



SAMUEL JONATHAN

WISDOM
AND THE FOOL

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The Fool

SAMUEL JONATHAN

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WISDOM AND THE FOOL

DEDICATION

To my father, friend and mentor,
Bishop Jonathan Ayodele Famoriyo
April 1942 – April 2000

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1 DEFINING WISDOM

*“You cannot become what
you cannot define”
– Samuel Jonathan*

How would you define Wisdom?

One day, I had the privilege of preaching at the London branch of a global church. At the commencement of the sermon, I asked “How many of us would like to be successful this year?” All hands went up. Some were so eager that they raised both hands! Then I asked my favourite follow-up question, “Who can define Success?”. The entire church was silent! Suddenly “Jerusalem” was without a voice.

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Many a time, we strive and aspire to become what we cannot define. We pursue goals that are not well-defined and chase targets that are not specific. The outcome is usually one of despair, discouragement and defeat.

Words such as clever, smart, intelligent, savvy and “wise” have been used with the notion that they are synonymous with wisdom. They distinctly differ from wisdom! Let us look at the proper and wholesome definition of wisdom. We will also incorporate the perspective of the best-selling book of all times and the most popular book in the world, The Holy Bible.

Wisdom is application of knowledge. Wisdom is implementing knowledge you have acquired. Wisdom is putting into practice what you have learned.

In Matthew chapter 7 verse 24, Jesus defines a wise person as one who listens, learns and puts into practice. In His illustration, Jesus likened a wise person to one who builds a house on a rock; a foundation that is

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stable and reliable. When the “storms” of adversity fall, the “winds” of difficulty blow and the “floods” of challenges rise, such a house remains standing firm.

From the classroom to the castle and from the pew to the pulpit, there are many lessons that are learned but truly little implementation. Therefore, after many teachings, illustrations with parables and spending much time preaching to the people, Jesus asked “When I return, will I still find faith?” (Luke 18:8 NIV). In other words, observing the huge disparity between knowledge (learning) and wisdom (doing), Jesus was wondering if people will still be found abiding by his teachings when He returns!

Wisdom has always proven priceless! Yet many do not seek it. Christians would be the most blessed “race” on earth if all were to acquire wisdom. Whether it is Psalm 112:3 or Proverbs 10:6, the Word of God narrates blessing upon blessing and reward upon reward for all who obey God and do His Will.

Is Obedience related to Wisdom

Certainly, yes! Wisdom is implementing what you have learned about God's Will. Wisdom is obeying the commandments of God which you have knowledge of. Wisdom is obeying God.

*“Without an alignment,
there can be no fulfilment”
– Samuel Jonathan*

A lifestyle of wisdom aligns you with God's Will. Your alignment with God grants the permit for your fulfilment (of God's promises). A life aligned with God enjoys the best of God. A lifestyle of wisdom results in a life that fully experiences the Blessing of God. Wisdom is unlocked by the fear of God and the fear of God unlocks the *Treasures* of God.

*“The fear of the LORD is the
key to this treasure”
– Isaiah 33:6*

2 THE FOOL

One night, a man was about to go to sleep. This gentleman knew very well that the weather was cold. Whenever the temperature significantly drops, he knows to make sure that his windows are properly closed, locked and make sure there is no draft i.e. influx of cold air. It has an adverse effect on his health.

As he laid down on his bed, he had the visitation of that wonderful voice called the Holy Spirit. When you enjoy intimacy with God, the Holy Spirit gives clear guidance on even the very minute matters in your life! He was nudged by the Spirit of God to get up and shut the windows. The gentleman thought to himself “I should be fine. I should be okay. I'll get through it's cold but not that cold”.

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If there is anything to learn about the Spirit of the Living God; He is not a talkative! As a young Pastor, I first learned this truth from Daddy E.A. Adeboye. As I started establishing intimacy with the Holy Spirit, I discovered he is the finest of Gentlemen! He will never force Himself on you. If He must repeat Himself, it is for your safety. You will surely thank Him for doing so.

How I wish someone reading this can just shout a living “Hallelujah” unto the Holy Spirit.

“Thank you, Jesus!”

Later that night, around 2 o'clock in the morning, that man started having sniffles. The sniffles became sneezes and in a matter of minutes his nose became congested. He sat up in his bed sighing “Oh gosh”. Before he could complete his thread of thoughts, he began coughing. Now he realised “I should have, could have ...”

