

Keep Your Head Straight

As we put Christmas behind us and head toward the New Year, Pastor Stephen Brown has some timely advice for us.

Brown, a native Memphian, is the founder and senior pastor of Light of Glory International Church (LOGIC), one of the fastest growing churches in the Memphis region. With a bachelor's degree in physical education from Idaho State University and a master's degree in education, he taught swimming and diving for a number of years. He tells about a young boy named Billy.

Billy had watched so many professional divers and wanted so much to dive like them that he refused to take time to learn the basics.

Time after time, Brown tried to help Billy see that the most important thing about diving was to keep his head in the proper position. If the head entered the water properly, Brown explained, the rest of his body would enter the water properly – at least more properly than it had been.

Billy would dive into the pool, do a belly flop, and come up grinning, "Mr. Brown," he would shout, "were my feet together?"

"Billy, I don't care whether your feet were together or not," Brown shouted back. "Make sure your head is straight, then everything else will work out."

The next time, Billy would stand on the edge of the pool and really concentrate. Then he would dive and, once again, make a mess of it. "Mr. Brown, were my hands together?"

"Billy," Brown would groan in frustration, "I'm going to get you a neck brace and weld it onto your head. For the hundredth time, if your head is right, the rest of you will be right. If your head is wrong, the rest of you will be wrong."

Brown's story is instructive. And isn't his advice for Billy true in all of life?

If our head is wrong, our marriage will probably suffer. If our head is wrong, our priorities will be fouled up. If our head is wrong, our jobs won't work out. If our head is wrong, it may even affect our health in a negative way.

Wisdom is defined as the ability to think and act utilizing knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight. In life, we are confronted with situations and events that require us to make choices. Some of them can be very stressful and even life-threatening.

God understands our distress, and He seeks to make us new persons through faith in Christ and a dependence on Him – through wisdom acquired in Bible reading, in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and through the counsel of fellow believers.

As we prepare to enter 2016, let's strive to keep our heads straight.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him (James 1:5 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter