



By Elder Neil L. Andersen

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

# HOW TO BE WISE

In today's information tidal wave, we desperately need wisdom—wisdom to **sort through and discern** how to apply what we are learning.

Let's remember:

1. We must seek after wisdom.
2. Wisdom is multidimensional and comes in different sizes and colors.
3. Wisdom gained early brings enormous blessings.
4. Wisdom in one area may not be transferable to another.
5. Wisdom of the world, while in many cases very valuable, is most valuable when it humbly bows to the wisdom of God.

The scriptures describe two types of wisdom: the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God. The wisdom of the world has both a positive and a negative component. In the darkest description, it could be described as a partial truth, mixed with intelligence and manipulation, to achieve selfish or evil purposes.

There is another kind of wisdom of the world that is not nearly so sinister. In fact it is very positive. This wisdom is consciously acquired through **study, reflection, observation, and hard work**. It is very valuable and helpful in the things we do. To good and decent people, it comes as we experience our mortality.

More importantly, the wisdom that brings success in the world must be willing to step behind the wisdom of God and not think that it can substitute for it.

Not all wisdom is created equal. We need to learn that when there is conflict between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God, we must **yield our will to the wisdom of God**.

I suggest you take some of the issues facing you. Put a line down the middle of a paper. List the wisdom of the world on the left side and the wisdom of God on the right side. Write the issues in conflict one with another.

## What choices are you making?

In section 45 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which speaks of the events leading up to the Second Coming of the Savior, the Lord again tells the story of the ten virgins and then leaves us with these words: "For they that are wise, and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be

hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day" (see D&C 45:57).

Let us **seek after the wisdom of God**. There is much we can learn right now about wisdom. I promise you that the Lord's blessings will attend you as you seek for wisdom, the wisdom of God. He is so anxious to impart His wisdom to us. And if we will be obedient and prayerful and seek after it, it will come. ■

*From a Brigham Young University–Idaho commencement address given on April 10, 2009.*

## HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

"There are always two possibilities to choose. You can choose what you want. But you should decide wisely. I can say that choosing the Lord can help you through each day and having the Holy Spirit by your side can help you through each situation. Choosing the wrong side can lead to an unhappy feeling, a feeling that will seem like happiness for a short time but afterward you will see the consequences and you will bitterly regret the decision you have made. Stay on the Lord's side! It's not always easy, but it's worth doing!"

Samuel J., Austria