

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A TEACHABLE SPIRIT

When asked in a visitation by the LORD in a dream what he wanted, King Solomon asked for wisdom. He knew the great responsibility he had in being King of Israel and that he needed God's help and wisdom.

We see this in the book of 1 Kings:

"At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" **(1 Kings 3:5)**

"Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

"And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted.

"Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice,

"behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.

"And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honour, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days." **(1 Kings 3:7-13)**

WE WILL ALL NEED GODLY WISDOM TO FULFILL GOD'S DESTINY AND PLAN FOR OUR LIFE – WE ARE ALL IN A VERY REAL SPIRITUAL CONTEST

The Apostle Peter made this very clear when he wrote,

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world." **(1 Peter 5:8-9)**

In today's study I will be looking at a few areas in relation to the importance of having a teachable spirit

I will commence with one key Scripture in the book of Proverbs.

"Listen to counsel and receive instruction, That you may be wise in your latter days." **(Proverbs 19:20)**

Having a continual teachable spirit helps us to grow in maturity in our walk with the Lord and to succeed in life

There are three types of people in life when it comes to being teachable.

There are people who are:

- i) Unteachable**
- ii) Hard to teach, and**
- iii) TEACHABLE**

Put another way, we have people who:

- i) Learn from other people's mistakes and experiences**
- ii) Learn from their own mistakes, and**
- iii) Never learn because they are unteachable**

Invariably if we cannot learn from others and are unteachable, we will also be a person who walks in disobedience to God's perfect will for our life. Even though we may walk in partial obedience, in God's eyes this is still disobedience.

We can often be teachable in some areas of our life, BUT not in other areas of our life. Often in our areas of insecurity we can be less open to being teachable as we try and maintain control over those areas of our life

Being TEACHABLE and having a desire to walk in the will of God for our life is a great key to becoming a great man or woman of God and to fulfilling our God given destiny

King David was a man after God's own heart, who had a great desire to do the will of God for his life. We can see this in the book of Acts.

"And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' **(Acts 13:22)**

He was Israel's greatest ever King

1) Why being teachable is so important

- i) We come into the world knowing nothing. We have a lot to learn.**
- ii) We can learn more quickly by drawing on the teachings and counsel of other mature Christians. There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors. **(Proverbs 20:18) (Proverbs 15:22)****
- iii) We will avoid a lot of unnecessary pain and suffering in our life **(Hosea 4:6) (Proverbs 11:14) (Proverbs 2:10-22) (Proverbs 10:17) (Psalm 119:165)****
- iv) We will gain more insight and knowledge to impart into the lives of others, **(1 Timothy 4:13-16) (Proverbs 16:22-23)****
- v) Those that we mentor and disciple will also grow up to be teachable as they observe our lifestyle, **(1 Timothy 4:12) (1 Peter 5:1-4)** and**
- vi) It is the key to fulfilling our full potential in Christ. **(Ephesians 3:20)****

2) What stops us from being teachable

- i) Pride / Lack of humility (Pride comes before a fall – See Proverbs 16:18) This was the case with King Nebuchadnezzar – Daniel Chapter Four)
- ii) Being inflexible (We can so often become creatures of habit)
- iii) Having a competitive spirit (**James 3:14-17**)
- iv) Having no real reverential fear of God.
In the book of Proverbs we read, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (Proverbs 1:7)
Having a healthy fear of the LORD helps us to exercise godly wisdom in the way that we live our life and in the choices that we make.
- v) Fear of change (Not fully trusting God with our future)
- vi) Worrying about what others may think / Peer group pressure
- vii) Not being a team player (Individualism) Having our own agenda rather than a team and Kingdom of God agenda, (**Proverbs 18:1**)
- viii) Having a rejection problem resulting from being put down when growing up. Where counsel from others is always perceived as being rejection
- ix) Simply Apathy. Having no real desire to grow in our walk with the Lord and to learn new things. Just happy with the status quo, and
- x) Being continually distracted by the things of this world and the cares of this life so that we never fully invest our lives in becoming all that God has planned for our life. (**Mark 4:18-20**) God always has so much more for our lives

