

SERENITY PRAYER -- Wisdom

Wouldn't it be nice if we were all born wise and made nothing but good decisions? Unfortunately that isn't the case. All of us have made bad choices and walked down paths that have caused us pain and harm. Recovery teaches us to think and act in new ways. But, as we work to make changes in our life and relationships, we may not always be certain of what to do. We may need some guidelines to help us identify Godly wisdom in our thoughts and choices.

Not all wisdom is Godly. The Bible describes a kind of "worldly" wisdom that justifies destructive behaviour and leads to disorder, instability and confusion. We need to be aware of this type of wisdom, which is characterized by jealousy and selfishness. The Bible says: ***"Jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and motivated by the Devil. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and every kind of evil"*** (James 3: 15-16).

Worldly wisdom and thinking cause us to focus on what others are and have. It makes us envy others so much that we are always dissatisfied. It's easy to become so consumed by our own desires that we become inconsiderate of others, often hurting the people we love. This type of wisdom is inspired by the Devil and will lead to our ultimate destruction, since Satan's ***"purpose is to steal and kill and destroy"*** (John 10:10).

If our thoughts are dominated by jealousy and selfishness, we need to ask God to replace our earthly wisdom with His Godly wisdom. He can and will change our mind and our life. ***"Then the way you live will always honour and please the Lord and you will...learn to know God better and better"*** (Colossians 1:9-10).

Godly wisdom - wisdom based on the knowledge of God - is essential to recovery. God's wisdom is ***"first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of***

mercy and good deeds. It shows no partiality and is always sincere" (James 3:17). Godly wisdom brings peace and leads to selfless living and faith that works. It allows us to admit our failures and rebuild our life from the ashes of defeat. It frees us from our destructive dependency. It helps us live for others and builds relationships that will support our recovery.

On the practical level, our wisdom can be judged by whether or not our actions conform to God's instructions. God's instructions were given to us

because they naturally lead to healthy living. Jesus said, ***"Anyone who listens to My teaching and obeys Me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against the house, it won't collapse, because it is built on rock"*** (Matthew 7:24-25). Filling our minds with Jesus' words and instructions will help us turn away from the things forbidden by God and find the wisdom we

need to walk toward wholeness.

Like most aspects of recovery, walking in wisdom is a process that we grow into. Fortunately we have a Father in heaven Who is eager to give us the wisdom we need. The Bible says: ***"If you need wisdom - if you want to know what God wants you to do - ask Him, and He will gladly tell you"*** (James 1:5). Our heavenly Father loves us tenderly. He is always there for us, wanting to give us the wisdom we need whenever we ask for it.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. How has my life been affected by bad choices and wrong paths?
2. When do I struggle with making appropriate and Godly choices?
3. Where do I seek guidance for the decisions I need to make? Is this helpful?
4. How has "worldly" wisdom affected my choices and life?
5. How can I learn more about God's instructions for living?
6. How might my life change if I made Godly choices for living?
7. What one thing can I do this week to increase my Godly wisdom?

SERENITY PRAYER

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things
I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
Trusting that You will make all things right
if I surrender to Your will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with You forever in the
next. Amen.*