

EMPOWERMENT!

“Ask, and it will be given to you;
seek, and you will find;
knock, and it will be opened to you.



For everyone who asks receives,
and he who seeks finds,
and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

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Mat. 7:7

The dictionary defines empowerment as the process of becoming stronger and more confident, through acquiring the knowledge, means and ability to accomplish our desired goals in life. Accordingly, the Christian life isn't simply a matter of only identifying with Christ in words, but more importantly to be empowered by God to live as He wills for us. This then requires that we must seek knowledge through the very source of empowerment, His Word, to find out what we must do to achieve it, and then live wholeheartedly in the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the mission Christ gave us on this earth.

In essence, God sent the Holy Spirit, to so enable us to be empowered to follow Christ through knowledge, guidance, ability, and the confidence needed to move forward. That's why Jesus in Mat 7:7 said to ask, seek, knock; in other words, be of one mind, wholly dedicated and focused on truly receiving the power to follow Christ through His Word in our daily Christian walk.

Through knowledge, we acquire understanding, and then discernment is given to us by the Holy Spirit, so we can apply God's wisdom to our lives. The Christian walk is our mission from Christ to carry on throughout our life!

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EMPOWERMENT SOURCE

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,
and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof,
for correction, for instruction in righteousness,



that the man of God may be complete,
thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Tim 3:16-17

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What is the source of empowerment to live the Christian life triumphantly to the glory of God?

Just as we exercise our bodies to acquire endurance, or that we discipline ourselves to have a healthy diet, our spirit needs to be strengthened and empowered to live according to our belief in Christ. Only God through the Holy Spirit can so equip us to successfully live in accordance to His will.

David in Psalm 73:26 said, “My flesh and my heart fail; *but God is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” Paul in 2 Timothy 1:7 added, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” Therefore, we can easily conclude that the only source of empowerment to live as God and Christ intends for us is through God Himself and His Word, which is Christ.

Deut. 31:6 clarifies it this way: “Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He *is* the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.” Paul repeated Jesus’ words in Acts 1:8, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

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Isn't it a normal human tendency to expect that things happen when, where and how we so desire? Impatience and frustration are most obvious reactions we see every day in people's life, resulting in trials and problems at home, in the workplace and everywhere else. Yet, the Lord says that those that wait upon Him will renew their strength, thereby the importance on waiting on God rather than impatiently move foolishly in all directions. Prov. 3:5-6 tells us, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Waiting upon the Lord to guide us for important situations in our lives equates to trust Him, resulting in wise decisions.

Just as a soldier needs to be trained and equipped for war, he still waits for his commander's order to move forward. As we are also trained by God through His Word, it empowers us with spiritual knowledge and strength to move forward with our plans, but as well, we must wait for guidance and trust Him for our life's decisions and plans.

Waiting upon the Lord to be empowered to make decisions results in, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philip. 4:13) Do we wait on God for life's decisions?

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EMPOWERMENT - KNOWLEDGE

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 1:7



God... Our Source for Knowledge

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The dictionary defines knowledge as information, truth and principles we acquire for awareness, understanding and to allow for proper reasoning in making beneficial choices in life. Actually, the world we live in is focused on knowledge, and people invest years of their lives in education to allow them to have a career to provide for their needs.

However, how does this apply to our spiritual life and how can we be so empowered with knowledge from God? To start with, unless we do get knowledge about God, we will remain spiritually ignorant and therefore fail to avail ourselves of both God's blessings, as well as to be equipped to defend ourselves against the lies, deceptions and the attacks of the enemy of our faith.

Prov 18:15 says, “The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.” In other words, knowledge gives us the power to discern the true path to life, as opposed to being fooled by the world around us. That's why our only source of spiritual knowledge is the Word of God as Paul said in 2 Tim 3:16' “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

How is our spiritual knowledge right now?

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THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE & WARNINGS

“And you shall know the truth,
and the truth shall make you free.”

John 8:32



*“Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;
They will seek me diligently, but they will not
find me. Because they hated knowledge
and did not choose the fear of the Lord.”*



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Prov 1:28-29

Knowledge, in all aspects of life, provides us with many blessings, such as understanding life's demands, as well as protecting us against deceivers and liars. In other words, knowledge is power, as Prov 2:10-11 says, “When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; understanding will keep you.” As well, Ecc 7:12 adds, “But the excellence of knowledge *is that* wisdom gives life to those who have it.”

In essence, knowledge gives understanding, allowing us to discern right from wrong, with gaining wisdom as a result. However, the flip side is that the absence of knowledge deceives and can be dangerous at all levels. Can we, for example choose to remain ignorant and as a result fly by in life?

