

Proverbs 16:22

Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.

Some men are winners, and others are losers. What is your greatest asset? Can you measure true success and wealth? Some men have a fountain of life inside them, and they are truly rich. But others are full of folly, which leaves them bankrupt from the inside out. Understanding, the power of right thinking, is a wonderful thing, but only a few have it. Folly, which is ignorant stupidity, governs the thoughts and actions of most men.

What is understanding? It is the ability to understand – to comprehend and grasp the true nature of a thing. It is the correct and proper analysis of a dilemma, event, or situation that sees all the angles and consequences. It is accurate and intelligent reasoning that arrives at the right conclusion by correctly absorbing all the details of an issue and any possible contingencies. It looks beyond appearances to see the true essence of a thing.

What is a wellspring? It is the source or head-spring of a stream; a fountain-head. When used figuratively, a wellspring is a source of perennial emanation or supply. It is a continual or perpetual provision or supply of some thing. Solomon described a wise man's excellent speech as a wellspring, when he wrote, "The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook" (18:4).

Understanding is a wellspring of life by providing a perpetual supply of correct analysis and conclusions for life's numerous dilemmas, situations, and difficulties. The man with understanding can always choose those alternatives that preserve and prosper his life. The man with understanding is rich indeed. He has a treasury of knowledge and knows how to use it to save himself and those around him from death, dysfunction, and trouble.

But consider most men! They do not have a supply of understanding. They are ignorant and stupid. They are fools. Their thoughts, words, and actions are directed by their own foolish thoughts, which lead them into folly and death at every turn. Rather than improving their lives, they create dysfunction, havoc, misery, and pain for themselves (13:15; 19:8). Every time they turn within to find an answer, they come up with insane and profane ideas. Their folly results in dysfunction, destruction, trouble, and death.

Reader! Do not think yourself above the instruction of folly. You came into this world messing on yourself; and without God's help, you will end up just as foolish. You were born with a deceitful and desperately wicked heart (Jer 17:9), and only a heart transplant by regeneration and conversion can produce understanding. The world and the devil are intent on taking you down to their base, perverse, and rebellious level of thinking.

You can build a wellspring of life. David wrote, “Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way” (Ps 119:104). And again, “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (Ps 119:130). The Bible, which has God’s precepts and words, builds understanding. You can understand more than your teachers and the ancients by keeping God’s precepts (Ps 119:99-100). It is God’s words found in the Bible that teach wisdom and understanding (Deut 4:5-8).

Humbly obeying God’s commandments and turning away from evil is the way to understanding (28:5; Job 28:28; Ps 111:10). This should make perfect sense, since it is the infinitely wise God Who inspired the Bible’s words. It begins with the fear of the Lord (3:3-6; 9:10), and prayer increases it further (2:2-3; I Kgs 3:9; Col 1:9). It is God’s inspiration that can give a young man the advantage over old men (Job 32:8; II Tim 2:7).

Nabal and his wife Abigail illustrate the difference between her good understanding and his churlish folly (I Sam 25:3). While Nabal put his whole family at risk by being obnoxiously rude to David’s servants, the wise woman preserved her household by godly reasoning with a very angry David. What did the Lord do? He killed Nabal and gave his beautiful wife to David. Her understanding was a wellspring of life to her and her house.

When natural men think, they come up with ideas like evolution and revolution, both of which men with understanding ridicule as absurd. They read the Bible and know that all things were created out of nothing by the command of God (Gen 1:1-3; Heb 11:3) and rebellion against civil authority is the nature of a rabid dog (II Pet 2:10-12). They know that capital punishment works, no matter what the ACLU might say (Gen 9:6; Eccl 8:11). And they know that corporal punishment works better than grounding (13:24; 22:15).

When you get several men thinking together, they come up with the idea of same-sex marriages, which a man with understanding hates as an abomination against God and nature (Rom 1:24-27). When you get several women together, they advance the murder of their unborn babies, while demonstrating to save spotted owls and outlaw corporal punishment (Ex 21:22-25; Job 39:13-18)! The instruction of fools is folly!

