



"Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not." (Prov. 4:5)

MAKING SENSE OF LIFE

PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is the study or examination of existence, values, reason and the mind. It is "the love of wisdom" (PHILO: "love" – SOPHIA: "wisdom"). Philosophers ask what makes life the way it is.

In ancient Greece, Socrates (the father of philosophy) declared that **"the unexamined life is not worth living."** I don't subscribe to a lot of what Socrates said, but this particular sentiment is worthy of consideration.

Socrates was tried for the crime of questioning the gods of the state and for teaching his pupils the necessity of questioning all things and doing what one thinks is right even in the face of universal opposition.

He taught that "goodness" and what was "right" was more important than the changeable wishes of "the gods."

At his trial in 399 BC in Athens, Socrates declared that his method of examining everything had revealed to him that most people spent their lives pursuing things like money, ambition, pleasure, security – without asking themselves if these goals were important. Without serious examination, reflection, observation and critical analysis, they would not know if they were doing the right things. The accepted thing may not be the right thing ... and the ability to discern what is THE RIGHT THING requires a life of examination.

Thinking that they are doing what is necessary and acceptable, people waste their energy, time and money pursuing things that do not benefit them. Whole cultures have been built around the pursuit of money and power without ever asking if it is "right." In their foolish attempt to gain the world they lose their souls (Mk. 8:36).

HOW DO PEOPLE BELIEVE WHAT THEY BELIEVE?

How do we arrive at our set of beliefs or assumptions, prejudices and convictions? A hundred years ago this question was given more attention than it is today. Sadly, today's generation dwells on material things to the exclusion of the spiritual things that make a "good life."

The study of how to determine what is a good life is called "Philosophy." In the past, philosophy was part of a standard education. It taught the skill of how to evaluate and

examine life in general ... a discipline that benefited students in any field they entered. Of course, not all philosophy is good. In fact, most is not. Philosophy, like religion, is corruptible. All the more reason to examine and question.

It is important that we examine our thinking processes always. We must ask not only "can we?", but "should we?". If we ask only what is expedient or politically correct we ruin ourselves. No matter how effectively and efficiently we achieve goals, if they are wrong goals then we are digging ourselves deeper and deeper into a pit. Therefore we should examine our methods. We should question and examine all authority. Modern education seems to teach the opposite.

Socrates believed that any life worth living must be **"an examined life."** I agree. Men who do not examine their thoughts constantly cannot live good lives.

TEACHING MEN TO FISH

The ability to "think" is taken for granted today. Just because thoughts enter our heads does not necessarily mean that we are thinking correctly. Thinking (reasoning) is a learned skill. It does not come automatically. In deed, it may be the most important discipline of all.

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for one day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for the rest of his life."

The above statement is one of those truisms whose validity is obvious whether speaking of fish or thoughts. Teaching men to think is the highest goal of a true teacher. It is good to get answers from a dependable source, but it is better to learn the skill of sorting out truths for yourself.

Jesus told his disciples He would make them *"fishers of men"* (Mtt. 4:19). Fishing for men requires thinking skills and good communication. Anyone can offer a thought, but it takes a wise teacher to equip a student with the skill of thinking. Of course, the student must be ready before a teacher can teach him anything. Thus it is said: *"when the student is ready the teacher will appear."*

Solomon taught us that: *"Wisdom is the chief thing; therefore get wisdom: and acquire discernment."* (Prov. 4:7)

WISDOM

What, then, is “wisdom” and how do we get it?

Wisdom is more than the gathering of information. One might say that wisdom is what’s needed to understand information. Without wisdom, information is lost and misapplied. This skill is acquired by education and experience ... thus wisdom is usually associated with old age, for age provides experience. It has been said that wisdom is what you get just after you needed it. Also, true wisdom requires God’s gift of “eyes to see” and “ears to hear.” I’ve known many men who read the Bible regularly ... and still do not understand what it says. To repeat myself, wisdom is more than the mere gathering of information.

So you see, wisdom is a precious and rare commodity. It doesn’t come easily or cheaply. We often pay dearly for wisdom. And to our shame we usually do not recognize and honor the wise among us.

THE PARADOX

Modern America is a paradox. We have some of the most educated minds in the world ... with no wisdom. In other words we know a lot, but we don’t understand all we know. We can push buttons but we can’t manage our lives. We can put a space ship in orbit around Jupiter, but we can’t figure out why we are unhappy or why our families fall apart. What good is an expensive education or a highly trained mind if our lives are unhappy?

In my threescore years I’ve never seen Americans as unhappy and insecure as they are today ... and at the same time they are highly educated and skilled. What happened?

Well, what happened is that Americans have drunk the koolaid. They pursue wrong things and neglect to ask the right questions. They have sought profit without asking whether it was right. They have purchased educations that promised to make them rich and powerful and they didn’t care what they would be required to do. In short, they have forgotten the values that make life worthwhile. Americans quit following the sermon on the mount, and began following the gospel of profit. They learned how to manipulate and cheat, but not how to love. They learn how to take advantage of people, but not how to help them. The trouble is ... cheating, manipulating and exploiting leaves the heart empty and unhappy. Ethics and humility came to be thought of as weakness. This unhappy generation needs to rethink the meaning of “success.”

