

## ACQUIRING A HEART OF WISDOM

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to develop a realistic view of problems and pressures that may arise in life. Show how to acquire divine wisdom to cope with these

### **HEART OF WISDOM NEEDED TO COPE WITH PROBLEMS AND PRESSURES OF LIFE** (3 min.)

Mankind short-lived; 70 to 80 years of 'insistence on trouble'; many problems to contend with (Ps 90:10)

Even among God's servants, complaints, problems, and pressures do arise

Complaints by Israelites to Moses culminated in crisis at Meribah (Nu 20:2-13)

First-century Christians experienced difficulties (Ac 11:27-29; Php 4:2, 3)

In view of principle at Ecclesiastes 7:7, we need to acquire godly wisdom

Wisdom combines sound judgment with knowledge (*w82 10/15 22*)

Heart of wisdom could have helped Moses deal with provocation and not be enraged (Read Psalm 90:12) (Ps 106:32, 33)

### **GOD'S SERVANTS HAVE LONG ENDURED INTERNAL PRESSURES** (10 min.)

Israelites endured rule of wicked kings, priests, judges

David 'acted prudently' under wicked King Saul (1Sa 18:10-15)

Samuel served Jehovah faithfully in spite of poor examples of Eli and his sons (1Sa, chaps. 2, 3)

First-century Christians experienced problems, including divisions, internal "wars" and "fights" (Jas 4:1-3; 1Co 1:10, 11)

Revelation chapters 2 and 3 prophetic of future internal difficulties (*w89 4/1 12, 13*)

Problems include loss of first love for Jehovah (Re 2:4), holding fast to wrong ideas (Re 2:14), tolerating sectarianism (Re 2:15) and "Jezebel" influence (Re 2:20), apathy (Re 3:2, 15, 16)

These examples show we should not expect perfection from fellow servants of Jehovah but should acquire heart of wisdom to cope with such problems and pressures

### **HOW PROBLEMS IN EARLY CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION WERE HANDLED WITH A HEART OF WISDOM** (12 min.)

*Circumcision* was an issue among those who still felt it was a requirement (Ac 11:2, 3; 15:1; *w89 2/15 18-20*)

Matter taken to governing body (Ac 15:2)

Unanimous decision made, based on God's Word and evidence of outpouring of holy spirit on those uncircumcised (Ac 15:3, 15-18, 25; *w90 6/15 12-13*)

In spite of decision in 49 C.E., still remained an issue for some, who did not have a heart of wisdom (*w89 2/15 18-20*)

Paul argued against circumcision in letter to Galatians, written about 50-52 C.E. (Ga 5:1-3)

He dealt with the matter again in first letter to Corinthians, about 55 C.E. (1Co 7:18-20)

Advocates of circumcision were dealt with more forcefully in letter to Philippians, about 60-61 C.E. (Php 3:1-3)

Some might have been disfellowshipped to safeguard the congregation (Tit 1:10, 11; 3:10, 11)

*Resurrection* was another much debated issue among first-century Christians

Former Pharisees might have been inclined toward idea of immortal soul (*it-2 625*)

In 55 C.E., some held viewpoint that there was no resurrection (1Co 15:12)

Apostle Paul refuted this, basing his arguments on facts and Scriptures (1Co 15:3-8; *w81 12/15 18*)

In 65 C.E., some who had deviated from the faith held the view that the resurrection had already occurred (2Ti 2:16-18)

Christians warned about association with those who might not have made mind over fully (1Co 15:33; *w93 8/1 16*)

In dealing with these and other problems, Paul showed courage and a heart of wisdom

### **WHAT WILL HELP US TO ACQUIRE A HEART OF WISDOM TODAY?** (17 min.)

Recognize that as in the first century, some today may make strong assertions or express personal views on a wide range of issues (1Ti 1:7)

Paul showed importance of unity and need for being "fitly united" in our worship (1Co 1:10; 4:6)

Adherence to God's Word and guidance provided by "faithful and discreet slave" is course of wisdom (Mt 24:45-47; Ps 19:7)

Not to make issues out of matters that the Bible leaves to conscience (*w77 723 ¶25*)

Recognize that the congregation is not infallible

Truth flows progressively (Pr 4:18)

Jehovah's people do not claim to be *inspired* prophets (rs 136-7)

Not wrong to be interested in Bible chronology insofar as it helps one to remain spiritually awake (Mt 24:3; Ac 1:6)

Yet, eagerness and enthusiasm may lead to premature expectations

Such expectations can serve to reveal true heart condition

Those who serve with improper motive become disgruntled, go back to world for selfish reasons, become spiritually sick (Pr 13:12)

Those with heart of wisdom not disappointed but 'buy out the opportune time,' even increasing their service (Eph 5:15, 16)

Keep a balanced view of elders and others

Avoid unrealistic tendency to expect perfection from others (Ec 7:9, 21, 22)

As a pearl is the result of an irritation, we can develop and grow in humility, love, endurance, and other fruits of the spirit if we accept imperfections of others (Jas 1:2-4)

Should not let situations that Jehovah permits cause us to become enraged against him (Pr 19:3; w77 605-6)

Safeguard heart; trust in Jehovah (Pr 3:5, 6; 4:23)

### **ACQUIRE A HEART OF WISDOM (3 min.)**

Jehovah permits problems and pressures of life so that we may learn patience, humility, loyalty, and dependence on him and prove what is in our hearts (Heb 3:12, 13)

How we respond shows to what degree we have a heart of wisdom and what we may still need to work on

Essential that we humbly maintain viewpoint expressed at Psalm 90:12

Each day check your heart; pray for 'a heart bringing in wisdom'

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)