

TMI-NEW

Too Much Information — Not Enough Wisdom
Slide Notes by Sonny Bowman

The Information Age

- Quick, easy access
- Cheap access
- Almost anything
- Both right and wrong information
- Sometimes too much information – TMI

TMI Causes Problems

- Feel like we know more than we do
 - Having information is not the same as knowing something
 - Knowing how to do something is not same as knowing when to do it
- Feel overwhelmed or discouraged
 - When assaulted with lots of information, we begin to shut down and ignore it
- We are distracted
 - Spend more time looking at information and less time actually doing something

Overwhelmed example: “Before driving your vehicle please read this Owner’s Manual carefully.” (Nissan manual is almost ½ inch thick! Have the car 12 years, still have not read all of it.)

As a youth I remember consciously giving my parents excess information about a situation in an effort to cover up the fact that I was leaving something important out. Even at a young age I knew how to use TMI to my advantage.

How about those long agreements that you accept when using an internet service or some software? On April 1, 2010, online retailer UK video game company Gameplay (GB) Limited, doing business as Gamestation.co.uk, demonstrated the problems inherent in standard form contracts through an April Fools' Day prank of Faustian proportions. Gamestation added a very interesting clause to its online terms and conditions: By placing an order on April 1, purchasers granted to Gamestation a non-transferable, perpetual option "to claim, for now and forever more, your immortal soul". ... At the end of the paragraph, purchasers were told that they could click on a link to nullify the provision (and, upon doing so, were rewarded for their vigilance with a voucher code that had a value of £5.00). (“Immortal Souls and Standard Form Agreements: Reminder after April Fool's Day Prank”, <http://www.mcmillan.ca/93388>)

Distracted example: **Facebook** —a one-word example. (I’m not against Facebook. It can be a great tool or a great time waster.)

The Problem is NEW

- No, TMI is not a new problem!
- NEW is the problem!
- Not Enough Wisdom
- We call this “The Information Age” — Not “The Age of Wisdom”

TMI in Christianity

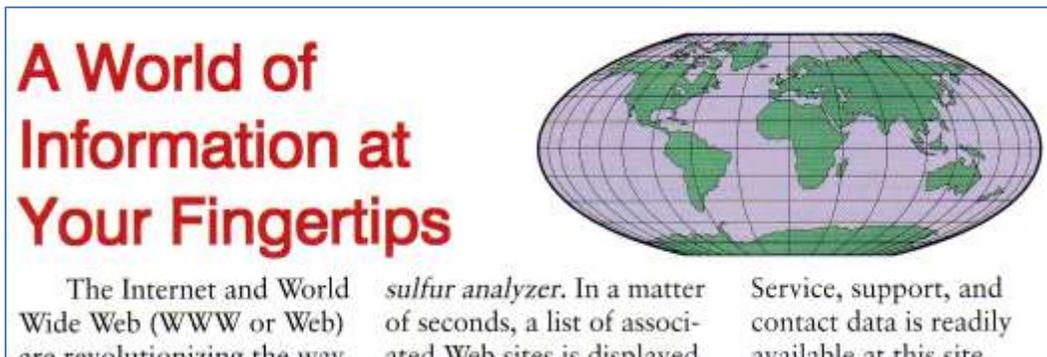
- Today’s Christian has greater and easier access to the words of God than previous generations
- But today’s Christians often use much less godly wisdom in our choices and actions than previous generations
- Our words may sound good, but our actions are often out of sync with God’s truth
- We are distracted and foolish

What is Wisdom?

- “knowledge of what is true or right coupled with good judgment.”
 - Good judgment comes from experience
 - Experience comes from bad judgment

Wisdom definition is from the Random House College Dictionary.

Story of my first color information brochures printed professionally to give to potential customers. It printed with **lavender** oceans (see image below). Any shade of blue would have been fine, but lavender is an unacceptable color for the ocean. I learned many valuable lessons from that experience that I still follow 12 years later.



Consequences help make us wise. Wisdom from a Christian view is being skilled in godly living. Unfortunately, wisdom of this kind is in short supply.

Information vs. Wisdom

- Information changes — wisdom is eternal
 - Proverbs 8:1, 22-23 — Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice? ... “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.
- Information is cheap — wisdom comes at a high cost

- Information expects nothing — wisdom demands action

Information changes. One time we are told that coffee is bad for our health. Then we are told that it is good for our health. Then another study is done and we are told that coffee is bad for us.

