The Only Source of Wisdom

Job 28:28; Romans 16:27; 1 Corinthians 1:18–20; 1 Corinthians 2:7-16; James 3:15
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The twentieth century produced an information explosion unparalleled in human history-instant access to volumes of knowledge at the click of your mouse. Yet with all we have learned and with all that's been written, man's wisdom is still impotent to answer life's most basic spiritual questions like: How did we get here? Where do I go when I die? What is the meaning of life?

I once read a book by a psychiatrist on how to deal with depression. A section entitled "Reprogramming Your Conscious Mind" particularly caught my attention. Her first suggestion was that every time you have a negative thought, shout, "Cancel!" She also recommended sleep programming-playing a tape recording all night that contains lots of positive feedback. During the day, according to her, you should listen to positive music.

The doctor also thought it would be helpful to cultivate a meaningful spiritual philosophy. She said you need to find a belief system that works for you-any will do-but be sure to avoid people who talk about sin and guilt. Her final recommendation was to find the light in yourself. Unfortunately, that is the best human wisdom can do.

True Wisdom Begins with God

God defines wisdom this way: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28). That verse describes saving faith-both fearing God and departing from evil take place initially at conversion. So you begin to be wise when you fear God by trusting in Him and repenting of your sins. As long as you have only human wisdom-or to put it in James' words, that which is "earthly, natural, demonic" (James 3:15)—you cannot know God or true wisdom. Without that critical first step, there is no relationship to the Giver of all wisdom and understanding.

On the other hand, if you have submitted to the gospel in repentance, you know the "only wise God" (Romans 16:27) as your Father. His book of wisdom is open to you as a Christian. The indwelling Spirit of wisdom illuminates to you the wisdom of His H Word-you truly can be wise.

Why then do we still have a sinful tendency to look first to man's wisdom and virtually ignore the sufficiency of God's wisdom found in the Bible? I think if we truly understand the stark contrast-the absolute opposition of the one to the other-we will leave behind the elementary understanding of the world to embrace the riches of divine wisdom.

Human vs. Divine Wisdom

Today your thinking is attacked by worldly philosophies and methodologies in an attempt to divert

you from the Word of God-the only source that can satisfy the deep needs of the human heart. It's not a new attack; the Corinthian believers had the same problem. They were strongly influenced by the prevailing ideas of their day. When they became Christians and were awakened to the revelation of God, they were exposed to an obvious conflict.

Paul, describing that conflict, said, "The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.... Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" (1 Corinthians 1:18–20). While the first-century philosophers viewed the wisdom of God as foolishness, in truth, God exposed their so-called "wisdom" as foolish. That opposition makes the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God incompatible-they are mutually exclusive.

God has given man the ability to study, analyze, categorize, and develop the physical resources of this earth to benefit physical life. But that's where his wisdom ends. Because of sin, his mind is totally unable to discern the spiritual dimension. He has no power to change his own heart, no understanding to solve his spiritual dilemma, and no resources to satisfy his soul-he is spiritually dead.

The wisdom of men makes no contribution in the spiritual dimension, and it doesn't need to make a contribution. God's wisdom is rich and infinite-it needs no supplement.

True Wisdom Is Divinely Revealed

First Corinthians 2:7 says, "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory." The Greek word translated "mystery" doesn't refer to something strange or puzzling; it's a technical term for the kind of truth man has not previously known but is now revealed. The truth that God saves sinners through the substitutionary sacrifice of His Son is now plain for all to see.

However, no one can come to that truth by himself because of sin. "A natural man [an unconverted person] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Divine wisdom can't be empirically deduced by analyzing data and physical evidence (verse 9). It comes only as a gift God gives when His Spirit reveals His Word to individuals.

First Corinthians 2:10 says, "To us God revealed [His truths] through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." The Holy Spirit-the divine Author of Scripture-searches the deep recesses of God's Person and knows the mind of God perfectly. Therefore He is able to reveal God and God's will completely. The Bible contains all the wisdom man needs for solving all the spiritual struggles, problems, and issues of life.

Those deep things of God, Paul says, "we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words" (1 Corinthians 2:13). You have a resident Truth Teacher to enlighten you about essential spiritual truths. The Holy Spirit takes God's Word, the Word He has revealed and inspired, and illuminates it for those in whom He dwells. You can rightly appraise the Word, but only when you rely on the Giver of the Word.

Paul concluded, "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor]inthians. 2:16). You can understand if you are

diligent and obedient to study and submit to it. Because it is revealed, its authenticity is guaranteed. Because it is inspired, its accuracy is guaranteed. And because it is illumined, its applicability is guaranteed.

Don't turn to human wisdom to solve spiritual problems. If the world had anything to offer, the best of its citizens would not have crucified the Lord (1 Corinthians 2:8). As a true believer, anchor all your confidence in the Word of God, the only source of true wisdom.

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