He rose from his bed. In a rare combination of top speed to prevent more cold air coming into the room

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and the slow speed of regret and guilt, he made his way to the windows and shut them. You could hear the ping-pong “commentary” going on in his mind as he sluggishly dragged his feet across his bedroom floor.

The coughing and sneezing were so bad that he started to feel a lot of discomfort. Till daybreak, and for the entire day, the sneezing became worse and disrupted his schedule for the day. He was in pain ... avoidable pain.

The description of this gentleman’s experience is quite vivid because I am that man. I was “The Fool”!

3 AVOIDABLE PAIN

*“A fool ignores what needs
to be done to avoid pain”
– Samuel Jonathan*

In the twenty-sixth verse of the seventh chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Jesus explained “Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who builds his house on the sand.” Simply put, a fool is someone who does not implement what they know!

*“Whatever you ignore will
eventually ignore you”
– Samuel Jonathan*

In the real-life story I shared with you in the previous chapter, the gentleman had knowledge of the consequence(s) of leaving his windows open but did not apply the knowledge. He ignored the need to take precaution and it caused him pain. The pain was avoidable!

Isn't that what most of us do?

From matrimony to ministry and from our finances to daily circumstances, we experience pain that is avoidable. In fact, we inflict ourselves with unnecessary pain. Sadly, other people are affected by such pain. Sometimes it is those we claim to love dearly, our spouses, our friends and sometimes our children.

The Yes-No-Yes Evaluation

A drunken driver who takes the lives of eight innocent children walking to school causes avoidable pain to eight families! In addition to cutting the lives of

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those children short and robbing them of their destinies, the driver inflicts scars which will remain with the families for the rest of their lives.

Let us try the Yes-No-Yes Evaluation together:

Evaluation Question	Answer
Did the driver know that alcohol and excessive drinking will impair his ability to drive?	Yes
Did the driver implement the knowledge he had?	No
Was the pain avoidable?	Yes

While in a haste to beat rush-hour traffic, a devout mother places her early-morning steaming-hot coffee mug at the edge of the kitchen counter. As she packs her child's lunchbox, the Holy Spirit prompts her with a gentle voice to move the hot cup of coffee away from the edge of the kitchen counter. Her response? "It's just me alone in the kitchen. I'll grab it in a sec."

Unknown to her, while struggling with the zip of the schoolbag, her 2-year-old quietly walks into the kitchen and reaches for the hot coffee mug. It was

horrendous!

Evaluation Question	Answer
Did this mother know the harm that can be caused by a hot beverage?	Yes
Did she apply that knowledge and move the hot coffee away from causing harm?	No
Was the pain avoidable?	Yes

*“Whatever you do not use
will never be useful to you”*

– Samuel Jonathan

In all instances, they had knowledge but did not use the knowledge. Thus, the knowledge they acquired remained useless and that is who Jesus referred to as “foolish”. Sadly (and above all) the pain was avoidable!

This occurs repeatedly in everyday life. At work, a team member ignores an integral procedure on a project and results in the failure of the entire team. Not only does the team fail but the company loses the contract and shortly thereafter, starts laying people off!

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Lives can be gravely damaged when we fail to utilise knowledge we possess. Resources can be depleted for failure to apply knowledge.

Families can be destroyed. Relationships can suffer irreversible consequences. A person can be scarred for the rest of their lives just because wisdom was ignored ... and the pain was avoidable.

4 THE WISE CHOICE

***“Who can survive the consuming fire?
Who will endure the everlasting burning heat?
He who walks righteously”
-Isaiah 33:14-15***

Just as the absence of wisdom results in undesirable outcomes and painful consequences, the same applies to the pain many will suffer in hell on the *Day of Judgement*. The pain is avoidable!

Let us see if the “Yes-No-Yes” Formula applies:

Evaluation Question	Answer
Do most people know about Heaven and hell?	Yes
Will all of them do that which is needful to avoid hell?	No
Is the burning pain of hell avoidable?	Yes

Christian vs. Disciple

Many Christians cannot be referred to as Disciples. Some cannot even define who a Christian is! From having a Bible at home to being a person who attends church regularly, everyone has their answer to the question “Who is a Christian?” Let me share with you the definition we have for a “Christian” at Lifestyle Church.

