



Part One

Teaching Wisdom To Our Children

By

Mark McGee

Chapters

Introduction	3
Love Your Soul	4
Fear God	14
Be An Example of a Wise Person	21
Be Wise in the Things of God	28

Introduction

Do you remember the name Buckminster Fuller? He was an inventor, mathematician and futurist who wrote a book shortly before his death 35 years ago titled *Critical Path* (St. Martin's Press, 1981). In the book, Fuller introduced the idea of a "Knowledge Doubling Curve." Using all of the knowledge that the human race had accumulated and transmitted by 1 AD as a starting point, Fuller believed knowledge would have doubled by about 1500 AD. The next doubling of knowledge would have been about 1750 AD. Doubling increased exponentially during the next two centuries and had grown to about every 25 years by the end of World War 2. Today, because of the computer and other information systems, the doubling time of knowledge is close to every 12 months and experts say it may one day double every 12 hours!

I touched on some of these futurist views in the section about "The Science of Immortality" in my book *A History of Man's Quest for Immortality* (Fifth Estate, 2007, pp. 391-470). Though "knowledge doubling" is certainly a big challenge to our society, there is a bigger problem. Knowledge is increasing, but wisdom is decreasing. Our children will "know" more in their lifetime than we will ever know in ours, but they will have little "wisdom" to use that knowledge.

We must teach wisdom to our children now!

[This study series first appeared in Grace Martial Arts Fellowship newsletters during the 1990s]

Love Your Soul!

Whether you are a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, teacher or friend to children, this special series is for you. This is the first of many posts to help you help your children grow in *wisdom*. Let's begin with the lessons from the wisest man who ever lived (not counting Jesus Christ).

The words of King Solomon in Proverbs 19:8 are powerful: "He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good." Our parents teach us from an early age how to love them, ourselves and others, but what about our soul? The soul is eternal. The body dies, but the real you lives forever. We spend so much time taking care of our bodies and improving our minds and relationships with others, but shouldn't we also learn how to care for our eternal soul?

King Solomon was one of the wisest people who ever lived. The Bible tells us: "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment ... And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore ... And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt ... And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." (1 Kings 3:28; 4:29, 30, 34)

Solomon had a wise father. King David was not perfect, but he was wise. David loved God and wanted to do God's will. David loved his son and wanted him to be wise. Solomon learned so much about wisdom from his father and from God. Solomon made the correct choice in his early years: to get wisdom.

“Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great? And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king. Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.” 2 Chronicles 1:10-12

Solomon received tremendous wisdom from God and was known around the world for it: “And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built ... And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom ... So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for

wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.” (1 Kings 10:4, 6, 7, 8, 23, 24)

How can we receive God’s wisdom into our souls? How might God use us to be a light to the world of His Love and Knowledge? Let’s turn to His Word and learn.

We begin by taking Proverbs 19:8 in context. Solomon learned much about caring for his soul from his father, King David. So, let’s first see what David knew about wisdom and what he would have passed along to his son. Then, let’s see what Solomon knew about wisdom and what he would have passed along to his son prior to his writing the words of Proverbs 19:8. What we learn is good for us and for our children and their children.

First, what David knew about wisdom. Notice how instruction, knowledge, wisdom and understanding are often placed together.

“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”
Psalms 19:7

“The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.” Psalms 37:30

“My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.” Psalms 49:3

“Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.” Psalms 51:6

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Psalms 90:12

“Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.” Psalms 107:43

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.” Psalms 111:10

“Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.” Psalms 119:98

Now, what Solomon knew about wisdom and what he would have taught his children. As you read what he wrote to his children, think about how you could teach these same precepts about wisdom to your children.

