



# More Precious than Silver, BETTER THAN JEWELS: THE GIFTS OF Knowledge and Wisdom

By Alison Witte

We live in a culture where education is not only a foundational part of our daily lives, but also a commodity that we generally value highly. We require all children to attend school because we believe education is essential for society to flourish and thrive. We encourage our grown children to go to college to better themselves and prepare themselves for the world of work. We promote lifelong learning as a way to stay active and sharp in retirement. There is even talk of the new “knowledge” economy where companies make knowledge or data rather than steel pipes, washing machines, cars, or clothes. We are conditioned to see knowledge and learning as ways to advance ourselves personally, financially, and socially.

But where does this narrative come from? Where do we get these ideas about learning and knowledge? And more important, what does the Bible have to say about learning and its roles in our lives?

## Opening Prayer

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Bless and guide us as we study Your Word to grow both in knowledge and in faith, that we may use our learning to be a blessing to Your created world and to those around us. Amen.

## Opening Discussion

Is all learning good? If not, when is it bad?

## Benefits of Learning and Knowledge

The Bible has much to say about learning, both directly and in rich examples of how learning enriches the lives of God’s people. How can learning help us grow in faith?

**Deuteronomy 6:4–9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 119:73** \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 10: 38–42** \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 2:41–47** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 8:26–35** \_\_\_\_\_

## Drawbacks of Learning and Knowledge

While the Bible provides many examples of the ways learning and knowledge can enrich the lives of God’s people, it also points to examples of the ways learning makes living a faith-filled life difficult. How can learning impede our growth in faith?

**Exodus 14:9–14** \_\_\_\_\_

**Numbers 13:17–33; 14:1–4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proverbs 3:5–7** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ecclesiastes 1:16–18** \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 9:12–14a** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 1:18–25** \_\_\_\_\_

## Wisdom vs. Learning and Knowledge

The word “wisdom” appears over 200 times in the Bible, while “learning” appears just over 50 times. What is wisdom, and how is it different from learning or knowledge?

**Psalms 111:10** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job 28:12–28** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 2:6–13** \_\_\_\_\_

Wisdom is different from knowledge, especially godly wisdom. Wisdom comes not just from observation and knowledge of the world around us, but from the Word and the Spirit of God. How do wisdom and learning work together to help us grow in faith?

**1 Kings 4:29–34** \_\_\_\_\_

**Exodus 31:1–7** \_\_\_\_\_

**Colossians 1:9–10** \_\_\_\_\_

God is the ultimate source of knowledge, wisdom, and faith. He blesses us with curious minds to seek out information and new ideas.

This desire for knowledge can help equip us to lead faithful lives and to be blessings to others. Knowledge can also help us grow and mature in our own faith. But we must always remember that knowledge only goes so far and that we should also seek godly wisdom. Godly wisdom reminds us that *we walk by faith and not by sight* (**2 Corinthians 5:7**) and, therefore, must rely on God's Word and His wisdom above all else.

By putting faith first, we can then put our knowledge and learning to the best possible uses: service of others and the sharing of the Gospel. When we show the joy we find in learning about the miraculous and awesome God we have and when we eagerly share our discoveries, we can be a blessing to the people around us.

## Closing

Read **1 Kings 3:5–9**.

**Closing prayer:** Lord, You have given us minds to learn about the wonders of Your creation and Your Word. Grant us hearts to seek not only knowledge but wisdom as well, and bless us richly, as You did King Solomon. Help us to use Your gifts of wisdom and knowledge to grow in faith and trust in You, to learn how better to serve in Your world, and to share with others the precious gifts we receive through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sing or say verse 1 of "I Know My Faith Is Founded" (*LSB* #587; *LW* #354; *TLH* #381).

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