These mindless morons promote labor unions to protect their jobs, which have the very opposite effect of shutting down their companies or exporting that industry to other nations! They reason that WWII brought the prosperity of the 50’s, but are never able to connect the dots to realize that destruction can never bring prosperity! They call Picasso’s confusion art, illiterate rap music, adultery an affair, and sodomy gay. What folly!

The precious book of Proverbs, which was given to teach understanding (1:2), teaches men to avoid get-rich-quick schemes (12:11; 13:11), warns against suretyship (17:18), teaches how to deal with an offended person (15:1), warns about the danger of anger (14:29), and gives the criterion for a great wife (31:30), among many other lessons.

But understanding goes much further. The man with it knows the cause and cure of death (Rom 6:23)! Glory! He knows the purpose for man’s existence on earth (16:4; Rev 4:11).

Glory! He knows of a spiritual conflict beyond his sight that exceeds any visible event in importance (Eph 6:12). He knows the future of the universe and Who is really in charge!

Fools should be avoided, because their folly will corrupt your good manners (9:6; 13:20; I Cor 15:33). How can you spot a fool? Listen (14:7)! A fool cannot control his mouth. He will be pouring out the nonsense that is in his heart (15:2,28; Eccl 10:12-14). As soon as you detect that a person speaks contrary to the word of God or without study, avoid them and despise them (Is 8:20; Rom 16:17-18; I Tim 6:3-5,20-21; II Tim 2:23).

Stupidity should be against the law: and it is against God's law (Rom 1:31). The Lord expects you to use the wisdom He offers through His word and pastors (1:22-23; 9:1-6). If you do not accept it and seek it, He will laugh at your calamities (1:24-33; 8:5,36). This is the most important pursuit of your life (4:5-7; 16:16; 23:23). What is hindering you? What is distracting you? What is deceiving you? Seek understanding with all your might.

Once you gain some understanding, you should become a tree of life to those around you (10:21; 15:4). When others do not know what to do, you should have the certain answers of truth and understanding for them (22:17-21). Instead of remaining an infant that needs to be taught, you should be growing in understanding to teach others (Heb 5:12-14).

What will you do today and tomorrow to build a wellspring of life? The future of your family and estate depend on it (24:3). Even a poor man can have understanding, though poverty usually proves the opposite (28:11). God has sent pastors to feed you knowledge and understanding (Jer 3:15; Neh 8:7-8). Do you love their reproofs (15:32)?

You live in the perilous times of the last days, and it is your holy duty before God to be wise and understand what the will of the Lord is (Eph 5:15-17). Instead of turning away from the truth to fables like the rest of the Christian world, you must earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jer 6:16; II Tim 4:3-4; Jude 1:3).

Brute beasts have no understanding, no matter what PETA claims (Ps 32:9). But God blinds rebellious men far beyond brute beasts (Is 44:18-20; Rom 1:18-27; Eph 4:17-19). Hyenas and donkeys do not practice same-sex mating! And do not try to obtain understanding from this world's educational system, because God has promised to destroy their efforts (I Cor 1:19-20; 3:19-20).

If you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God in sincerity and truth, you have great understanding through the gift of eternal life (I John 5:20). You should always be thankful (II Thess 2:13), for no man can comprehend or discern the things of God without the miracle of regeneration (Ps 14:2; 53:2; John 8:43; 12:40; Rom 3:11; I Cor 2:14).

The Lord Jesus Christ was given great understanding, for in Him was hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Is 11:1-3; Col 2:3). Humble yourself before God and beg Him for some of that wisdom. He will not turn you away or criticize your urgent request (Jas 1:5; Col 1:9-10). Apply yourself to the word of God each day, and give rapt attention to His preachers. You can have a wellspring of life for your great prosperity.