“To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding ... To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity ... A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction ... Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets.” Proverbs 1:2,3,5,6,7,20

“So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding ... For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of

his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding ... He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly ... When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.” Proverbs 2:2,6,7,10

“Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil ... Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding ... The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens ... My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion ... The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.” Proverbs 3:7,13,19,21, 35

“Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth ... Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding ... I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.” Proverbs 4:5,7,11

“My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding.” Proverbs 5:1

“Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.” Proverbs 7:4

“Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? ... O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart ... For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it ... I

wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions ... Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength ... Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.” Proverbs 8:1,5,11,12,14, 33

“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars ... Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding ... If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.” Proverbs 9:1,8,9,10,12

“The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother ... He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame ... The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall ... In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding. Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction ... In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise ... The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom ... It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom ... The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.” Proverbs 10:1,5,8,13,14,19,21,23,31

“When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom ... He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace ... He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.” Proverbs 11:2,12,29,30

“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise ... There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.” Proverbs 12:15,18

“A wise son heareth his father’s instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke ... The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death ... He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.” Proverbs 13:1,14,20

“Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands ... In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them ... A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth ... The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit ... A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident ... The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly ... Wisdom resteth in the heart of

him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known ... The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame." Proverbs 14:1,3,6,8,16,24,33,35

"The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness ... The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so ... A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise ... A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother. Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly ... The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise ... The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility." Proverbs 15:21,33

"The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it ... How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver! ... He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he. The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning ... The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." Proverbs 16:14,16,20,21,23

"A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren ... A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes

into a fool. Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it? ... Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth ... Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.” Proverbs 17:2,10,16,24,28

“Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom ... The words of a man’s mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook ... The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.” Proverbs 18:1,4,15

“He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good ... Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.” Proverbs 19:8,20

Now, let me place this in context of something very dear to my heart: teaching martial arts in a Christian atmosphere. Instructing children and young people to defend themselves is a wonderful thing. It is a great opportunity to improve the bodies and minds of hundreds, even thousands of people. We teach our students the art of self defense. We teach them how to defend themselves and others who are innocent. It is a wonderful reward knowing they can do that effectively while they are on earth. But is that the best thing? Is there something even better? Yes! By far the greatest reward in life is to teach our children, students and friends how to love their own souls; for that will do them good throughout eternity. We begin by imparting to them the

knowledge, wisdom and understanding of God. That will reap eternal benefits and bring great joy and happiness to many lives.

Given the fact that knowledge currently "doubles" about every 12 months, our children will *know* more than any previous generation. However, another fact is that *wisdom* to use the growing volume of knowledge is diminishing rapidly.

King Solomon of Israel was the world's wisest man. When he spoke, people listened. They were amazed at his combination of knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five. Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish. And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon." 1 Kings 4:29-34 (NKJV)

A good place to begin teaching wisdom to our children is through the words of Solomon and his father, King David.

Fear God

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” Psalm 111:10

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Proverbs 1:7

“Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.” Proverbs 4:5-7

Wisdom is the “principal” thing in life and it begins by having a reverential fear of God. Having a healthy fear of the Almighty God is a good thing. It prepares our hearts and minds to receive knowledge and with knowledge comes understanding. To teach wisdom to others we must first fear God. It’s like the fear a child has for their father. They love their father and their father loves them. The child wants to please their father in every way. They do not want to displease him. When they disobey their father, they see the displeasure and disappointment in his eyes. They don’t want to see that. They don’t want to receive his discipline. Wise children obey their parents because they love and fear them.

The Hebrew word for “fear” in Psalm 111 and Proverbs 1 is *yirah*. It is translated by many English words, including “fear, piety, reverence, awesome and revere.” Wisdom begins with reverential subordination to God. Most people in the world have made themselves “god” and glory in themselves. They are wise in their own sight. If they do worship a god, it is one of their own creation. Billions of people through history have made gods from wood and stone and made up their own religions from their human wisdom. God has laughed at them and destroyed their gods and attempts at human glorification.