3) What are the characteristics of someone who is teachable

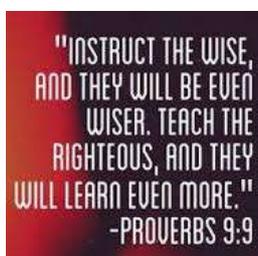
- i) They can receive Godly counsel and correction from others without reacting or being defensive (**Proverbs 9:9**) (**Proverbs 8:33**)
- ii) They respect the opinions of others (**Philippians 2:3**)
- iii) They can work together well with others. They are team players (**Psalms 133**)
- iv) They are able to learn from other people’s experiences (**Romans 12:16**)
- v) They are able to humbly serve the visions of others (**Luke 16:12**)
- vi) They are open to embracing the ideas of others that are more suitable than theirs without feeling inferior. They are secure in who they are in Christ and in the position that God has placed them in
- vii) They do not try and defend themselves when others disagree with them. They listen to learn – Their identity comes from who they are in Christ (**James 1:19**) (**Colossians 3:23-24**)
- viii) They have a great desire to learn from God and from others and to grow in their area of gifting and in their life skills
- ix) They surround themselves with Godly mentors who speak into their lives, and
- x) They have a great desire to do the will of God for their lives (**Psalms 40:8**) and to glorify God with their lives (**1 Corinthians 10:31**)



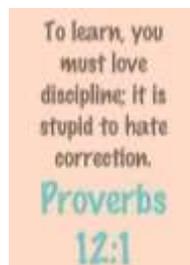
4) So how do we become more teachable

- i) We need to choose to consecrate our lives to the Lord on a daily basis – To allow His will for our life to unfold **(Ephesians 5:15-17) (Luke 9:23-24) (John 12:24-26) (Galatians 2:20)**
- ii) We need to cultivate an INTIMATE walk with the Lord **(Psalm 37:4)** We need to purposely make time to spend with the Lord to gain His counsel – Revelation from God comes from being in isolation with Him
In the book of Jeremiah we read,
“For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, And has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard it?”
(Jeremiah 23:18)
- iii) We choose to become accountable to others. Having Godly mentors in our life helps us to grow in our faith and to gain greater wisdom to help us to make right choices in life
- iv) We choose to respect the opinions of others and to be open to learning from others.
- v) We actively seek to learn more and to grow in relation to our area of gifting and calling and in other areas of life. Leaders are Readers
- vi) We continually mediate on the Word of God to gain Godly wisdom for our life. We also have a great desire to apply this wisdom to our own lives so that we build our lives on a firm foundation. **(Joshua 1:8) (Matthew 7:24-27)**
- vii) We CHOOSE to involve God in ALL our plans and to continually seek Him for His wisdom and guidance. **(Proverbs 3:5-6) (James 1:5-8) (Isaiah 55:8-9), and**
- viii) We need to CHOOSE to continually heed the counsel and promptings of the Holy Spirit to maintain a soft and sensitive conscience towards the things of God and to remain in the centre of God’s will for our life **(John 16:13) (John 14:26)**

The more we adopt the above disciplines in our life, the more easily and natural it becomes for us to be teachable



"INSTRUCT THE WISE,
AND THEY WILL BE EVEN
WISER. TEACH THE
RIGHTEOUS, AND THEY
WILL LEARN EVEN MORE."
-PROVERBS 9:9



To learn, you
must love
discipline; it is
stupid to hate
correction.
Proverbs
12:1



Proverbs 15:22 Plans fail
for lack of counsel, but
with many advisers they
succeed.

IN CONCLUSION:

Being teachable and obedient to the will of God for our life is not only crucial to fulfilling God's destiny for our own life, but also can have eternal ramifications for others.

As we faithfully embrace all that God has planned for our life we will:

- 1) Help others to come to Christ, and
- 2) As church leaders, help others to fulfil all that God has planned for their lives.

(Ephesians 4:11-13)

This is why the Apostle Paul emphasised the importance of investing our lives fully in the work of the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” **(1 Corinthians 15:58)**

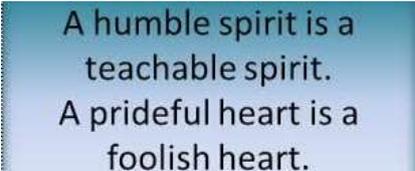
So being teachable and obedient has great benefits not only for our own life, but for the lives of many others

Two concluding thoughts: Firstly, humility and being teachable go hand in hand. The more we humble ourselves the more teachable we become. Like John the Baptist we need to be able to say, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” **(John 3:30)** The simple fact is that none of us knows it all. We must all be humble enough to allow others to speak into our life

Secondly, as we become more humble and teachable we invariably find that strife no longer has a place in our home, our church meetings and in our workplaces. I will finish with one more passage of Scripture in the book of James, which clearly emphasises why we all need to become more humble and teachable in life:

James wrote, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.” **(James 3:13-16)**

Being humble and teachable helps us to be
peacemakers in our homes and church meetings.



A humble spirit is a
teachable spirit.
A prideful heart is a
foolish heart.

So may I encourage you today to develop a teachable spirit, so that you can avoid a lot of unnecessary hardship and pain in your life and become all that God has planned for your life. We have one life to make a difference in this world for eternity.