

Intellectual Pursuit

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Sermon Synopsis

In this episode of World Impact, Dr. Billy Wilson, president of the university, powerfully calls believers to embrace a lifelong pursuit of knowledge as a divine mandate. Central to the message is the understanding that intellectual pursuit is not just an academic endeavor but a godly virtue and a way to glorify God by equipping oneself to impact the world. Using the recently opened JD McKean Library as a backdrop, Dr. Wilson highlights the importance of educational resources combined with spiritual integrity to prepare students—and all believers—for meaningful service in the 21st century. The sermon underscores that learning is a sacred journey, one that must be actively cultivated and fiercely pursued throughout a lifetime, echoing biblical wisdom that exhorts us to seek understanding as diligently as hidden treasure.

Integral to the message is the acknowledgment of technology and innovation as vital tools in modern learning, epitomized by Oral Roberts University's dedication to providing cutting-edge resources such as virtual reality stations, digital research databases, and media arts centers. Dr. Angela Sample, associate dean of the university library, passionately encourages learners of all ages to respond to God's prompting to gain knowledge, affirming that it is never too late to start learning. A striking example of God's hand in intellectual pursuit is illustrated through Dr. William Ranahan II, a research expert whose faith-led scientific breakthroughs in cancer treatment exemplify how intellectual labor can intersect with divine purpose. The sermon embraces the biblical truths found in Proverbs and 2 Peter, which link the acquisition of wisdom and knowledge to honoring God and strengthening faith. However, the speaker does not shy away from warning believers about the dangers of knowledge without love or humility—reminding us that pride and sorrow can accompany learning if not stewarded rightly.

Dr. Wilson masterfully weaves historical biblical figures into the sermon, spotlighting Moses, Daniel, and the Apostle Paul as paragons of godly intellectual pursuit. Moses, educated in the

wisdom of Egypt, and Daniel, skilled in Babylonian literature and interpretation, demonstrate how worldly knowledge sanctified by God's power can shape history and fulfill divine purposes. Most notably, Paul's rigorous training under Gamaliel and his missionary zeal illustrate how deep scholarship combined with spiritual empowerment enables a global influence for Christ. The sermon concludes with a clarion call for believers to present themselves as living sacrifices, renewed in mind and spirit, to fulfill God's perfect will through intellectual growth. This integration of faith and learning presents a compelling vision for Christians to become transformative leaders and faithful stewards of knowledge for the advancement of God's kingdom.

The message is further enriched by insights from Dr. Armenio Suzano, director of the Department of Music, who offers a unique perspective on the role of the arts in neurological health and spiritual expression. He reveals how engaging creatively through music and dance activates both sides of the brain, promoting mental agility and healing—testimonies such as the recovery of Congresswoman Gabby Giffords through music therapy powerfully testify to God's ability to restore and renew through intellectual and artistic pursuits. Suzano challenges believers to wield their artistic talents with a Christian worldview to influence society positively and infuse culture with biblical values. As God's curators, believers are called not only to pursue knowledge but also to shape social norms for His glory through creative expression.

In closing, this sermon from Oral Roberts University stands as a clarion call to every Christian to eagerly pursue knowledge as a form of worship and service unto the Lord. With the powerful example of biblical leaders, testimonies of contemporary Christian scholars, and the encouragement to engage in cutting-edge educational experiences, believers are inspired to harness their God-given intellectual abilities fully. This divine partnership of learning and spiritual devotion promises not only personal growth but also a transformative influence that can change communities and nations. Faithful Christians are urged to never cease in their quest for wisdom, for it is through a renewed mind and a heart wholly committed to God that true impact is made for His eternal kingdom.

Sermon Highlights

- God calls every believer to pursue lifelong learning and intellectual growth as a godly virtue to glorify Him and impact His kingdom.
- Biblical examples like Moses, Daniel, and the Apostle Paul demonstrate how knowledge and wisdom, when sanctified by God, empower us to lead and transform the world.
- The pursuit of knowledge must be coupled with humility, love, and spiritual integrity to avoid pride and burnout, as warned in scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 8:1 and Ecclesiastes 1:18.
- Engaging in lifelong intellectual discovery equips believers to navigate a world full of deception and ignorance, fulfilling the command to understand the fear of the Lord and gain the knowledge of God (Proverbs 2:3-5).

- Christian education, such as that provided at Oral Roberts University, combines rigorous academic pursuit with the power of the Holy Spirit, enabling learners to be bold visionaries and transformative agents for Christ in every sphere of influence.

Scripture Verses

Proverbs 2:3-5

Indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 3:13

Blessed are those who find wisdom, and those who gain understanding.

Proverbs 23:23

Buy the truth and do not sell it—wisdom, instruction and insight as well.

2 Peter 1:5

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

1 Corinthians 8:1

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up.

Ecclesiastes 1:18

For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.

Ecclesiastes 12:12

Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to them. Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body.

Acts 7:22

Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.

Daniel 1:4-5

Young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.

Daniel 5:12

He did this because Daniel, whom the king called Belteshazzar, was found to have a keen mind and knowledge and understanding, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means.

Acts 22:3

I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.

Acts 5:34

Then one of the Pharisees, a teacher of the law named Gamaliel, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while.

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Quotes

- "God has called you to pursue knowledge all of your life." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "Knowledge is powerful when it is sanctified by God and put in God's hands." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "Intellectual pursuit is such a gift; it is the ability to unpack the world around us that He created so that we can get to know Him better." - Dr. William Ranahan II
- "Learning is a godly thing. God made humans to learn and He wants us to be lifelong learners and pursue intellectual knowledge throughout our life." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "When you bring your music, your art, your dance, your literature, your sculpture into society, you are affecting the very intellectual pursuits of our society and influencing them with the kingdom of God and with the biblical perspective." - Dr. Armenio Suzano

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