

Being the Church in an Unbelieving World

HOW CAN PEOPLE GAIN THE WISDOM OF GOD?

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 2:6-13

INTRO: Last week we read the admonition of the Spirit through Paul to follow the wisdom of God instead of the wisdom of man contained in human philosophy.

- But how can we attain the wisdom of God?
- How can we know we have found the truth about God and the things of God?

1 Corinthians 2:6–13 NKJV 6 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. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 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.*” 10 But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 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. 12 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. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Paul ended in 2:5 saying, I don’t want your faith to be in the so-called wisdom of human philosophy but in the power of God.

6 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**.

Mature – telios – **complete** – not mature in contrast with spiritual babes, but all **believers who are complete in Christ**

Age – present **time** period

Rulers – leaders

Nothing – more literally – **wasted, abolished, done away with**

Paraphrase v.6 – We speak God’s wisdom to believers, but it is not the current popular philosophy being touted by the influencers, who will be done away with...

7 But we speak the **wisdom of God** in a **mystery**, the **hidden** wisdom which God **ordained** before the ages for our glory,

wisdom of God – in contrast to human philosophy

Mystery – mysterion - not something to be figured out, **not a puzzle to be solved - that which is hidden until it is revealed**

Ordained before the ages – determined before time began

For our glory – for our greatest good

Paraphrase of 6 & 7 together – We speak God’s wisdom to believers, but it is not the current popular philosophy of the influencers, who will pass away, but it is wisdom from God, that could only be known as God revealed it to us.

8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have **crucified the Lord of glory.**

Now Paul offers proof of his point. Obviously, the recent Roman and Jewish leaders did not know God’s plan or they would not have crucified the Son of God.

Crucified the Lord of glory – Can we miss the irony Paul offers. These leaders did their wicked worst to Heaven’s Very Best.

- Could they have done this if they had known who they were nailing to a cross?
- Could they have done this if they had known what it was that Jesus was doing for them, offering them a way of forgiveness and eternal life?

9 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.”

Verse often used to refer to the glories God has prepared for the saved in heaven and beyond, but it means more than that.

Paul is saying, “You cannot attain the wisdom of God by what you see, hear, think, or feel. A person is no more capable of figuring out who God is than an ant crawling across the floor can figure out who or what you are.”

HOLY SPIRIT’S CONCLUSION

People cannot discover God or the things of God on their own.

During my doubting Thomas years in college I said to my mother, “I think people need to be saved by faith, but beyond that we need to figure it out by evidence and proof. So, if the evidence suggests that two of every kind of animal would not fit on a boat the size

the Bible gives for the ark, then I'm not going to believe what the Bible says about Noah and the ark."

Thus I began my attempt to just figure God out with my own tiny mind. Seven years later when that spiritually dry period of my life ended, I knew no more of God and His ways than before.

So, if you cannot deduce or figure out God and the things of God, how do we ever know Him? The Spirit through Paul explains ...

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

We can know God, even the deep things of God, as they are revealed by the Spirit of God.

11 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.

What person really knows you deep down? Your spirit knows the real you!

And the Holy Spirit really knows the One True and Living God.

12 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.

This wisdom of God is not something to be figured out, but something to be received. And the Spirit tells us what God wants to give us, such things as forgiveness, redemption, transformation, abundant life now and eternal life forever. This is why Jesus commands us to go share the gospel.

13 These things we also speak, not in **words** which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, **comparing spiritual things with spiritual**.

Paul says, "This is what we teach believers, what the Holy Spirit teaches in words." Not feelings, not impressions – words! He is talking about the Scriptures.

Comparing spiritual things with spiritual – This was Paul's practice. On his second missionary journey, Paul went to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and then Corinth. In every place his practice was the same.

Acts 17:1–3 NKJV 1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2Then **Paul, as his custom was**, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths **reasoned with them from the Scriptures**, explaining and

demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ."

Comparing spiritual things with spiritual – comparing Scripture with Scripture

CONCLUSION: And this was what eventually I learned after those seven frustrating years of trying to figure out God and the things of God, truth and wisdom, the origin of the universe and where history was headed. I was not capable of knowing by my own reasoning. I also learned that the same was true for the scholars and philosophers, because their thoughts on these things changed every few years.

If I wanted to know the truth, I had to receive it from the One who revealed it.

If I wanted to truly know God, I had to read and study the Word of God, given by the Holy Spirit who alone knows the deep things of God.

So, I did the simple thing that had eluded me all those frustrating years. I said the words Jesus Himself said, "Your Word is truth." And I believed it with all my heart.

And I set out to become a diligent student of the revealed Word of God, and that continues to be my goal and great desire. And my primary methodology of study is to compare Scripture with Scripture. When I read something I don't understand, I see where else it is mentioned in Scripture. Scripture explains Scripture.

My heart, Sunday after Sunday, and any other time you are willing to listen, is to try to help you understand the revealed, written Word of God, because it is there that you will discover the wisdom of God and all the wonderful things God has for you.

Believers ask yourself this, "What could I do to be a more diligent student of God's Word?"

- Read the Bible more regularly
- Read the Bible books as a whole and study them
- Be a part of a Lifechange Group
- Be a part of a discipleship class