"The Source of True Wisdom"

I Corinthians 2:6-16

2-12-2023

Introduction: (Job 28:12-23)

**** Where is the source of true wisdom?***

I. God's wisdom is not revealed by the world's wise men (v.6-9)

A. God's wisdom is only appreciated by those who are spiritually mature (v.6a)

B. God's wisdom is not of this world (v.6b)

C. God's wisdom is a hidden mystery (v.7-9)

II. God's wisdom is revealed by His Spirit through His Word (v.10-16)

A. The Holy Spirit gives the ability to KNOW God's Mind(v.10-12)

B. The Holy Spirit gives the ability to TEACH God's Word(v.13)

C. The Holy Spirit gives the ability to DISCERN God's Ways (v.14-16)

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A. God's wisdom is only appreciated by those who are spiritually mature (v.6a)

"Howbeit" - Paul-- having stated how he came to Corinth with a simple, clear-cut, specific message void of this world's wisdom--now shows how his message (though viewed by the world as *"foolish"*) was not foolish but is really the ultimate wisdom -- God's wisdom.

"Them that are perfect" - Those whom the Lord has brought to a complete (full) knowledge of the truth.

"Perfect" - Excludes the unsaved and carnal (3:1; 14:20).

If you find that the preaching and teaching of God's Word is uninteresting, doesn't make sense, is a waste of time, perhaps it's because you are not among those who have a matured understanding of Christ's work at Calvary.

Though the world may view the Christian message as nonsense, absurd, idle religious chatter, those whose hearts God has touched by His Spirit (taking His Word and convicting our hearts by its truth) find we love to hear God's wisdom.

No matter where you go in this world, when you meet a fellow believer, you find an instant comradery, an instant common bond. Your world view matches; he relates to what you say; you are on the same wave length.

B. God's wisdom is <u>not</u> of this <u>world</u> (v.6b)

God's wisdom and the humanistic *"wisdom of this age"* are worlds apart (light years apart).

> ***"My thoughts. . ." -*** Isaiah 55:8-9 - *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

> "Recall the great thinkers of past ages whose ideas of science, medicine, and philosophy have been disproved by the discoveries of subsequent ages. Genuine wisdom transcends the ages of time and is eternal" (Gromacki, p. 32).

> ***"Princes" -*** The leaders, the "head honchos," the intelligencia of this age.

> Those scholastic humanistic brains are already being put out of commission by God.

> Their supposed philosophical truth is being made idle. Their ideas (of how the world began, why we are here, and where we are going) are going to be buried by God.

> However, His wisdom (Word) by contrast will remain forever and ever.

> One day their ideas will be erased and forgotten, but God's truth will be evident for eternity.

C. God's wisdom is a <u>hidden mystery</u>(v.7-9)

V. 7

The ***"wisdom of God"*** is wisdom which originates <u>in</u> God and comes to us <u>from</u> God.

He is the source and supply of all true spiritual wisdom.

The ***"wisdom of God***" is "the work of Christ in His crucifixion, as God's secret plan of redemption (v. 2, 8) and the exalted Christ who presently mediates God's hidden wisdom tot His people" (E.E. Ellis, cited by Rienecker, p. 391).

"A mystery" - A mystery is something that is concealed, viewed, kept secret; *"hidden"* from man's eyes unless God reveals it.

Unless God removes the blinders, people will remain oblivious to His will and ways.

This verse shows that there is <u>truth</u> which exists outside of man, truth which man has no way of knowing unless God reveals it.

Much truth eludes mankind's five senses (cp. v. 9).

God's mystery is revealed via the <u>Scriptures</u> (Rom. 16:25-26 - *"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."*

"Ordained" - To decide beforehand; to pre-determine.

God planned before time began, before the ages of this world began to unfold that He would have a wise plan of redeeming people which would result in the glorification of those who believe.

His past wisdom leads to our future glory.

V. 8

"They would not have crucified" - Obviously, if the lost leaders had known who Jesus really was, they would not have crucified Him, and God's plant o save sinners would never have come to fruition.

Had the religious leaders known that Christ's death for sinners was essential to His plan of salvation, they (in an attempt to foil God's plan) would not have crucified Christ. Out of rebellious spite, they would have avoided any dealings with Christ.

