EPISODE 45 (SESSION 2)

Wisdom and Meaning

PROVERBS 2–3, 10, 15, 19–20, 26, ECCLESIASTES 7

Depending on how familiar you are with the podcast and *Asking Better Questions of the Bible* series, you may or may not have heard Marty discuss pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional wisdom and how it relates to our relationship with wisdom and the Text.

Pre-conventional wisdom probably isn't actually wisdom—it masquerades as wisdom. Our naive beliefs we have before we've had much experience in the world. Like my eleven-year-old believing he should have unlimited screen time.

Conventional wisdom is what we quickly learn from others. Most of this is good wisdom, but sometimes this simplicity doesn't work when things aren't clearly right/wrong, black/white. My son understands unlimited screen time is unhealthy.

Then there is post-conventional wisdom, which helps us experience and relate to the wisdom in books like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes a lot more realistically. In my experience learning from people a whole lot wiser than me, t*he more you recognize you don't know about God, the wiser you in fact are*—and I feel like that is the journey we have with post-conventional wisdom in the Bible. This is the type of wisdom we are challenged to see in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, and we must learn, often through trial and error, *when* and *how* this wisdom is true for us and true for others.

The more you recognize you don't know about God, the wiser you in fact are.

This type of wisdom is hard to teach; it cannot be taught simply from a pulpit by one pastor on a Sunday morning, or even from one episode of your beloved Text-based podcast.

This deeper wisdom comes from maturity, experience, and insight. It does not come automatically; it's not a guarantee! Perhaps this is why we find the process of true discipleship so important. Purposefully modeling, practicing, and living this type of organic, authentic wisdom that releases someone to go and experience the living God for themselves. Living a good life.

I hope one day my son moves to a place of understanding how screen time may truly influence his life—school, future job, relationships. Or how, in a tech-driven world, his job influences his relationship to screen time. This knowledge of the use of technology is not some universal solution to apply, and how he navigates such situations each day will change. Much like a verse from Proverbs, it can be wielded like a sword or heal like a balm.

It can be wielded like a sword or heal like a balm.

Finding those truths, oftentimes that lead us to more questions than immediate answers, is wisdom. Finding these truths, and knowing when they are true as well as when they are not, is wisdom.

One bit of wisdom I believe is nearly always true, but takes a whole lot of practice and even accountability to get there, I learned from our beloved Josh Bossé in his series on Ecclesiastes (*Qohelet* in Session 9). If feels odd trying to write about this book of the Bible without him around, so I'll let him close this one out. Don't jump ahead to these episodes yet, but carry this bit of post-conventional wisdom with you.

"A good name is better than fine oil
And the day of death better than the day of one's birth."

ECCLESIASTES 7:1

What is this person's legacy?
The good name is what's left after you die.

When you have a good name and are at the end of your life… What your name means to people… That's different than a vineyard you've raised up… The sum of everything you've done in your life. That is better than simply a lot of potential.

The image of death is not about focusing on the saddest, most depressing things. It's about having a good name… When you're in a house of mourning, what is left behind is the good name.

Giving more of our heart to what's important after you're gone. What's left behind. That is so much weightier, more of a north star, than what is something that can be celebrated…

What is left behind after we die. That is the good stuff.

PRAYER

I wish to redefine what my world calls meaningless, and,
like breath, experience Your Spirit.
like smoke, experience Your fire.
like mist, experience Your peace.

I no longer seek to grasp wisdom,
but let her hover over me.
That I may follow her on the journey
that leads me closer to You—
Enveloped by Your presence,
moved by Your power,
forever growing in Your truth.
Amen

EPISODE 45 (SESSION 2)

THE FOUR PILLARS



BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:

I

TEXT

What stands out to you about the wisdom in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes? What do you still wish you knew more about? What could you meditate over or memorize?

II

COMMUNITY

How is your community helping one another grow in wisdom? How can you help one another experience wisdom? Who can you look to for wisdom?

III

DISCIPLESHIP

Who are you modeling your own journey with wisdom for? Who do you look to for guidance in recognizing when wisdom is true for you? Who or what may be left behind when you are gone?

IV

WRESTLING

What are you wrestling with about wisdom in recognizing the complexity of it? Which Proverbs or verses from Ecclesiastes might you need to look at through a new lens?

Spotify

Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.

BEMA SESSION 2

MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE
SPIRITUAL FORMATION

True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of "Creating Space for God" in our lives. We believe that ***if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it*** *as He desires. You're already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS
YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

We believe that young adults are shaping the future of this world. *Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION
THEOLOGY OF WORK

This isn't only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. ***The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***

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