What Does the Bible Say About Common Sense?
Proverbs 8:5
03/18/2020 Wednesday PM

Introduction

- Over the past two weeks we have looked at thought provoking questions like, **What is the difference between Islam and Christianity?** and **Is Jesus Really God?**
- Last week's question really built off of the previous week's because it is the single greatest difference between Christianity and all other religions on the planet.
- Some believe in Jesus, however they do not believe he is God, which for us as Christians, is a no-go.
- Tonight, we are going to pivot a little and ask, **What Does the Bible Say About Common Sense?**
- We hear a lot about 'common sense' today, especially the lack of it that seems to go around.
- First we need to define what we mean by 'common sense.' Merriam Webster defines it as: sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts. We often hear people say, "use common sense."
- Another way of saying it is: good sense and sound judgment in practical matters.
- So, let's look at what God's Word has to say about it tonight.

Proverbs 8:5 (NLT)

How naive you are! Let me give you common sense. O foolish ones, let me give you understanding.

Proverbs 8:5 (NIV - 1984)

You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding.

- The Greek word translated in the NLT as 'common sense' is *`ormah* which means: shrewdness, craftiness, prudence.
- We see that the NIV translates this word as prudence, and Merriam Webster defined 'common sense' as "sound and prudent judgement…"
- Merriam Webster defines Prudence as:
    1. the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason
    2. shrewdness in the management of affairs
    3. skill and good judgment in the use of resources
    4. caution or wariness as to danger or risk
- Looking at these definitions, we get the sense that 'common sense' is in fact synonymous with prudence.
- If we are telling someone to use 'common sense' we are telling them to be prudent.
- Plainly, common sense is sound judgment in practical matters.
- In **Proverbs 8:5** most translation use "prudence" while others say "discretion." A select few say "common sense.
- Biblically, common sense can be thought of as a combination of wisdom and discretion.

Proverbs 8:12–14

[12]"I, wisdom, dwell together with **prudence**; I possess knowledge and discretion. [13]To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. [14]Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power.

- Wisdom is knowing what to do. Discretion is knowing when and where to do it.
- Being foolish is having no common sense or being "void of understanding," as the KJV puts it in **Proverbs 7:7; 24:30**.
- The book of Proverbs proclaims the benefits of gaining wisdom and also shows the negative aspect of being foolish. (**Proverbs 13:16; 16:22; 26:11**)

Proverbs 3:13–14

"[13]Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, [14]for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold."

- Wisdom allows us to see life the way God does.
- When we seek God's perspective, we can make decisions based upon their eternal significance rather than selfish interest.
- **When we choose to make decisions based on that kind of wisdom, we are exercising 'common sense'.**
- V.14 tells us that "wisdom" "is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold."

- The desire for instant gratification is the enemy of common sense.
- Many people have become ensnared in trouble and heartache because they rejected a wise path and sought instead immediate satisfaction.
- Common sense is often developed by learning from the consequences of such poor choices—the school of hard knocks educates many.
- Everyone makes bad decisions at some point; however it is what we learn from those negative experiences, that dictates if we are wise or foolish.
- A wise person learns from his or her mistakes, a foolish person keeps repeating them.
- Some people seem born with a more level head, while others learn from experience.
- Either way, wisdom and common sense should be continually pursued in order to experience the best God has for us.

Proverbs 2:1-8

[1]My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, [2]turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, [3]and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, [4]and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, [5]then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. **[6]For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. [7]He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, [8]for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.**

- The Lord calls us all to be wise, prudent, and discerning.
- If we are going to walk in step with God and if we are going to have the same mindset as God, we must walk in wisdom, because God is not foolish.
- God is the ultimate standard-bearer of 'common sense.'
- **When we walk in these ways we can see that the Lord is our shield and "he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones."**
- When we speak to people about using common sense, let us do so in a way that understands what we are asking of them. We are asking them to be wise.
- Ensure that they understand what true wisdom means.

- Right now the world is in dire need of people that display common sense and wisdom.
- As Christians, we should be modeling this for people and leading them in paths of prudence, not foolishness.
- Sometimes we like to call this "logic" however if we are basing our wisdom on God's will, it transcends logic and becomes God's wisdom.
- Do not be a part of the foolishness of the world that Satan uses to ensnare and destroy people with.
- Instead, be a part of proclaiming God's message to a lost and dying world. When you do that, you are proclaiming wisdom and common sense to a desperate world.