Satan knew God's plan of salvation. This is why he, through Peter, rebuked Jesus for His plans to go to the cross (Mk. 8:33), and no doubt instigated others to demand Him to come down from the cross (Mt. 27:40, 42).

Jesus said, *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"* (Lk. 23:34).

"What is so amazing is the fact that God worked out His wise plan in and through human ignorance. Wicked hands of blinded men crucified, but this is exactly what God had willed (Acts 2:22-23). Nevertheless, God holds men spiritually responsible for their sinful deeds" (Gromacki, p. 34).

V. 9

Paul paraphrases Isaiah 64:4 to show how the spiritually blind, deaf, and dull world has no grasp on the wonderful things God has prepared for His people (Note: Loving God is the fruit of faith in Him. A practically synonymous phrase for a regenerate Christ is *"a lover of God"* - Rom. 8:28; I Cor. 8:3).

II. God's wisdom is revealed by <u>His Spirit</u> through <u>His Word</u> (v.10-16)

A. The Holy Spirit gives the ability to <u>KNOW</u> God's Mind(v.10-12)

V. 10

Though the unsaved lost world has no inkling of an idea what God has given to His people and what God has planned for His people, we have seen, heard, and it has entered into our hearts by the supernatural unveiling work of the Holy Spirit.

"Our salvation involves all three persons in the Godhead (Eph. 1:3-14; I Pet. 1:2). You cannot be saved apart from the <u>Father's</u> electing grace, the <u>Son's</u> loving sacrifice, and the <u>Spirit's</u> ministry of conviction and regeneration" (Wiersbe, p. 575).

The Father <u>planned</u> to save me before the world began,
The Son <u>died</u> to save me almost 2,000 years ago,
The Spirit <u>opened my eyes</u> and saved me in March, 1976.

The Holy Spirit knows the depths of God's mysterious secrets. Those who have His Spirit have been initiated into His past, present, and future wisdom.

"Searcheth" - Does not mean that the Spirit searches with a view to obtaining information; rather, it is a way of saying that He <u>penetrates</u> into all things" (Leon Morris, p. 57).

V. 11
To demonstrate how the Holy Spirit has insight into the mind of God, Paul uses an illustration.

Man has a human spirit with which he can comprehend and know the abstract thoughts of other men who share the same human spirit. I can talk to my dog about physics and mathematics, but my dog will never understand; the brute has not the capacity. However, I can speak about abstract concepts with people, and they get what I'm saying. Why? Because we share the same Adamic nature.

"For a flea to understand a dog, it would have to be at least as advanced as a dog" (MacArthur, p. 60).

For man to understand God, he must be as advanced as God (which he is not even remotely close to).
Just as man relates (communicates) on a level above the animal realm, so God has thoughts and concepts that are beyond our grasp to reach without the Holy Spirit's illumination.

"No man" - Not even the greatest of geniuses can by empiricism (observation) or rationalism (reason) come to understand God's hidden truth.

Romans 11:33 - *"O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"*

No one knows God's ways like the Spirit, because the Spirit has the same divine nature as God!

Important theological note: Just as there is no distinction between man and his human spirit, so there is no distinction between God and His Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows God's mind because He is God!

V. 12

"Received" - No one is born with the Holy Spirit; He must be received.

It is God who gives His Spirit. The Spirit is not earned, worked for, or deserved.

Prior to the Holy Spirit's regenerating work, we had the spirit of the world. We thought like the world, reasoned like the world, planned like the world, etc. But now we have a new Spirit (Ezek. 36:26).

Why did God give us His Holy Spirit? ***"That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."***

The Holy Spirit opened our minds to the grace of God, and to the gifts He gives by grace!

The glories of eternity thrill our hearts because the Holy Spirit has shown us things to come (via His Word).

Every believers has an in-house "resident Truth Teacher" (MacArthur, p. 64) (I Jn. 2:27).

Never take arrogant pride in your spiritual knowledge, because it is the Holy Spirit who gave you such knowledge.

B. The Holy Spirit gives the ability to TEACH God's Word(v.13)

When we speak God's Word, it is not the world's message. Rather, it is the Holy Spirit's message.

Only speak that which you know to be true. If the Holy Spirit hasn't taught you it in His Word (and you don't have firm Scriptural footing), don't teach it to others!

Speak according to the *"measure of faith*" (confidence) He has given you (Rom. 12:3, 6).

