

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

LESSON –10: THE WISDOM OF GOD

I. Defining wisdom:

A. Old Testament:

* *ckakmah* (*chakemah* or *chokma*; adjective) – showing wisdom; being wise, skillful, practical; in non-spiritual matters, it referred to one who was a skillful craftsman and had mastery of an art

* *chakal* (noun) – wisdom, experience, shrewdness; having the knowledge and ability to make right choices at the *opportune time*

B. New Testament:

1. Wisdom:

* *sophia* – wisdom, perception of realities, all information that can be assembled; scholastic ability to use knowledge (I Cor. 1:17 – 2:13; I Cor. 12:8; Proverbs 8 – a personification of this wisdom)

* *sunesis* - deep comprehension, perception and understanding; it is the ability to see relationships between concepts and quickly comprehend their significance, leading to directions and adaptations of behavior (Mark 12:33; I Cor. 1:19; Eph. 3:4; Col. 1:9 & 2:2)

* *phronesis* - wisdom in determining ends and the means to attain them; sound judgment, practical wisdom and proper action, prudence; it implies both good judgment and excellence of character and habits; this was considered the highest form of wisdom (Eph. 1:8; I Cor. 2:16)

2. Knowledge:

* *ginosko* (V) – knowledge; to have the understanding, includes even knowledge by revelation; see Eph. 3:19-

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

20

* *epiginosko* (V) - to become thoroughly acquainted with, deep understanding; knowledge with involvement; see 2 Cor. 1:13

* *gnosis* (N) - knowledge based on science or intellectual activity; see Eph. 3:19

* *epignosis* (N) - full knowledge with intimacy of that knowledge; full comprehension, recognition, and perception; see 2 Peter 1:3

C. Discussion: wisdom is a gift, and God is its only true and reliable source: it is the ability to use knowledge for good – to spiritually guide, correct, instruct, and encourage ourselves and others – to build up the church, evangelize the world, and to protect against and combat sin and injustice when we encounter it. It is skill in the art of Godly living. Biblical "Wisdom is knowing the greatest goal in any situation, and the best way to achieve that goal," (John Piper, "The Great Work of the Only Wise God"). In Daniel 2:21-22, when he described God's wisdom in action, he wrote, "*He changes the times and seasons; He removes kings and establishes kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals the deep and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him.*"

II. Important scriptures about wisdom:

***Psalm 111:10** - The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

***1 Corinthians 3:18** - Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, *let him become a fool that he may become wise*

***Proverbs 2:3-6** - "Indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

and search for it as for hidden treasure,
then you will understand the fear of the Lord
and find the knowledge of God.
For the Lord gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding”

***Psalm 90:12** - Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

***Job 12:12** - Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?

***Jeremiah 9:23-24** - This is what the LORD says:

Let not the wise boast of their wisdom
or the strong boast of their strength
or the rich boast of their riches,
but let the one who boasts boast about this:
that they have the understanding to know me...

***Proverbs 4:7** - The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom; though it cost all you have, get understanding.

***Proverbs 11:2** - When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

***Proverbs 16:16** - How much better to get wisdom than gold, to get insight rather than silver!

***Proverbs 17:28** - Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues.

***Proverbs 19:8** - The one who gets wisdom loves life; the one who cherishes understanding will soon prosper.

***Proverbs 13:10** - Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

***Psalms 37:30** - The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom, and their tongues speak what is just.

***Ephesians 5:15-16** - Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

the days are evil.

***Colossians 4:5-6** - Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

***Colossians 2:8** - See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

***Colossians 3:16** – Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

***Proverbs 1:7** - The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

***Proverbs 3:7** – Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.

***Proverbs 4:6-7** - Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.

***Proverbs 13:1** - A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not respond to rebukes.

***Ecclesiastes 2:26** - To the person who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

***1 Corinthians 1:25** - For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

***1 Corinthians 2:1-16** - And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written:

“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived”...

the things God has prepared for those who love Him - these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for,

“Who has known the mind of the Lord
so as to instruct him?”

But we have the mind of Christ.

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

***Colossians 2:2-3** - My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

***James 3:15-17** - 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. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

***Romans 12:2** - Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect

***James 1:5** - If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

***1 Corinthians 1:30** - It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

***Proverbs 19:20** - Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.

***Proverbs 3:5-6** - Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.

***Ephesians 5:6-10** - Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

***1 John 4:1-** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

***Romans 1:22-25** - Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

***Romans 12:2** - Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

*** I Corinthians 3:18-20** -Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight.

***I Corinthians 1:19-20** - I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate. Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

***James 3:13-18** - Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

III. God's wisdom in the world

A. A comparison

1. Worldly wisdom:

a. Three types (from James 3:15-17)

1). 'Earthly' – "common sense"

2). 'Sensual' (intellectual) – applied human experiential knowledge; non-spiritual

3). 'Demonic' – designed to subjugate God and promote sin; anti-spiritual

b. Self / man created (through Satan's assistance)

c. Self-centered - seeks only the selfish benefit of the individual

d. Constantly changing (due to changing knowledge and changing social norms)

e. Swayed by changing customs, beliefs, and emotions

f. Unreliable

g. Profits nothing spiritually

h. Distracts the individual from truly important spiritual matters

i. Eventually leads to death, physically & spiritually

j. Temporary

2. God's wisdom:

a. Authored by God – the One who created truth in the first place

b. Eternal

c. Unchanging – will never need to vary from age to age

d. Always reliable

e. Founded in real truth

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

f. Creates true joy and happiness

g. Spiritual by design - leads to eternal life

B. How can we obtain wisdom from God?

1. We must have *reverence* for God and all His ways – as His children, we must yearn to *think* and *act* like Him

2. We must regularly *read* His word, and read with diligence and understanding

3. We must regularly *ask* God for wisdom in prayer

4. We must *trust* God completely and allow Him to work on our minds and in our lives on a daily basis

5. Once we see God's wisdom helping to guide us, we must *apply* this wisdom on a regular basis:

a. *Continue to study* daily to grow our spiritual knowledge

b. *Involve ourselves* in the lives of others in service and helping with their problems

c. *Share* our wisdom with others