

Finding treasure (w/c 21 October 2018)

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Luke 12:34)

Wisdom in the Bible is very much a practical virtue (cf Exodus 35:31), not simply an intellectual exercise. In his letter, James makes it clear that a necessary outcome of wisdom is action; the "good fruit" he describes in James 3:17.

The Bible also makes clear (see for instance, Colossians 2:2-3 and Isaiah 33:6) that wisdom is the treasure (or one of the treasures) we are to value and to seek.

Read Proverbs 2:1-11

In Psalm 111, we read that *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..."* What do we understand by such fear? The CEV translates this verse as *"Respect and obey the Lord! This is the first step to wisdom and good sense."*; how does that help you?

In verse 2, what do we understand by the writer's insistence that we 'apply' our hearts to understanding?

How should we understand the lines about *"holding success in store"* and *"guarding the course of the just"*? How could we approach such concepts and ideas with believers trapped in perpetual poverty or other injustice?

Verse 9 promises that we will, *"understand what is right and just and fair"*. What are the implications for us in what we are and do? How does this align with the requirement of us outlined in Micah 6:8?

Paul talks about the *"renewing of your mind"* (Rom 12:2). How does this thought resonate with our gaining of wisdom?

Read Matthew 13:44-46

What do those outside the faith need in order to see to realise that there is such treasure to be found? In terms people understand today, what is the treasure? Does 1 Corinthians 1:30 help?

In what ways are Christians called to guide those seeking for such treasure?

How can we show others the value (and indeed, the values) of the Kingdom?

On the radio recently¹, I heard someone being interviewed say: *"I'm not religious at all, but there is definitely somebody up there."* How can we help them see who that 'somebody' is?

Finally, how do the thoughts in the Colossians and Isaiah passages referred to at the start of the study help you understand both the nature of the treasure Jesus describes in his parables and also the value of wisdom?

"Wonder is the beginning of wisdom." (Socrates)

¹ Radio 4 on 7 October at 1.30pm – *Hashtag Pray*