The Apostle Paul told the sad story of the folly of human wisdom in his letter to the Christians in Rome.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to

uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” Romans 1:18-32

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” How true that is. Go to any bookstore or library in the world and you’ll see how the human race professes itself to be wise and in doing so they become fools. There is no wisdom outside of God’s Wisdom. There is no truth outside of God’s Truth. God

Knows everything; He is All-Wise. The beginning of wisdom for any person is to **fear** God. That's where it begins for us; that's where it begins for our students. If we do not fear God, we cannot teach our children and the children of others how to fear God. If we are "afraid" of God, we cannot teach reverential fear. We must know, understand and experience God's Love as the great love of the greatest Parent Who has ever Loved. Our fear of God must be based on love and respect for God, not fear because we don't want to get caught or be punished. If we fear God for the wrong reason, we play games with God, others and ourselves. We cannot model Godly fear for children that way. They'll see we're phonies and hypocrites and either walk away or learn more devious ways of playing the self-righteous, hypocrisy game. Each generation of game players becomes worse until faith loses all meaning and purpose. We must be real with God, real with ourselves and real with others. That's difficult but necessary to having wisdom and teaching wisdom.

Having fear of a physical attack is healthy. It teaches us to be aware of our surroundings and be prepared for an attack that could come at any time, by any method and from any direction. We teach children and young people to defend themselves in scary situations in life. We introduce our students to ways of defending themselves against attacks that would frighten most people. We teach children and teens to defend themselves against yells and threats, grabs and holds, punches and kicks, tackles and throws. We teach them how to face

someone carrying a stick, knife or gun. That kind of training would give most adults a severe headache. The training we give our students develops “knowledge and understanding” that leads to “wisdom” about how to deal with physical and mental attacks. They develop godly confidence and self confidence during their training that prepares them for the real thing. Being “afraid” doesn’t protect people. That leads to freezing or panic; just the reaction an attacker wants. “Fearing” an attack works because it leads to knowledge gained through training which produces skill and the wisdom to use it.

I invite you to spend the coming weeks and months considering what God meant when He said: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” Here are some Scriptures to help you in your study. Meditate on His Word and make it part of the fiber of your life. Write your thoughts in a notebook or journal so you will be able to share them with your children and students.

Genesis 22:9-14

Exodus 1:15-21 ... 14:31

Leviticus 19:1-32 ... 25:17

Deuteronomy 6:1-25 ... 8:1-6 ... 10:12-20 ... 13:4 ... 14:23 ... 17:18-20
... 28:58-62 ... 31:11-13

Joshua 4:23-24 ... 24:14-15

1 Samuel 12:14-24

2 Samuel 23:1-4

2 Kings 17:25-41

1 Chronicles 16:23-36

2 Chronicles 19:7-9

Nehemiah 7:1-2

Job 1:1-22 ... 28:28

Psalms 2:1-12 ... 5:1-7 ... 15:1-5 ... 19:7-9 ... 22:22-24 ... 25:12-14
... 33:8-9 ... 36:1-12 ... 61:1-8 ... 66:16-20 ... 67:1-7 ... 86:1-11 ...
89:1-7 ... 96:1-4 ... 102:13-16 ... 103:13-18 ... 111:1-10 ... 112:1-3
... 115:11-18 ... 118:1-4 ... 128:1-4 ... 135:19-21 ... 145:18-20 ...
147:11

Proverbs 1:7, 20-30 ... 2:1-5 ... 3:6-8 ... 8:13 ... 9:10 ... 10:27 ...
14:1-27 ... 15:16, 33 ... 16:6 ... 19:23 ... 22:4 ... 23:17 ... 24:21-22
... 31:30

Isaiah 2:10-21 ... 11:1-5 ... 29:22-23 ... 33:1-6 ... 50:10 ... 59:19

Jeremiah 5:24-31 ... 10:6-7 ... 32:37-40

Daniel 6:26

Hosea 3:4-5

Haggai 1:12

Malachi 3:16

Acts 9:31 ... 10:1-4 ... 13:15-26

Romans 3:10-18

2 Corinthians 7:1

Ephesians 5:15-21

Colossians 3:22-25

Hebrews 12:28-29

1 Peter 2:17

Revelation 14:6-7 ... 15:1-4 ... 19:5-6

Be An Example of a Wise Person

We need to be students before we become teachers. We need to be wise and act wisely before teaching others about wisdom. Every Christian should be a student of wisdom, but those who teach others about living wisely should be well-versed in wisdom and continue to study wisdom throughout their lives. Good martial arts instructors have the respect of their students. Martial arts teachers have traveled the martial road ahead of their students and bring knowledge, experience and wisdom to their classes.

