



# Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

Published monthly by  
Free to Be  
Life Coaching  
and  
John Rottschafer PhD  
Certified Life Coach  
Volume 30 - June 2008

## Wisdom

"What were you thinking??!!" It's one of those questions few of us enjoy being asked, because it usually follows some type of failure on our part. While we might simply respond with a sheepish "I guess I wasn't", we might also try earnestly to explain the logic behind our behavior. Yet, if there was thinking and reasoning behind our behavior, how could things have gone so wrong?

Experiences such as these highlight both the necessity for and the tenuous inadequacy of "thinking". Life without thinking is chaos; life with thinking is still uncertain. So much depends on the quality of the thinking. Is it flawed and foolish, or is wisdom evident?

Wisdom - it was the gift most desired by King Solomon, and the trait we want to see in our leaders. It is what we seek to develop in our children, and what we wish to claim for our selves. But what is it? And where does it come from?

While much has been written about wisdom, let's consider just five characteristics of this highly valued gift.

1) Wisdom is based in knowledge. No knowledge ... no wisdom. Yet, knowledge does not guarantee wisdom, and increased knowledge does not guarantee increased wisdom.

The accumulation of information is inadequate to produce wisdom, since information alone can produce all types of "knowledgeable foolishness".

2) Wisdom is based in the knowledge of truth, specifically the truth about who we humans are, how we best function and relate, the role we play in this world, and what we need to rise above our weaknesses. In a world full of "noted authorities", we are often inundated with "informed opinion" about life issues. While some of it is helpful, truth is often drowned out by the banging of self-made drums. So where is truth to be found?

When seeking the truth about anything, it is best to consult its source (eg - the writer of the book, the designer of the machine, the painter of the picture). In the case of mankind, Scripture, our Owner's manual, becomes the best source for uncovering the truth about effective living. Such knowledge empowers us to develop moral and social codes for living based on the instructions of our Creator. Yet, even in the midst of such truth, wisdom may still be absent.

3) Wisdom exists when we take the knowledge of truth as revealed in Biblical principles and actively apply it to our daily living. To be sure, such wisdom may, at times, "fly in the face" of conventional "wisdom" based on human reasoning and motivation.

Different principles ... different "wisdom". Yet, living out a Biblical moral code gives us the distinct advantage of being connected to the blueprint of the One who originally designed us and our world.

4) Wisdom is not meant to be hoarded. It isn't gained simply to feed our self. Rather, as with all good things, it is meant both to enrich our own life and to share with (not impose on) others. As Seneca once wrote, "If wisdom were offered to me with this restriction, that I should keep it close and not communicate it, I would refuse the gift."

5) Wisdom is not static. We have the opportunity to grow in wisdom throughout our lifetime. This happens, however, only as we continually seek out the truth of the Biblical blueprint (alone and with others), apply it consistently in our life decisions, and learn from our experiences.

Living in wisdom isn't necessarily easy. It requires us to be conscious, intentional, and committed to living the truth. It calls from us a deeper connection with our spiritual core, and the courage to trust what we believe but cannot control. It requires the strength and freedom of humility, and the vision to see beyond simple self-interest. In the end, however, the peace and fulfillment we experience confirm the value of this path.



# Pause with Purpose

Volume 30 - June 2008

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work..

You can contact me at:  
John Rottschafer, PhD  
*Free to Be* Life Coaching  
4519 Cascade Rd SE Ste 18  
Grand Rapids MI 49546

phone - (616) 949-9925  
e-mail -  
john@freetobelife coaching.com  
www.freetobelife coaching.com



If you do not wish to receive this letter, please share this request at the contacts above and your name will be removed from the mailing list.

Copyright 2008 by John Rottschafer Ph.D. and Free to Be Life Coaching.  
Reprint permitted with copyright information and web address included.

## String Trimmers and Life

She was talking about her string trimmer. You know ... those wonderful motorized tools that trim long grass with a spinning plastic string. Her's ran well and was very efficient, ... until it ran out of plastic string. She tried to refill the spool with more string, but it wouldn't automatically feed out like it used to. What had been a smooth operating machine became a huge source of frustration.



She soon learned that her situation was fairly common. She also learned that restringing wasn't that hard, but that it needed to be done a certain way in order to work properly. That "certain way", she discovered, was explained right there in the owner's manual she kept in her file.

And so it is with life. So often we attempt to accomplish, or relate, or lead, or decide, only to fall into frustration because we fail to first educate ourselves with the instructional truth of our Biblical owner's manual. Our own strength and knowledge take us so far, ... and then get in our way.

Let's open our hearts and minds to the truth available to us, and allow a fresh breeze of wisdom to direct and revitalize our weary efforts.

"A single conversation across the table with a wise man is better than ten years mere study of books."

-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow