

January 4 – Growing in Wisdom and Grace

Scripture Readings

1 Kings 3:4–15 – Solomon's Request for Wisdom

And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place: Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?" It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Psalm 119:97-104

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts. I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

Ephesians 1:3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Luke 2:40–52

And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Reflection in the Field

Wisdom grows quietly. It is not seized in haste but formed through humility, attention, and presence. Solomon's request for discernment began with confession—"I am but a little child"—and God answered not by granting power, but by shaping the heart to listen. Likewise, the young Jesus learned and grew, not apart from daily life, but within it—among family, teachers, and the rhythm of worship. Wisdom unfolds in relationship.

Those who serve beside horses understand this sacred rhythm of growth. A horse learns not through force, but through consistency, gentleness, and patient guidance. Each step of progress arises from quiet trust—ears tuned to tone, eyes soft with recognition. The wise trainer listens more than speaks; the wise disciple, too, learns through stillness and obedience. In

the gentle pattern of care, correction, and rest, both horse and human are shaped toward grace.

To grow in wisdom and grace is to walk daily in the nearness of Christ—to listen for His Word, to yield to His correction, and to rejoice in His companionship. Like Mary, we learn to treasure these moments in our hearts, discovering that wisdom is not found in knowing much, but in being known by the One who loves completely.

Luther Reflection

“Christ’s wisdom was not the wisdom of proud scholars but the humble obedience of one who listens to His Father. We learn not by commanding God but by hearing Him and keeping His Word.”

— Martin Luther, Sermon on Luke 2:40–52, Luther’s Works 52:46–48

Reflection Prompts

Where in your life is God inviting you to listen more deeply rather than act quickly?

How does the horse’s quiet learning mirror your own growth in faith?

What practices help you stay attentive to God’s Word each day?

In what ways can you share wisdom with gentleness and grace this week?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You grew in wisdom and in favor with God and man. Teach us the humility to learn, the patience to listen, and the grace to follow where You lead. Let our hearts be gentle, our words be kind, and our hands steady in service. As we walk beside Your creatures and Your people, shape us into reflections of Your love and peace. Amen.

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24–26)*