Martial arts books, especially Christian ones, speak about the importance of teaching wisdom to our students.

Verse 88 of the *Chinese Five Word Song* reads: “To learn correctly depends on long frequent practice and on your wisdom.” Verse 110 reads: “Strive for knowledge of the method, but also the wisdom (craft) of its usage.” In Christian martial artist John Chung Li’s commentary about that verse, he wrote: “When we talk about meeting the attack by the method you learn, you should know how to make your method suitable. Wisdom changes the method into a suitable movement. This we call craft. Craft is shaped from wisdom and experience. The detail of truth is so fine that we have to meditate on its usage. A rough minded student cannot gain much, so we should carefully meditate on each movement bit by bit. The more you meditate, the more you gain. First we should master the method of

movement; second, we should meditate the craft together with the movement to meet the enemy. Method and craft: the two must come together.”

This is paramount in our instruction. We teach methods that can cause serious injury when applied in a self-defense situation. We must also know which self-defense techniques are appropriate for different attacks. We may know how to perform a high block with great strength and speed, but if we have not also learned how to perform a low block and someone kicks at our leg we will not be able to defend ourselves. We may know how to execute an outer reaping throw with great proficiency, but if someone grabs us from behind and pulls us back quickly and we have not learned any other throws we will be unable to defend ourselves. Martial arts teaches students how to use every part of their bodies in every possible direction for self defense. We practice with our teacher, our partners and alone to develop the necessary understanding of how each technique works in every possible attack situation. We learn what works and doesn't work against every conceivable scenario. Our students must know the wisdom of using the techniques they are taught. They learn the methods and the craft of using them from their teachers. If their teachers have the wisdom and impart the wisdom, students will be wise in their usage of dangerous methods.

Pastor and martial arts Grand Master Karl Marx Sr. said it well in his book *Martial Art Spirit*: “A sensei must always be an example of high virtue. The relationships with the many students must be, above all, objective and well defined. Only in this way is there perceptual learning and improvement. Since all martial arts training are primarily oriented towards the spirit of self-reliance, the Sensei has an obligation to set an example for the students in all things in excellence, discipline, moderation, and wisdom.”

These four aspects of life should stand before us every day as we teach children martial arts under the Christian banner. EXCELLENCE – DISCIPLINE – MODERATION – WISDOM. They will make us, and our students, powerful witnesses of the Glory and Power of our LORD.

- EXCELLENCE
- DISCIPLINE
- MODERATION
- WISDOM

In the book *Encounter The Warrior's Heart*, Joseph Lumpkin and Daryl Covington wrote: “Although learning is as important as leaves to a tree, it is only half of what is needed to become a warrior. There must also be discernment. Learning is not only reading books and acquiring knowledge. The ultimate challenge is in knowing how to integrate knowledge into life. In this way, and only in this way, can learning become wisdom. Discernment is far-sightedness. It is the

ability to see the outcome of a situation. To hone this skill one must be a student of human nature. He must allow knowledge, wisdom, and far-sightedness to gestate in his spirit. This patience will enable him to see the end of a matter from the beginning.”