In America “success” means winning at any cost ... as if life itself were a competition. It is called “Capitalism.” We compete for food, wealth, jobs, and public office. “Success” means winning ... in sports, in wars, between family members, and between nations. Losers just can’t cut it.

95% of the world’s wealth is owned by only one-percent of the people. That means that only five-percent is left for all the rest of us. Who in their right mind (other than the elite one-percent) would accept this arrangement?

Well guess what? Americans are content with this arrangement because they emulate and envy the elite one-percent, and in their individual larcenous hearts they dream that one day they will win their piece of the big pie. In

essence they are little thieves dreaming of being big thieves.

Bankers and politicians are licensed to steal, and they are good at it. Americans (the victims) tolerate it because the elite one-percent con them by telling them that they have a chance to share in the ill-gotten gain. So Americans sell their souls for the false promise of getting a share of the booty of organized crime (government and banking).

LEARN TO LOVE

Obviously, the current American system is based on neither love nor wisdom. Scripture tells us in simple terms:

10. ... **love is the fulfilling of the law** (God’s). (Rom 13:10)

7. ... *love is of God; and every one that loves is born of God, and knows God.* (1 John 4:7)

35. *For whoso finds me (God) finds life, and shall obtain favor of Yahweh.*

36. *But he that sins against me wrongs his own soul: all they that hate me love death.*

Prov. 8:35-36

8. *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate you: rebuke a wise man and he will love you.*

9. *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.*

10. **The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom:**

Prov. 9: 8-10

MAN’S WISDOM = NO WISDOM

25. ... *the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

26. *For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*

27. *But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;*

28. *And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:*

29. *That no flesh should glory in his presence.*

The humble man who lives an examined life and whose heart is contrite and easily broken is the man whom God chooses and blesses.

Those who ignore God are digging deep pits for themselves. They become mad (insane) in their own “wisdom.” Man’s wisdom would be laughable if it weren’t so tragic.

MODERN WISDOM

For instance: the BBC recently reported that *"toddlers who lie will do better."* According to the enlightened minds of our time, *"Toddlers who tell lies early in life are more likely to do well later. The complex brain processes involved in formulating a lie are an indicator of a child's early intelligence. Those who are able to lie have reached an important developmental stage. Those who have better cognitive development lie because they can cover up their tracks."*

This was because they developed the ability to carry out a complex juggling act which involves keeping the truth at the back of their brains. The researchers added: *"They even make bankers in later life."*

Yep, there seems to be an element of truth here. Teach your kids to lie so they can become bankers. You can nearly smell the success! (Keep digging those pits).

DEPRESSION?

Man, in his great wisdom, has created a slick banking system and a Wall Street with which to exploit it. Today the well educated graduates of Harvard and Yale go immediately into the field of finance (banking) because that is where profit and big bucks are found. In deed they need big bucks to pay off their \$150,000 student loans.

So man's wisdom lays out the premier plan to achieve success, and every mother's son is sent off to learn the banking trade.

What do you suppose happens to a society whose brightest sons are educated to be thieves and murderers? (Keep digging those pits).

But, not to worry ... the boys at the top of the organized crime of government and banking assure us that the pit is still easy to escape from. The bankers' shenanigans will only dig small pits ... called "recessions." So Americans watch FOX and CNN to assure themselves that America is not going into a "depression."

Remember, you can't cheat (or trick) an honest man. That's why con men choose liars to con, because they can be tricked. Therefore, since Americans are easily tricked by FOX and CNN it can only mean one thing: Too many Americans are dishonest ... otherwise they couldn't be conned consistently.

The tricksters had it easier back in the 30's because sources of information were very limited. Most Americans were ignorantly happy working and not knowing what government and bankers were doing in the world. "The Great Depression" was over before most Americans were told it was a depression.

It appears that the depression of 1929-1934 is pretty similar to the depression we are in now with its temporary rallies but persistent sell-offs.

The early 1930 rally came after the market had fallen nearly 50% in the fall of 1929. The spring rally of 1930 took the market up nearly 50% again, to a level that was only about 20% below the previous peak.

That rally, of course, was also the biggest sucker's rally in history. After the market peaked in April 1930, it crashed again, eventually down 89% from the 1929 high and more

than 80% from the 1930 high. **The market did not reach the 1930 high again for another quarter of a century.**

While Wall Street was crashing and brokers were jumping out of windows of tall buildings, the newspapers were telling Americans things like this:

February 2, 1930: *"So substantial has been the improvement in business recently that a number of brokerage houses which reduced expenses sharply following the break of last autumn are expanding again. In some instances, employees who were let out are being taken back."* (New York Times)

February 5, 1930: *"The speed with which the stock market rallied in sympathy with the better tone in commodities yesterday is an indication, according to brokers, of the close attention that is being paid to the commodity situation."* (New York Times)



February 5, 1930: *"Brokers, with the experiences of last autumn fresh in their minds, are being surprised daily, one of them said yesterday, by the amount of cash that their customers are supplying."* (New York Times)