A Christian is a person whose lifestyle reflects Christ in ALL they do.

Being a Christian is a lifestyle! It is not just a religion. Neither is it a title. It has nothing to do with the size of the church you attend or the role you play at church.

*“Having a popular Pastor
does not make you a
powerful Christian”
– Samuel Jonathan*

Being a Christian is a way of living. Your personal life and professional life must align with The Cross. God must be glorified in your career and calling. The words you speak must match the life you live! This is the Testimony of Acts 11:26. The residents of Antioch keenly observed that the lifestyle of the Believers was very much in line with that of Christ. Hence, they named them “Christians”.

*“What you speak must
match what you live”
– Samuel Jonathan*

Now, who is a Disciple? I love this question and it is the easiest to answer. A Disciple of Christ is a person who lives according to the teachings of Christ! Any similarities? Yes, you are right.

A Christian ought to be a Disciple of Christ.

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Jesus gave this simple answer in John 8:31 “If you hold on to My teachings, then you are really My Disciples.” A Disciple of Christ is an individual who continually and consistently holds on to the teachings of Christ. From their utterance to their countenance and from their conduct at home to how they conduct business, Christ is revealed!

This explains why, at Lifestyle Church, we do not refer to each other as members of the church but “Disciples of Christ”. We are a Discipleship Church, equipping Christians to live in such a way that Christ is revealed in ALL do. We are not interested in members! Church Membership is NOT a requirement for Heaven. However, doing His Will, abiding by His Word, holding on to His teachings is a requirement. Membership simply gives a sense of affiliation or belonging. We desire more than just belonging; we desire more of the doing.

“Doing” requires implementing the knowledge you and I have.

Shutting the Windows

Whether it has to do with your family, career or walk with God, where do you see avoidable pain? As you look in the rearview mirror of life, what aspect or facet of your life is experiencing recurring avoidable pain?

When I realised that the opening of my bedroom windows had caused my avoidable pain and unpleasant discomfort, the first thing I did was to spring to my feet and shut the windows. What “windows” do you have to close?

Identifying the “windows” you need to close is the first step. Secondly, shut them right away. Do not think about it. Revoke your mind’s permit to be the venue for another debate. Shut that window immediately!

Thereafter, it is alright to review what has happened. Take stock of that area of your life. Assessing the magnitude of the pain or the loss you have incurred is appropriate provided you do not dwell on it. By shutting the windows, you have stopped the bleeding and that is what matters most. Now the

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healing can begin.

Our Heavenly Father is immensely merciful. As a result of His tender mercies, many of us have outlived the painful outcomes which resulted from our failure to apply wisdom! I hope some will join me in saying “Thank you, Jesus”.

One more step to complete the healing process is to resolve and give a wholehearted commitment to always choose the path of wisdom; doing what we know is right (Hosea 14:9). And that is what Righteousness means; consistently and continually doing that which is right and pleasing to God.

How certain are you about eternity? Are you in doubt of the avoidable pain of hell?



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Let us say this prayer together:

"Lord Jesus, I sincerely apologise for the times I have ignored knowledge I have received about you. I repent of the many times I have disregarded your Word. At this moment, as I resolve to fully implement all I have learned about your Will, I plead for Your forgiveness. Forgive me O LORD. Please become my strength and fortress. Strengthen me in obedience. Increase me in wisdom. Order my steps Holy Spirit. You are my LORD and Saviour, Jesus, and I give my life to you, in Jesus' Name. Amen"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Samuel Jonathan is the founding Pastor of Lifestyle Church; a church with the primary focus of discipling Christians to live in such a way that Christ is revealed in ALL they do. In 2010, Samuel established the Royal Centre for Public Speaking. This illustrious institution has transformed the presentation techniques and public speaking skills of individuals from 13 countries and received well over 1,000 testimonials! CAMP 4:13, designed and conducted by Pastor Jonathan is the first certified Christian Course in Public Speaking. Samuel's passion and focus are prayer, righteousness and intimacy with God. The same is reflected in his music! Ultimately, his purpose and goal in life is to please God.

Above all the awards, applauds and accolades, Samuel is blissfully married to Lynda and blessed with children who are a Living Testimony of Isaiah 54:13.