

This Summer I have been renewed in my appreciation of God's Wisdom—the Wisdom that underlies creation and presents better ways and worse ways. Every time I see a woman in high heels, I remember my sisters and mother talking about “sensible shoes”. Yesterday, a woman blew through a stop sign on a cross street where I was stopped. If she keeps doing that she will wake up dead one fine morning—not by my hand. It is just that God has structured the universe in such a way that the odds are against her if she does not change.

The new appreciation for God's wisdom I have acquired has to do with my declining health. One reaches a certain age at which one leans into one's weaknesses and limitations rather than trying to resist and overcome. My back has been getting worse through the last six years—partly because I have yielded to a couple of herniated disks and favored them rather than disciplining myself to strengthen the muscles around them with boring core exercises on the floor which I hate. This Summer I have done the core exercises every day and *mirabile dictu*, my back pain is pretty much gone. This does not mean I am going to enter the Mr. Universe competition. As Dirty Harry famously pointed out, “A man has got to know his limitations..” Knowing one's limitations is also wisdom from God. It means that I will thank God for the little bit of wisdom that God has given me that tells me what to do, when to do it, and why to do it. This has also applied to my whiny knee which needs to be firmly told, “Shut up and do your job.” Babydog has helped with this particular wisdom venture. When my knee starts whining, he ain't care.

August is a great month to reacquire good habits we have let slip or to acquire for the first time habits we ought to have been cultivating all along. Here are some that come to mind:

Scripture reading starting with the New Testament and then going to the old.

Prayer that begins in silence and continues in listening.

Overlaying your practice of integrity with Jesus' practice of integrity.

Love and humility no matter how forced they feel for you.

Cutting out the sweets—especially the fructose.

Cutting out the alcohol.

Cutting out the carbs. This includes silencing the little voice that says, “It's not carbs; it's pizza.”

Giving your insulin a period to reset by not snacking all day long.

Exercising your heart.

Exercising your tendons.

Exercising your muscles.

Resetting your frustration quotient by telling yourself, “No, I really don't have anything better to do.”

One could argue that we can make too much of God's wisdom and turn “the good life” into a be all and end all. We can not cross that bridge when we come to it. But if the alternative is to keep doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result (Einstein) or being stuck on stupid (Dr. Phil) I think that applying the wisdom of God is worth the risks.

Blessings, JSM