Knowing God’s Word and having the wisdom to use it correctly must come together in the life of the Christian teacher if we are to be able to teach wisdom to our children. Paul wrote Timothy about handling the Word of God properly and carefully: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15) The NIV translates the verse: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” It should be the goal of every Christian teacher to handle God’s Word correctly. A teacher who mishandles the Word of Truth does need to be ashamed. The Lord has placed in our hands the lives, minds and hearts of children and youth. Christian martial arts instructors have the privilege and responsibility for guiding their students into the Truth of God’s Word as well as the truth of martial arts principles and practice. Our wise use of those Truths is an example to our students about how to use God’s Word. If we mishandle the Word, our students may do the same. If we teach improper martial methods, our students may use them to hurt rather than help people in need of protection.

One of a Christian martial arts teacher's primary messages is that success as a martial artist is never having to fight. We don't train our students to fight. We train them to stop conflict before it begins where possible and end conflict with the least amount of force necessary if it does begin. A martial arts teacher who is quick to fight sends a powerful and unfortunate message to his or her students. Students often follow the actions of their teacher. We need to be smart and act wisely when we face bullies, sensitive emotions or injustice. We teach more by what we do than by what we say.

Sensei Wendy Williamson in her book *Christian Martial Arts 101* wrote this about wisdom in difficult situations: "Be smart. Think before you act. Wisdom is much better than strength and weapons of war (Eccl. 9:16-18)." Those verses read: "Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good."

Nothing can compare with wisdom in a life. With wisdom we see, know and understand completely. We see things as God sees them, know as He knows and understands as He understands. The human mind is amazing and complex, but it is also flawed. It is clouded by sin, thus many of its decisions are mistakes. Self-confidence can and should go only so far. God-confidence is what we should trust. God's Mind has no flaws. He makes no mistakes.

In Psalm 19:7-8 King David wrote that God's Word is four things: perfect, sure, right and pure. " The law of the LORD is perfect...the testimony of the LORD is sure...The statutes of the LORD are right...the commandment of the LORD is pure." We can trust God where we can trust no one else, even ourselves. No other person's words are perfect, sure, right and pure; only God's.

- PERFECT
- SURE
- RIGHT
- PURE

When we trust in God's Word, many wonderful things happen in our lives and the lives of those we teach. David said trusting God's Word does four things in a person's life: it converts the soul, it makes wise the simple, it rejoices the heart, and enlightens the eyes. " ...converting the soul...making wise the simple...rejoicing the heart...enlightening the eyes."

- CONVERTED
- WISE
- JOYFUL
- ENLIGHTENED

This is what every Christian teacher should be: converted, wise, joyful and enlightened. This is what we want for our students. We want their soul to be saved. We want the simple to become wise. We want hearts to rejoice. We want eyes and minds to be enlightened. In a

reverse way, this explains the condition of people who do not know God. They are lost, simple, sad and dark. Our mission is to teach lost people God's Word so they will become saved people who are wise, joyful and enlightened. Many world religions and philosophies promise these attributes, but only Christ can deliver on the promise. Every philosophy contrary to the Way of Christ is foolishness.

Quotes from the following Martial Arts books:

Fifth Estate Publishing

Chinese Five Word Song (John Chung Li, Li Tung Fung, Mark McGee, 2004)

Martial Arts Spirit (Karl Marx, Sr., 2004)

Encounter The Warrior's Heart (Joseph Lumpkin, Daryl R. Covington, 2003)

Agapy Publishing

Christian Martial Arts 101 (Wendy Williamson, 2004)

Be Wise in the Things of God

Okay, we want to teach wisdom to our children. Good goal to have, but where do we start? First, we must be truly converted. It's not enough to attend church and say the right words. Conversion is new life, new direction, new thoughts, new desires. Christ touches our soul and changes it from the inside out. He makes us new and real.

In order to teach children about wisdom, we must be wise in the things of God. We must know Him intimately and understand His ways completely. When we face difficulties beyond our understanding, we must know how to go to God and His Word and receive His Wisdom to deal with those difficulties, problems and challenges in life and ministry. We must be filled with the joy of God. Our hearts should be filled and overflowing with the joy of loving, knowing, worshiping and serving God. We must be enlightened. We must know the path of God, be able to walk it securely and lead others in the way of righteousness.

