

Your Family's Understanding I the Circle of Learning, Part 2

I. The Nature of Understanding

- **Understanding can be good.** Proverbs 30:12, 3:5, 12:15, 21:2; Judges 17:6, 21:25
 - Though knowledge of the truth is always good, understanding can be good or bad.
 - Though understanding does involve being acquainted with additional facts that support and expand on the original fact, there is also a level of interpretation to understanding.
 - There's a personal aspect to understanding in that interpretation and synthesis are part of the process of understanding.
- **Understanding is power.** Proverbs 3:19, 24:3, 28:11, 20:5
 - If knowledge is power, you'd better believe that understanding that knowledge is even more power.
 - Understanding doesn't just help us better comprehend truth, it helps us reveal things in people that they — perhaps — didn't even know were there.
- **Understanding can save.** Proverbs 28:2, 19:8, 1:5, 11:12, 17:27, 15:21, 16:21-22
 - The more we understand about God, His Word, and ourselves, the better our chances will be that we won't fall into the destruction of sin.
 - Understanding can save us from the relational carnage of sinfully tearing people down with our words.
 - If you want to avoid the pitfalls of life, share God's understanding of life.
- **Understanding is valuable.** Proverbs 3:13, 16:4, 16:16, 23:23, 14:33, 17:24
 - Whether it will show up on a test or not, we need to strive to understand the knowledge God gives us.
 - Understanding is good when it agrees with God. Understanding is powerful, it can save us from all sorts of destruction, and it's valuable.

II. The Source of Understanding

- Proverbs 21:30, 8:14, 2:6
- There is no knowledge, understanding, or application of that knowledge and understanding that can ever be used against God because all true knowledge, wisdom, and understanding belong to God.
- God is the source of understanding. We will never find true understanding outside of Him.
 - The world is impotent to help us understand the cure for racism. No earthly politician can give us a better understanding of government than God can. The world does not understand identity better than the God Who created us.
 - Friendship, love, emotions, worship, parenting, shame, fear, anger . . . the world is completely impotent to help us understand these concepts correctly. Even our own sinful heart will misunderstand these realities better than it will understand them.
- Do your kids really grasp the fact that true understanding of any subject can only be had as we look at it through the lens of the Scriptures?

III. The People Who Reject Understanding

- Proverbs 18:2
- The fool doesn't care to understand the truth about an issue. They're too busy leaning on their own understanding and trying to convince everyone else that their understanding is right.

IV. There are Consequences for Rejecting Understanding

- Proverbs 10:13, 13:15, 14:29, 28:16, 21:16, 10:21
- If we don't understand how to safely use a firearm, we're increasing our risk of injury and death. If your kids don't understand how to safely live this life in the will of God, they are greatly increasing their risk of spiritual injury and death.

V. How to Acquire Understanding

- **We need to want understanding.** Proverbs 7:4, 10:23
 - We need to want understanding as much as we want to spend time with a dear friend.
 - For a man of understanding, using that understanding in a wise way is as enjoyable as playing a sport.
- **We need to work for understanding.** Proverbs 2:2-11, 4:1, 5, 7, 5:1, 8:1
 - True attention takes work.
 - It's an amazing idea to help your kids — of all ages — learn to pay attention.
 - We've been told for far too long that children can't pay attention, and we're given all sorts of reasons why they're supposedly incapable of doing it.
 - But children can and do pay attention all of the time. Sometimes they are so engrossed in what they want to do that they don't even hear you talking to them in the same room.
 - All children can pay attention. The problem is that they only want to pay attention to the things they believe are valuable.
 - We need to teach our kids to choose to pay attention to good things, even if they don't yet appreciate how valuable they are.
 - If we're going to wait until our kids value understanding before we expect them to pay attention to it, they will never value it, and they'll never pay attention to it.
 - The less they have and the less they focus on getting more, the easier it will be to ignore truth and understanding.
 - We must teach our children to incline their minds to learning knowledge and understanding.
 - And that can start at any age by expecting them to give you attention as you interact with them. Teach your kids to look at you with their eyes. Teach them to stand or sit still when they listen. Teach them to put down the toy in their hand when they're being instructed.
 - The evidence is overwhelmingly on the side of having to do the hard work in parenting our kids to pay attention to the things that matter.
- **We need to embrace discipline.** Proverbs 15:32, 17:10, 19:25
 - If your kids truly value understanding, they're going to engage with discipline.
 - Discipline is the four-stage process of teaching, reproof, correcting, and training. But the word "discipline" is often used specifically for the reproof step.
 - Reproof is the step where we have to inform our kids that they were wrong. They were believing a lie, they were leaning on their own understanding, they were interpreting the situation incorrectly. And because of that they did wrong, and — often — will receive consequences for their sin. A child who learns from these interactions will increase in understanding.
 - Your kids probably hate being reproofed. They hate being told they're wrong. They hate receiving consequences for their sin. But there is hope to teach our kids how to value reproof because God commands us and our kids to value reproof. He illustrates the blessed rewards of those who value reproof. It is possible.
 - Slowly our kids will — Lord willing — learn to appreciate reproof and learn to grow in their understanding as they are reproofed.