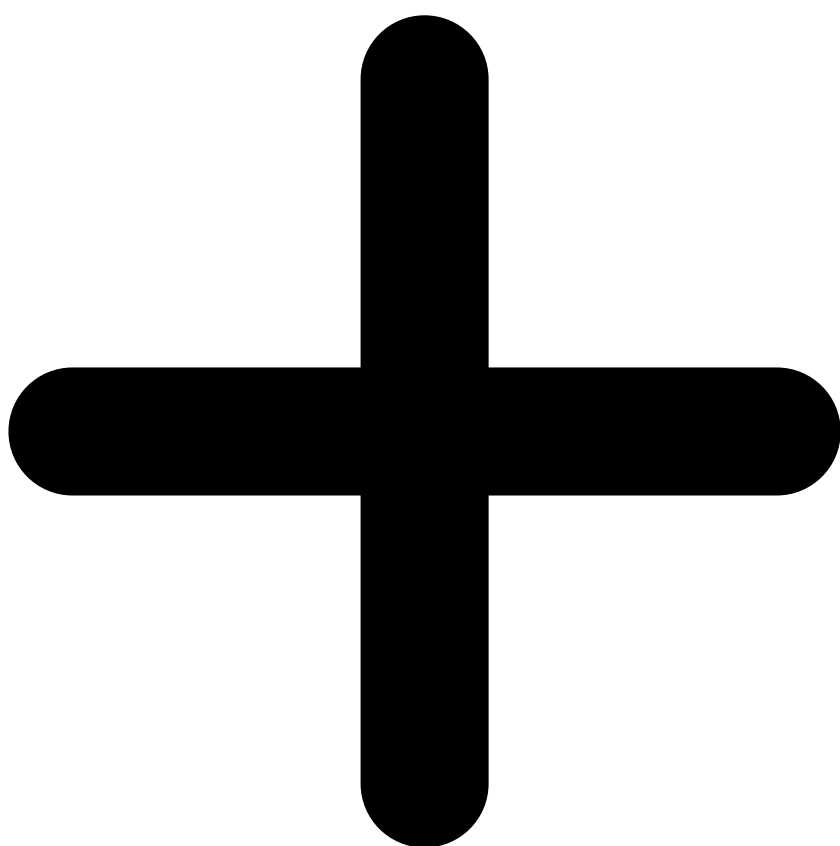
- *"Take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day..."* Eph. 6:10-13

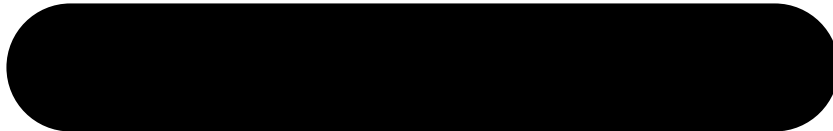
Here is one of my favorite end-times' prayers: *"This I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God."* Phil. 1:9-11

This prayer tells you how you can love God and others: 1) Having knowledge and discernment, that is, wisdom, results in 2) making the best decisions, which leads to 3) holiness and 4) through Christ, being fruitful with the result that 5) God is praised and glorified. 6) This is applicable during the church age, but now that we are in the end-times, we know that the day of Christ, the day of the rapture, is drawing near. You can see the need to have wisdom so as to love God and live for Him.

This prayer applies to the end-times. And God wants you to apply the truth of His word, to apply spiritual knowledge, so you can possess spiritual wisdom. And to be successful, to be godly, to give glory to God when the Antichrist is ruling the earth, and when there is great persecution, you must have spiritual wisdom.

Finally, *"We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God... giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints."* Col. 1:9-12





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