

The Wisdom of God

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Pastor E. Keith Hassell

1 Corinthians 2:6-16 (NKJV) “However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For ‘who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.’”

There are two sources of wisdom: the wisdom of this age and the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:23-24). There is no wisdom apart from Him. If the rulers of this age had known the wisdom of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

The wisdom of this age is not like God’s wisdom. James 3:15-16 (NKJV) declares, *“This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”* Notice that the wisdom of this age is “earthly”, meaning it is conformed to this world. Second, it is “sensual”, meaning it is guided by what can be perceived and enjoyed by the five physical senses. Third, it is “demonic”, meaning it is of an evil spiritual origin. This fallen wisdom is characterized by envy and self-seeking that brings forth confusion and every evil thing. In the end, it will come to nothing (1 Corinthians 2:6).

On the other hand, the wisdom *“from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”* God’s wisdom is of a heavenly rather than earthly origin. It is peaceable rather than contentious. It is gentle rather than harsh. It is willing to yield rather than proud and stubborn. It is full of mercy and good fruits rather than judgmental and mean. It is without partiality rather than showing favoritism. It is without hypocrisy rather than having a double standard. The fruit of this kind of heavenly wisdom is righteousness—being right and doing right in the sight of God.

According to 1 Corinthians 2:7-9, the wisdom of God was ordained before the ages for our glory: *“But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’”* (1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV) God’s wisdom is a mystery that is hidden from those who consider themselves to be wise.

We cannot know God's wisdom apart from the revelation of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who helps us know the wisdom of God because He searches all things, knows the things of God, and reveals them to us.

The reason we cannot know the wisdom of God apart from the Holy Spirit is because God's wisdom is spiritual in nature. The Bible contains the wisdom of God. It is a spiritual book. The Holy Spirit is our spiritual Teacher (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit uses spiritual words to communicate spiritual things to us. Spiritual things are spiritual realities that cannot be perceived by our five physical senses or comprehended with our natural minds. We need the help of the Holy Spirit.

Examples of spiritual things in the Bible are: spiritual birth (John 3:6); spiritual gifts (Rom 1:11); spiritual language (Acts 2:4); spiritual seed (Rom 9:8); spiritual fathers (1 Cor 4:15); spiritual mothers & brothers (Luke 8:21); spiritual family (Eph 3:15); spiritual law (Rom 7:14); spiritually minded (Rom 8:6); spiritual things (Rom 15:27; 1 Cor. 9:11); spiritual words (1 Cor. 2:13); spiritual discernment (1 Cor. 2:14); spiritual judgment (1 Cor. 2:15); spiritual vs. carnal (1 Cor. 3:1); spiritual food (1 Cor. 10:3); spiritual drink (1 Cor. 10:4); spiritual Rock (1 Cor. 10:4); spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1); spiritual believers (1 Cor. 14:37; Gal 6:1); spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44); spiritual reality follows the earthly types and shadows (1 Cor. 15:46); spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3); spiritual songs (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16); spiritual hosts of wickedness (Eph 6:12); spiritual understanding (Col 1:9); spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5); spiritual dwelling place (Eph 2:22); spiritual sacrifices (1 Pet 2:5); spiritual warfare (Eph 6:12); spiritual weapons (2 Cor. 10:3); spiritual nation (1 Pet 2:9); spiritual priesthood (1 Pet 2:9); spiritual generation (1 Pet 2:9); and spiritual people (1 Pet 2:9).

Another way of saying "spiritual things" is "heavenly things". In discussing the new birth, Jesus said to Nicodemus: "*If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?*" (John 3:12 NKJV) Examples of heavenly things in the Bible are: Heavenly Father (Matt 6:14); heavenly Man (1 Cor. 15:48); heavenly body (1 Cor. 15:47-48); heavenly Kingdom (Kingdom of Heaven) (Matt 4:17); heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph 1:3, 20; 2:6); heavenly host (Luke 2:13); heavenly authority (Matt 16:19; 18:18); heavenly will of God (Matt 6:10); heavenly reward (Matt 5:12); heavenly Bread (John 6:33); heavenly building (2 Cor. 5:1); heavenly family (Eph 3:15); heavenly Master (Eph 6:9); heavenly hope (Col 1:15); heavenly citizenship (Phil 3:20); heavenly joy over repentance (Luke 15:7); heavenly register (Luke 10:20); heavenly instruments of worship (Heb 8:5); heavenly things purified with Christ's blood (Heb 9:23); heavenly country (Heb 11:16); heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22); heavenly treasure (Luke 12:33); He who is from heaven (John 3:31); heavenly calling (Heb 3:1); heavenly gift (Heb 6:4); heavenly vision (Acts 26:19); heavenly throne of Majesty (Heb 8:1); heavenly possession (Heb 10:34); heavenly general assembly and church of the firstborn (Heb 12:23); heavenly witnesses (1 John 5:7); heavenly door (Rev 4:2); heavenly creatures (Rev 5:3); heavenly voices (Rev 11:15); heavenly temple (Rev 11:19; 14:17); heavenly signs (Rev 12:1, 3; 15:1); heavenly war (Rev 12:7); heavenly Temple of the Tabernacle of Testimony (Rev 15:5); heavenly multitude (Rev 19:1); and heavenly armies (Rev 19:14).

The natural man cannot perceive or receive these spiritual and heavenly realities. They are foolishness to him. Spiritual things can only be known and understood through the new birth and the agency of the Holy Spirit of God: "*Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'*" (John 3:3 NKJV) Spiritual people are able to judge all things because they see things clearly from the spiritual or heavenly perspective. Through the Holy Spirit, believers have access to the mind of Christ on any matter. Such is not the case with the man who relies on this world's wisdom. The natural man can observe the outward life of a believer but has no understanding of their true nature as spiritual people.

The wisdom of this age is a fallen wisdom that is contrary to the wisdom of God. However, the world's wisdom is no match for the wisdom of God. Through the wisdom of God the weakness of the cross overcame the power of the mighty. Through the wisdom of God the foolishness of the cross rendered foolish the wisdom of this world. Through the wisdom of God the invisible heavenly realities brought to nothing the physical realities in which man trusted. The wisdom of God is centered in the Person of Jesus Christ. The message of Jesus and the cross is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Don't be foolish. Become a fool in this age so that you might gain the true wisdom from above!