This is well highlighted in Pr 1:22: “How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge.” Hosea 4:6 adds, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

Therefore, we can conclude that acquiring knowledge is our responsibility, and turning a deaf ear to knowledge is no excuse to God. That's why Peter said, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

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SOURCE OF UNDERSTANDING

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and lean not on your own understanding;



Prov 3:5-6

in all your ways acknowledge Him,
and He shall direct your paths.”



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Understanding is defined as a faculty that allows a person to apply knowledge with discernment. In other words, we get knowledge through education, but unless we understand its true beneficial purpose, it is useless.

In the spiritual realm, understanding has its source in God, as Paul said in 1 Cor 2:12, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” That’s why we are asked to test the spirits to see if they are from God in 1 John 4:1.

The lack of understanding is the reason man has taken Christianity in all directions and denominations, based on opinions as opposed to God’s true Word. Aren’t we directed to be ONE BODY in CHRIST?

How then do we get true genuine understanding? Prov. 2:1-5 says, “My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, *and* apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, *and* lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as *for* hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.” The power is in God’s Word!

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HOW TO BE EMPOWERED WITH UNDERSTANDING

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything
by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving,
let your requests be made known to God;



Philip 4:6-7

and the peace of God, which surpasses
all understanding, will guard your hearts
and minds through Christ Jesus.”



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How are we to acquire understanding of God's Word? In short, it is to seek God in the study of His Word, and walk according to what the Word teaches without preconceived ideas, pride, or intent to profit materially.

Paul gave us a clear formula to apply in Eph 4:17-18, “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.” In other words, it is to walk guided by the Spirit of God rather than the world's.

As well, all glory goes to the Lord and not to our flesh. Proverbs 3:13-14 says: “Happy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom, and the man *who* gains understanding; for her proceeds *are* better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold.” Understanding finds its source in God, His Word, the reason we are enjoined to “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” 2 Tim 2:15.

Let's remember that “A fool does not delight in understanding, but in revealing his own mind.” Prov. 18:2

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Discernment is defined as the ability to have insight to comprehend situations, and choose a wise course of action in all decision making. In essence, discernment requires knowledge and understanding of sound core principles so we can make wise decisions in all aspects of life.

In Hebrews 4:12, the apostle Paul gives us a clear insight as to where to find this core knowledge to discern between good and evil, “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” In other words, our source of knowledge and understanding comes from the Word of God, thereby in using God’s wisdom, we are able to take proper courses of actions that will both please God and bring blessings in our lives.

The apostle John also gave us a warning to heed, so we are not fooled or deceived by false teachers, “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

If discernment is the result of proper knowledge and understanding of God’s Word, what are we doing about it?

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When we read that fearing God is the beginning of wisdom, what does it mean? How could we describe what the fear of God mean?

The amplified bible explains it this way: "The reverent fear of the LORD, that is worshipping Him and regarding Him as truly awesome, is the beginning *and* the preeminent part of wisdom, its starting point and its essence." In other words, fearing God is not the emotion of fear, as in seeing a head-on collision coming at us, but rather an emotion of awe in considering that God is our creator and yes, that as well we must live along His laws.

That's why James, the brother of Jesus, enjoined us to seek God's wisdom this way: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." The reason is simple, in that all true wisdom has its source in God, as opposed to the so-called world's wisdom. The apostle Paul added, "That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."

Christ came to save us and taught us the true wisdom of God. His Word contains the knowledge we need to learn about it. Are we using it?

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THE SOURCE OF WISDOM

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another



Col 3:16

in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
singing with grace in
your hearts to the Lord.”



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As I was cleaning up my garage the other day, I listened to music of the Gaither singers, and to best describe those 3 hours of work, they seemed to fly by in no time. I was singing along in my heart and could truly feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and the joy of the Lord.

Obviously, we can get God's wisdom through hearing His Word, whether in song, teachings or study. After all, God is the only source of true wisdom. That's why Paul said, "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Eph 5:15-16) In other words, we must seek wisdom from God as this life is but a vapor compared to eternity, and we should live this life as an investment for eternal life with God and Christ.

Throughout the bible, we find warnings after warnings, such as "To do evil *is* like sport to a fool, but a man of understanding has wisdom." (Prov 10:23) As well, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil." (Prov 3:7)

Since wisdom is acquired through the knowledge and meditation on the Word of God, are we steadfastly learning God's standards? Let's use God's wisdom, rather than adopt the foolish wisdom of the world?

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