

The Lenten Season is a reminder that Jesus Christ overcame our biggest challenge by doing what we could never do. He defeated sin and death to give us forgiveness and life, to restore us to God's family.

But that is not all that God does. He wants to help us face other challenges in lives. For the past month we have been looking at how God helps us: Overcoming Falsehood with Truth, Evil with Good, Anxiety with Peace, and Fear with Faith. Today we look at the next challenge, Overcoming Confusion with Wisdom.

Life can be very confusing. I remember the first time I tried to take Lee Road in Brighton over US 23 after they put the roundabouts in. I ended up getting back on the Highway heading North. There was another time when we were heading to Hilton Head, SC and hit some road construction. Our GPS unit kept sending us around the same circle.

Life is confusing when people send us mixed messages or when different people tell us different things about the same topic. That is definitely the case when it comes to Christianity. The Christian faith begins with God. Many deny the existence of a god or say he is irrelevant. Christians believe God is the Creator of heaven and earth. Many deny a creator. Jesus says He is the truth. Many people claim that truth is relative. It is no wonder that about 25% of today's teenagers have no knowledge of God and no connection with Him.

There is something very important we need to say and understand right now. It is ok to have doubts or to question the Christian faith. This should be a safe play for us to raise our doubts, to ask our questions. Remember the father who brought his son with an evil spirit to Jesus. When Jesus asked how long this had been going on, the father answered, "Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 8:21-24 NLT) Doubt can coexist with faith. Doubts may mean that faith is alive, struggling and growing.

Can wisdom help us overcome confusion? That all depends on the kind of wisdom we are turning to for help. There are two kinds of wisdom in our world. James, Jesus brother, wrote about the wisdom of the world and the wisdom from God. We live in the information age. We have access to all kinds of knowledge. But knowledge is not wisdom. Proverbs tells us, "Fear of the Lord is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline." (1:7 NLT) This does not mean that the Christian faith is against using our intellect. It does mean that we begin with God, not by excluding God. It does mean that we realize that every good gift, even human intellect and advancements that improve the quality of our lives come from God.

God's wisdom will challenge what we do and how we think. If we break the Ten Commandments, we will hurt ourselves and others. If we fail to help others in need, we will miss out on the blessing that come from serving others. If we turn away from wisdom, we will suffer the consequences.

We don't get an automatic download of wisdom just because we are Jesus followers. Wisdom needs practice. Wisdom requires living and learning. Just as athletes practice doing the same thing over and over again so that they can do it in a game, so we need to practice wisdom over and over again so that we can apply it in our lives. So how do we do that?

First we need to be humble enough to hear God's Word, to listen to His guidance. There is a big difference between the person who knows they need help and those who think they've got it all together. I've coached a variety of youth sports. It always amazed me when I had a 12 year old player tell me that they have been playing the game for 5 or 6 years. They already know how to play the game and don't need a coach. Really? Proverbs tells us, *“So that you would recognize wisdom and value discipline; that you would understand insightful teaching and receive wise guidance to live a disciplined life; that you would seek justice and have the ability to choose what is right and fair.”* (Proverbs 1:2-3 Voice)

Next we need to seek God's Wisdom. James, the brother of Jesus, tells us *“If you don't have all the wisdom needed for this journey, then all you have to do is ask God for it; and God will grant all that you need. He gives lavishly and never scolds you for asking.”* (James 1:5 Voice) Jesus promises us the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us. We need to seek the Spirit's help.

We also need to follow God's Wisdom, to apply it to our lives. We are not wise because we desire or have God's Word. We are not wise because we read God's Word. True wisdom comes from following God's Word, from taking His advice and applying it in our lives. That happens when we are connected with God. That doesn't happen if we drift away from Him and His Word.

We also need to stay connected with fellow Christians. God brings us together to help and support each other. God can use the insights and experiences of our fellow Christians to give us wisdom. That is also why it is important that we have mentor relationships. We all have faith experiences and insights that others can learn from. We not only need to look for Christian mentors, but also look for opportunities to be mentors to others. Christian friends are extremely important. We don't limit our friendships to just Christians. But it is important to have a core of Christian friends. Christian friends don't just make a difference for kids, they do for adults too.

Wisdom is God's gift to help us overcome the confusion we face in life. Proverbs describes wisdom as a Lady. Lady Wisdom is calling.

Play The Voice Bible video, “Lady Wisdom.”