

# Developing Instructional Wisdom

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## The Chief Cornerstone

Just as Ephesians 2:20 and 1 Peter 2:6 describe Jesus Christ as the Chief Cornerstone of our faith, Proverbs 9:1, 2, and 9 is the chief cornerstone of Instructional Wisdom, serving as the foundation stone or setting stone upon which the weight of teaching from the Bible rests.

In a literal sense, the chief cornerstone is the key to keeping the walls of a structure straight. Taking sightings along its edges, builders take great care in setting this foundational stone to assure that all other corners of the structure will be at the appropriate angles as well. In a symbolic sense, the chief cornerstone represents aspiration and endeavor, and is a symbol of the beginning of a great effort, bounding within it all the hopes and aspirations for the structure to come. The same holds true while teaching from the Bible.

Instructional Wisdom asks the facilitator, instructor, or teacher to take their biblical knowledge, insight, and revelation that they have acquired through innumerable years of prayer, studying, and research and meld it with the intentionality, forethought, and diligence required to organize and orchestrate a learning environment that optimizes adult connection, engagement, and growth. By setting the chief cornerstone of Instructional Wisdom as outlined in Proverbs 9:1, 2, and 9, they will be able to more effectively give away and impart the Bible's invaluable and life-changing knowledge to others.

## Proverbs 9:1, 2, and 9 – The Way of [Instructional] Wisdom (NKJV)

Serving as the foundation stone or setting stone upon which the weight of teaching from the Bible rests, Proverbs 9:1, 2, and 9 is at the core of Instructional Wisdom.

*9:1 Wisdom has built her house,  
She has hewn out her seven pillars;*

Think about all the things required in building a house. Simply having blueprints or architectural designs is not enough; one also needs quality materials and workers to complete the task. Furthermore, the number “seven” can represent many things in the Bible, including completeness. Also, in a literal instance, having “seven pillars” would indicate a sound and solidly built house.

Therefore, acquiring biblical knowledge, insight, and revelation (e.g., blueprints or architectural designs) are just part of the completeness of teaching from the Bible (e.g., building a house). Intentionality, forethought, and diligence required to organize and orchestrate a learning environment that optimizes adult connection, engagement, and growth (e.g., materials and

workers) would serve as the chief cornerstone because once Instructional Wisdom is understood, developed, and effectively utilized, it can be deployed in any learning environment where the facilitator, instructor, or teacher desires to give away and impart the Bible's invaluable and life-changing knowledge to others.

**9:2** *She has slaughtered her meat,  
She has mixed her wine,  
She has also furnished her table.*

Think about all the things required in hosting a banquet. Simply having food and drinks is not enough; one also needs high-quality meat and wine if it is going to be elevated from a banquet to a feast, especially a feast of life. Meat – particularly from freshly slaughtered and butchered animals – is a very nutrient-dense food and was a mark of a feast in biblical times, representing the best food a host or hostess could provide.

Furthermore, although wine was a staple in biblical times, during a feast, the host or hostess would add aromatic spices to enliven the bouquet and improve the taste; and oftentimes add water to dilute, making it more palatable and refreshing. Finally, the host or hostess – after working diligently and providing the best food and drink they have to offer – would furnish their table with all necessities, waiting for their guests to arrive and partake in the feast.

Therefore, understanding that God's word (e.g., biblical knowledge, insight, and revelation) is the "*slaughtered meat*" of any lesson, the facilitator, instructor, or teacher (e.g., host or hostess) needs to become adept at "*mixing the wine*" with the intentionality, forethought, and diligence required to organize and orchestrate a learning environment that optimizes adult connection, engagement, and growth (e.g., to enliven the bouquet and improve the taste, making it [both the wine and the lesson] more palatable and refreshing). By doing so, they would have "*furnished the table*" of learning for their guests with the two aforementioned elements of a solid lesson (e.g., *slaughtered meat* [content] and *mixed wine* [effective teaching strategies] for a feast).

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

Think about all of the nouns associated with a church. How many of those people, places, and things need some type of repair, renovation, or upgrade? Now, think about conversations revolving around such repairs, renovations, or upgrades of these nouns. How do conversations centered on places and things differ to those centered on people? For example, if a member of a church – who happens to be a plumber – notices a leaky pipe and approaches the pastor about fixing it, the advice, recommendation, and offer to help is almost always met with open arms and much appreciation. Among others, the same can be said about a roofer and a leaky roof, a mechanic and a rambling car, or an electrician and errant wiring.

However, what does such advice, recommendations, and offers to help look like when it involves people? For example, a member of a church who is a financial advisor and offers to help people manage their finances so that they can be debt free, or a therapist who offers to help people

work through past pain and trauma, or even a teacher who offers to help people wanting to teach from the Bible to organize and orchestrate a learning environment that optimizes adult connection, engagement, and growth. Not wanting to delve into the psychology of human behavior, let's just say, oftentimes, it is not met with such open arms and as much appreciation compared to advice, recommendations, and offers to help when repairing, renovating, or upgrading places and things.

Therefore, if – as a facilitator, instructor, or teacher – it is your desire to give away and impart the Bible's invaluable and life-changing knowledge to others, but have not had training on how to effectively organize and orchestrate a learning environment that optimizes adult connection, engagement, and growth, than it is paramount to be a “*wise and just man*” and seek out, receive, and embrace “*instruction*” so that you can become “*still wiser*” and “*increase in learning*” by developing Instructional Wisdom.

## **Instructional Wisdom**

Whether one is teaching kindergarten through college, a youth group, or a small to large Bible study, it takes a lot of time, energy, and planning to construct a solid lesson. Therefore, it all starts with you – the facilitator, instructor, or teacher. There are many people who possess an incredible amount of biblical knowledge, insight, and revelation that they have acquired through innumerable years of prayer, studying, and research; with their desire being to give away and impart this invaluable and life-changing knowledge to others.

Therefore, understanding that, “divine wisdom springs from *integrity*, and becomes manifest through *creative* expression with *excellence* as its standard” (Johnson, 2006, p. 45), it is imperative for people teaching from the Bible to be aware of various learning modalities and effective teaching strategies, and to know when, where, and how to deploy them. Ultimately, especially as it pertains to adult learners, the facilitator needs to understand and embrace the chief cornerstone found in “The Way of [Instructional] Wisdom” as outlined in Proverbs 9:1, 2, and 9, and not only be knowledgeable about their content, but also be adept at organizing and orchestrating the learning environment to optimize learning.

Instructional Wisdom, therefore, is when the facilitator, instructor, or teacher – through their *integrity* of wanting to give away what they have – knows the content and the purpose and intended outcomes they want to achieve while tapping into people's individual *creative* expression, and, by doing so, elevates the standard of *excellence*. Any learning environment that teaches biblical truths and principles should never be something people have to endure. Rather, facilitators of such environments must learn, apply, and discipline themselves in Instructional Wisdom in order to more effectively connect and engage people in growing in the life-changing applications and revelations of the ultimate reality – who Jesus Christ is and who we are in Him.