

Becoming a Community of Shalom Series
Study Guide by Rev. Dale Peterson
Fourth of Four Presentations ~ Spring 2023

Wisdom in Daily Life

My grandmother, Agnes Raymetz, would pray, “God grant me knowledge, add to my knowledge understanding, and unto my understanding wisdom.” In the New Testament the author of James writes, “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

“Wisdom isn’t simply intelligence or knowledge or even understanding. It is the ability to use these to think and act in such a way that common sense prevails, and choices are beneficial and productive. You don’t get wisdom out of a textbook. You don’t get knowledge enough to make you wise. You don’t receive understanding from simply hearing others. Experience might be one of the most valuable tools in acquiring wisdom.” (Jack Wellman)

In this session we will explore a process for incorporating the practices of prayer and meditation into our everyday lives. This is a practice from Tara Brach that includes: 1) naming a clear intention, 2) establishing a formal practice, *and you will* 3) acquire an ongoing informal practice. Examples include driving a stick shift, riding a bike, and meditating. We will also meditate and prayerfully listen to God’s message for us today regarding wisdom.

Biblical Texts:

[James 3:17](#)

¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

[Psalm 51:6-12](#)

⁶You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

¹¹Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Reflection Questions:

- 1) Describe a person you consider wise. How do you think they gained their wisdom?
- 2) Looking back on your life, what are one or two of the wisest decisions you ever made?

Guided Prayer for Wisdom:

- 1) A time of restful attentiveness.
- 2) Meditation on [Psalm 51: 6-12](#) using *Lectio Divina*:

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- 3) Prayerful listening for God's message to me today.

