

Agape House of Worship
Bible Study - Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Topic: The Three Pillars of Spiritual Maturity: Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom

Reference Text: Proverbs 2:1-6

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Proverbs 2:1-6 "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 indeed, 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; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."

Introduction: Today we will examine the three pillars of spiritual maturity: Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom. While these terms are often used interchangeably, Scripture distinguishes them as progressive stages of spiritual growth. While knowledge provides facts, and understanding provides the insight, it is wisdom that enables us to apply God's truth to our daily lives. Today we are going to explore how these three interact, so we can move beyond simply knowing about God to living a life that reflects His character and fulfills His purpose.

I. Definition of Knowledge, Understanding and Wisdom

Knowledge:

- Hebrew: *Da* 'at (yada)) – knowledge, awareness
- Greek: *Gnōsis* – knowledge, insight

Knowledge is the acquisition of facts, truths, and information. It is the learning gathered through Scripture, experience, or education. Also, in the Bible, knowledge is often depicted as far more than facts but as a deep, relational knowing that involves experience. Hence, the word knowledge or knowing is sometimes depicted as experiencing or encountering. (Genesis 4:1, Philippians 3:10).

Key Scriptures

- *Hosea 4:6 "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."*
- *Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge."*
- *John 8:32 "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Understanding:

- Hebrew: *Binah* – discernment, insight
- Greek: *Synesis* – comprehension, intelligence

Understanding is the ability to translate meaning from the facts. It is insight, or intelligence, derived from putting ideas or facts together (a "mental putting together"). The ability to grasp deeper meanings, connect concepts, and form sound judgments, distinguishing it from mere theoretical knowledge.

Key Scriptures:

- *Proverbs 4:7 "In all your getting, get understanding."*
- *1 Kings 3:9 "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart."*
- *Colossians 1:9 "...being filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."*

Wisdom:

- Hebrew: *Chokmah* – skill, mastery, practical wisdom
- Greek: *Sophia* – wisdom, applied insight

Wisdom is depicted in the Bible as the practical application of knowledge and understanding to make sound, God-honoring decisions. It is "skill in the art of godly living". It is the God-given ability to apply knowledge and understanding rightly in real life, producing righteous outcomes.

Key Scriptures:

- *Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."*
- *James 3:13 "Who is a wise man...? Let him show by good conduct."*
- *James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."*

II. Connection and Interdependence of Knowledge, Understanding and Wisdom

The Bible presents these concepts as a sequential building process for spiritual growth. Wisdom is the correct application of knowledge, but it takes proper understanding to correctly apply knowledge. All the three attributes ultimately come from God. *Proverbs 2:6 “For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.” (NIV)*

We are going to look at how these three are connected:

Knowledge:

- Knowledge is the foundation of everything in spiritual development. Knowledge (facts/data) builds understanding (how things connect), which then enables wisdom (applying knowledge/understanding with good judgment for right action). There are two different kinds of knowledge.
 1. Informational knowledge: Knowledge acquired by senses (studying, observation etc.)
 2. Revelation knowledge: Revelation knowledge is a deeper, transformative knowledge directly imparted by the Holy Spirit.
- Knowledge without spiritual understanding is fruitless and ineffective. *2 Timothy 3:7 “always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.”*
- Pursuing knowledge without wisdom as the end goal leads to pride and spiritual emptiness: *1 Corinthians 8:1 “.....But knowledge puffs up while love builds up.”*
Matthew 13:14-15 “And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.’

Understanding

- Understanding is the bridge between knowledge and wisdom. Without understanding, it is impossible to convert knowledge to wisdom. *1 Corinthians 2:12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. (NIV)*
- Understanding helps with knowledge acquisition. The greater your level of understanding, the easier to know: *Ephesians 1:18 “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (NKJV)*
- Understanding is the bridge between knowledge and wisdom: *Ephesians 5:17 “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” (NKJV)*

Wisdom

- Wisdom is the Biblical goal of knowledge acquisition. It is the product of knowledge acquisition, combined with spiritual understanding with the right heart. *Proverbs 4:7 “Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. (NKJV)*
- God is the ultimate give of wisdom: *James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” (NIV)*
- The wisdom of God does not always look wise to man: *1 Corinthians 1:25 “For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.” (NIV)*
- The ultimate wisdom of God is Jesus Christ: *1 Corinthians 1:24 “but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (NIV)*

Concept	Core Question	Focus
Knowledge	<i>What is true?</i>	Information
Understanding	<i>What does it mean?</i>	Interpretation
Wisdom	<i>What should I do?</i>	Application