

Wisdom at Work at Work

Are you wise?

There are so many levels of knowledge, relationships, and goals that your answer can truthfully be “Yes” on some level. If you understand the relationships within your family and let that understanding guide your interactions with your family members and if your actions are directed by love of those family members and their welfare, then you can claim wisdom. If you understand the relationships among the peoples, policies, and goals where you work and if you act with that knowledge to help your employer reach his/her goals, then you are wise.

It seems to me that there are three parts to wisdom, (a) understanding of the relationships in a particular setting, (b) understanding the goal(s) of the players in that setting, and (c) taking action toward assisting or enabling the players, yourself included, to achieve those goals.

The faith-based value of wisdom raises the standard for being acclaimed wise to a higher level than would ordinarily satisfy in the examples given above. Once faith is brought in, the horizon for understanding is expanded beyond this world and this life. A Divine Being created this universe and brought us to life on this planet and that Being sent His Son both to save us and to teach us how to relate to that Divine Person. Humility is required to understand and take this into account. We exist out of love; we are loved now; and ultimately we are invited to return to full unity with our loving Creator. The truly wise person has the humility to let that relationship overshadow and be integral to all other relationships.

In faith-based wisdom, that accepted understanding dominates the first two legs of wisdom: (a) there is a loving relationship between and among the creator and all persons and creation in a particular setting and (b) the ultimate goal of that loving relationship is unity with the creator. The third part, the “practical wisdom” part, is to be guided by love. Based on our understanding we take action in the direction of bringing about good for all in the setting, a good that helps all, however slightly, to progress toward the ultimate unity with God.

I remember a story, perhaps from the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series, about an experienced salesman of audio systems. A young man came into the story looking for a new, up-to-date audio system. He was excited about and interested in the latest, most advanced system. As the salesman talked to the young man, he learned he was recently married with a new child and an income that left little beyond the necessities of life. Considering the young man’s eagerness, the salesman could easily have talked him into signing papers for a system and a loan that would have the family hurting financially for several years and earn the salesman a good sized commission. Instead, the salesman worked with the young man to help him see that a smaller, less expensive system was the best deal for him at that time. Worldly wisdom would say the salesman was foolish. True wisdom would say the salesman gave expression to true wisdom.

WISDOM — A Faith Based Value at Work

1. What does applying the faith-based value of Wisdom in your workplace mean to you? What do you think it would mean to those with whom you work? How does its meaning change for your different workplaces, for example, home or where you volunteer?
2. Why is it important to gain an understanding of Wisdom in the workplace and how to apply that understanding?
3. How do/could you apply the concept of Wisdom in your workplace(s)?
4. What would happen in your workplace if you took and actively applied the value of faith-based Wisdom in your workplace(s)? How would the workplace sound different? Look different? Feel different?
5. What first step are you willing to take this week?