"Comparing spiritual things with spiritual" - Paul keeps the thought general because it has a broad range of applications.

1) We can compare spiritual words with spiritual words (compare "Scriptures with Scriptures" - a vital rule of hermeneutics).

2) We can compare "spiritual truths because we have spiritual minds" (this is the point of verses 12, 16).

*3) We can express "spiritual truths to spiritual men" (this is the main emphasis of the verse which follows - **v. 14**)

C. The Holy Spirit gives the ability to DISCERN God's Ways (v.14-16)

V. 14

"Natural man" - the man who is limited to his five senses (Hence, the *"sensual"* man - Jude 19).

"Natural" - "having only the things of nature" (Wiersbe, p. 577) (Born of natural parents from the natural line of Adam).

This old nature cannot be improved, fixed, repaired or reformed. It must be replaced via the new birth.

"The natural man" - lit. "the soulish man" (i.e. the man devoid of the Holy Spirit).

The man who is left to himself. (He has a soul, but not the Holy Spirit).

He is a man left to himself without the special revelation of God. He has not God's revelation because he has not God's Spirit.

The natural man does not have the desire nor ability to understand God's truth.

The natural man "totally and persistently does not welcome spiritual concepts. He is inhospitable to Biblical doctrines and moral principles" (Gromacki, p. 40).

John 8:47 - *"He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."*

Because the *"natural man"* does not have the capacity to comprehend the Holy Spirit's message, he regards it as ***"foolishness"*** (folly, nonsense).

It does not make sense to his limited mind because he dwells in the realm of darkness and sin.

The natural man is not "in tune" with the Spirit. If he had a new "tuner" (i.e. a new heart), the message he views as "static" to his ears would have a discernable, clear sound.

Not only does he refuse to ***"receive"*** the Spirit's message, he cannot even ***"know"*** it (he does not have the capacity or ability to comprehend it).

Apart from the Holy Spirit's working on a man and opening his eyes to the truth, it is absolutely impossible for him to understand.
This is why a man must be *"born again"* by the Spirit (Jn. 3).

Satan has blinded the minds of those who don't believe (II Cor. 4:3-4).

"Paul rejects Philo's view that man has within him--breathed into him by God--the capacity for knowing God and the higher truths of the universe (Rienecker, p. 392).

Man can know about God via creation (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20) and via conscience (Rom. 2:14), but cannot know God and His mysterious ways and plans for the future.

"Spiritually discerned" - spiritually judged. No one can understand God's ways who is under God's judgment.

V. 15

"Judgeth" - to examine and understand

In contrast to the natural man, the spiritual man has the ability to scrutinize, examine, sift, and comprehend all things. It is an ability the Holy Spirit gives.

A whole new world opens up to a man regenerated by the Spirit. The blinders are removed from one's eyes; the scales of one's eyes fall off (Acts 9:18); the veil is taken away (II Cor. 3:14-18 - *"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.")*

"Yet he himself is judged of no man" - (i.e. he is not *"rightly judged"* NKJV).

While a believer can understand what makes an unsaved man tick, an unsaved man cannot understand what makes the believer tick. Because he cannot figure out God's ways, he has no ability to rightly instruct God's man in God's ways.

V. 16

No finite man can instruct an infinite God (SEE: Isaiah 40:13-18).

"But we have the mind of Christ" - We share Christ's mind because we share Christ's Spirit.

--We know what is right! Sadly, though, we don't always yield to that knowledge.

--We ALL (who are saved) have the same ability to know the deep things of God; if only we wouldn't be so lazy and would start reading His Word.

--We have the capacity to think "God's thoughts" and know how to conduct our lives, if we would not be so stubborn and rebellious.

"Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Lk. 24:45).

*The doctrine of illumination: Does not mean we can know and understand everything (Deut. 29:29) [But we can understand everything God has revealed.]

*It does not mean we do not need human teachers (Eph. 4:11-14) [The Spirit can teach us through what He has taught others.]

*It does not mean that study is <u>not</u> hard work (II Tim. 2:15) [It does mean that Scripture can be understood by every Christian who is diligent and obedient.]

(MacArthur, p. 65)

Conclusion:

Faith in God's wisdom is "the death blow to our own natural reason. . . [it] means a negation of our own logic and our own philosophy. . . [this] is a humbling experience." (DeHaan, p. 31).