God's Purpose for You

- You can know Scripture and have gifting for ministry, but still not know your purpose
- Wisdom is needed to help us know what we were put on earth to do as individuals and as a community
- When you know God's purpose for you, then your life begins to make sense

Godly wisdom is needed so you can know what God wants you to do with your life, and how to go about it. Today, many Christians don't seem to want God messing with their lives, so godly wisdom is the last thing they want—and it shows!

Desperately Needed

- Difficult times for individuals
- Difficult times for communities
- Difficult times for our world
- We desperately need people who can make sense of things from God's perspective
- Will you be one of those people?

We desperately need people with godly wisdom who know how to apply God's ways and truths to current problems and challenges.

Wisdom Can Be Gained

- An intelligent person can be unwise
- A mentally challenged person can be wise
- Anyone can grow in godly wisdom
- All Christians should be growing daily in godly wisdom
- It's a lifelong pursuit

Going from Info to Wisdom

- Information is not knowledge
- Information + study → knowledge
- Knowledge is not wisdom
- Knowledge + good judgment → wisdom

We have lots of information. So how do we get from just information to wisdom? Wisdom correctly interprets and applies knowledge. Knowledge is knowing that the tomato is a fruit, not a vegetable. Wisdom is not putting a tomato in a fruit smoothie.

Get Wisdom!

- Proverbs 4:5-6 — Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you.
- Proverbs 4:7 — Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.

It just doesn't happen to you! You have to go get it. Wisdom, as the "principal thing, is super important. And while you're pursuing wisdom, don't forget to go after understanding, also.

How Do I Start?

- Proverbs 9:10 — The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- Proverbs 3:5-7 — Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

The Scripture is not talking about a fearful terror here. God is love and He is personal. But He is still God and deserves respect, reverence, and awe. He is God, I am not! As you learn to know God and His ways, you will gain understanding.

I remember as a child: Dad said "no," so asked Mom. She said "yes." Dad explained my poor judgment in such a way I never did that again. Even though Dad loved me, he also was to be respected. Through a godly fear and consequences, I learned wisdom!

Proverbs 8:13 — The fear of the Lord *is* to hate evil...

God hates evil because it is contrary to His nature/character and it destroy people and the creation. If you flirt with evil, you do not fear God and you are not wise!

Wisdom Comes from God

- Proverbs 2:6 — For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
- James 1:5 — If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.
- Ephesians 1:17 — that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

There are parts we do (ask and seek) and a part that God does. Read the Bible to hear God's words.

Pursue the Treasure

- Proverbs 2:1-5 — My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God.

Notice Getting wisdom begins with desperate hunger.

Consider “Raiders of the Lost Ark” – they spent time, money, and energy—plus risked their lives to find the treasure. Have you put that kind of effort into pursuing God’s wisdom? I told you that wisdom was costly.

Reading the Bible

- Are you reading for information
- Or are you reading for knowledge
- Or are you reading for wisdom
- How often are you reading?

But I ate pizza back in 2005. Why should I eat it again? The Bible is food for your soul! If your soul is doing poorly, maybe you are starving it.

I typically read 2 chapters from the NT and 2 chapters from the OT each day. At that rate, I read the NT about twice and the OT about once every year. At my age, that’s a lot of times through the Bible. Yet I still gain new life and wisdom from it.

Wisdom in Action

- Matthew 7:24-27 — “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Information expects nothing, wisdom demands action. Wisdom is directly connected with hearing God’s word **and** doing what it says. Foolishness is the opposite of wisdom. If your life is falling apart, maybe you have been foolish—hearing God’s truth but not doing what it says...

No Action = Deceived

- James 1:22 — But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

That’s the worst kind of deception—you do it to yourself! We have enough other people trying to deceive us. Let’s stop doing it to ourselves.

Wise or Foolish?

- Proverbs 12:15 — The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.
- Proverbs 13:20 — He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.
- Proverbs 26:11-12 — As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly. Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

If you are truly wise, you will understand that you need outside help. A wise person learns that he is dependent on God and others. You will become like those you hang out with.

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In summary, I would like to read again the slide that we saw earlier.

In general, people in today's culture can be put off by me repeating this one slide. That's the problem. You will never gain wisdom by simply reading something once!

Goal of this teaching: To encourage you to actively and aggressively pursue godly wisdom. The people around you need it!

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