This sounds like a mighty big task to me. It seems greater than any human being could take on by themselves. It is. It is bigger than one person. That is the wonderful message of Christ: we are not walking alone. We are not serving alone. He is with us every step of the way. Christ is our great Master. He is our Divine Teacher. He is All-Powerful and All-Knowing. He walked the path before us. He can guide us through anything and everything that will come into our lives. He is the Wisdom of God.

Christ's Life and Words while on earth, His Words through His disciples after He returned to Heaven, they are our wisdom, our guide through life. As we listen and obey we will know what to do, how to do it and when to do it. Christ will answer our every question. He will meet our every need. And it is as we depend on Christ to guide us that we will know how to guide those we teach.

Christ faced life's most difficult moments with great wisdom, strength and courage. His Life and how He responded to temptations and tests will guide us now through the soul-mines of life. The first thing Christ did after beginning His official ministry was to face the great enemy of God, Satan.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high

mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

Matthew 4:1-10

Jesus faced Satan and defeated him long before we started out on the path. Christ has already defeated the enemy. We don't have to worry or fret about facing Satan alone. Nothing will happen to us that Jesus has not dealt with successfully. We will not stumble upon some new problem or challenge that will surprise and confuse God. Christ faced everything Satan had in his arsenal of tricks and won the battle! Jesus wants us to follow Him and become like Him. He is our wisdom. He is our strength.

Notice the four things Christ did and said when facing the enemy.

- OBEY GOD
- TRUST GOD
- WORSHIP GOD
- SERVE GOD

Look through the entire Bible and you'll find these four principles of wisdom in every Book and every chapter: obey God, trust God, worship God, serve God. If we wake up every morning and conduct our life on these four principles, we will be wise and able to teach wisdom to our children.

Practical Steps to Gaining Wisdom:

Read about wisdom in God's Word every day. Here are several methods for doing that. You might want to take each idea for a year and complete all the methods in seven years. When you complete that, start again. It can become a life-long study about wisdom.

- Read through the Book of Proverbs each month for one year. The purpose of Proverbs is explained in the first several verses of the first chapter: "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion." Proverbs has 31 chapters, so it's easy to do that. You may enjoy it so much you'll want to do that each year for several years. Select one or two verses from each day's chapter to consider and apply to your life that day.
- Get one of the flip-card Scripture calendars that has a verse about God's wisdom for each day of the year. Keep it on your desk, at your computer, in the kitchen, at work, wherever you'll see it and remember to read the verse for each day. Meditate on that verse throughout the day and apply it to your life that day and the days following.
- Read a chapter of the Book of Psalms each day. It will take you 150 days: less than six months. You may enjoy it enough to read

through the Psalms twice a year. Think about what you learned and apply it to your life that day and the days following.

- Use a computer search or exhaustive concordance to find every usage of the words **wise** and **wisdom** in the Bible. Develop a personal Bible study based on what you learn about wisdom. Read two verses each day and you'll finish the study in one year. Apply what you learn to your life each day.
- Read a chapter of the Gospels each day for one year. You'll read through the Gospels four times. Keep notes about the Wisdom of Christ. Think about something He said or did each day and apply the truth to your life.
- Read a chapter from the Apostolic letters each day. Consider one major truth from each chapter and apply it to your life. You'll be able to read through Acts and the Pauline and General Epistles twice a year.
- Do a year-long study about the lives of people in the Bible. Start with Adam and Eve and work your way through each person God mentions. Think about what you learn from each individual's life and choices and apply the insights to your life.
- Keep a journal with notes about what you learned about wisdom during your studies. Note what the Bible says, how you apply the truth to your life and what you are learning. You can review the notes throughout your life and use them in your ministry with children.

May God richly bless you as you prepare your heart, mind, soul and strength to teach wisdom to the precious children God has placed in your life.

Copyright © 1990-2016 GraceLife Ministries

“Scripture taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”