February 9, 1930: *"Out of the lately improved sentiment in Wall Street has arisen a feeling among many bankers and brokers that the idea of an altogether "new era" in American finance, which was proclaimed by the new school of economists before the October panic, has not been thoroughly destroyed after all. Some investment trust executives declared last week that they would not be surprised to see a return of some of the phenomena which made the 1929 bull era so unique."* (New York Times)

February 14, 1930: *"The improvement in sentiment in Wall Street may be traced almost directly to the encouraging reports which the financial community is receiving from the leading industries of the country, according to investment trust executives. They say that the current rise in security*

prices is firmly grounded on the improvement in business conditions that began in December.” (New York Times)

March 4, 1930: “According to one opinion the late unpleasantness in the stock market was merely a little hesitation in the major movement of the big bull market. A broker who explained this point of view to one of his customers yesterday met the fervent response: “Thank heaven, it was just a little hesitation.” (New York Times)

March 7, 1930: “Wall Street statisticians were surprised yesterday, in making comparisons with the averages of the same date last year, to learn that the recession had been so small. (New York Times).

March 25, 1930: “Wall Street was in a cheerful frame of mind as a result of numerous vague reports of improvement in business and industry, but the strength in stocks was generally ascribed to the more aggressive activity of professional interests committed to the advance.” (New York Times)

March 26, 1930: “The boisterous conduct of the stock market lately has given rise to apprehension in some quarters that a new and unbridled wave of speculation is about to start. The specter of a voracious market which once more will gobble up all available credit, nullifying the efforts of the Federal Reserve Bank to provide business with easy money, is being paraded.” (New York Times)

Etcetera, etcetera ...

As you can see, the common people who depended upon the Wall Street-controlled media for information were left in confusion ... just like today.

People today watch their TV News to learn how the economy is going. If they had an ounce of sense they'd know that the Wall Street-controlled media will NEVER tell the truth about it. America is in a depression right now. It is going to get even worse. We may actually read about it someday in the future ... when they are willing to admit it.

Unemployment is well over 20% ... over 40% in some locations. Foreclosures are epidemic. Over 40% of the people in some states are on food stamps. The only reason we don't see soup lines (like during the 30's) is because food stamps have replaced them. Some cities are losing businesses so rapidly that whole sections of the city are shutting down. But the clowns on CNN and FOX only give you the manufactured statistics of the Dow Jones. Wall Street is not a real measure of America's economy, nor does it reflect how life is going out here in the real world. Wall Street bankers are the modern-day robber barons who are being legitimized by Washington DC.

You can sort of excuse our parents for having been ignorant of the machinations of politics and finance in their day. The only sources of information were newspapers and radios, and most Americans had neither. But today we have no excuse for we have information at our finger tips 24 hours a day. I am not referring to the TV. Rather, the Internet is the

greatest source for information that ever existed. Twenty years ago no attorney or news room had the information sources we now have at our disposal. All we have to do is sort out the truth from the deception ... which is a doable task for anyone with “eyes to see and ears to hear.”

US GOV'T DECLARED WAR ON IRAN

Washington officially (although not openly) declared war on Iran in June. The “sanctions” bill that was passed into law will be used to force Iran into war. The US Government and Israel are apparently going to embargo shipping and commerce from entering Iran. They will probably stop Iranian ships that attempt to navigate in or out of the Persian Gulf. They will board the ships and search them ... much like the Israelis recently stopped and boarded the Turkish ships attempting to take supplies to the Palestinians. It will be a breach of international law and an unprovoked embargo on a sovereign nation. This has been historically defined as an act of war.

Iran is expected to react violently to this breach of her sovereignty. The US and Israel have deployed an armada of battleships to the Red Sea. There are now reports from the Israeli National News that The Israeli Air Force recently unloaded military equipment at a Saudi Arabia base while a large US force has massed in Azerbaijan, which is on the northwest border of Iran. Apparently the Saudi royal families, like the Egyptian government, have gotten in bed with Israel ... and this, too, is causing a stir among the Muslims, including the common Saudi citizens. A possible backlash of the common people of Saudi Arabia could overthrow the royal families who have prostituted themselves to the West and the Israelis.

Iran's president says Tehran will retaliate if its cargo ships come under inspection and that it will delay resuming nuclear talks to teach the West some manners.

On June 25, the Navy Commander of the elite Corps of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution General Ali Fadavi published a warning ... that if the United States and its allies inspect Iranian ships in international waters ‘they will have their response in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.’

The Iranians have hundreds of high tech missiles at the ready, capable of taking out aircraft carriers and war ships. This could escalate into a very deadly situation.

At some point the US war machine will likely bite off more than it can chew. Yet another war – this time against Iran – may be the straw that breaks the camel's back and bring down maniacs on Wall Street and Washington DC. Will they finally steal enough rope to hang themselves? It seems that they don't know the meaning of “enough.” They already control 95% of the world's wealth ... but that still isn't enough for them. They already have multiple wars going against poor third-world nations that can't defend themselves, but that isn't enough either. When will their appetite for money and power be satiated? Apparently never ... until God stops them.

Perhaps if America repents God will stop them.

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