

Series: **God is...So What?**

Today's Title: **"God is Wisdom"**

October 16, 2022 – *Select Passages* – Sermon 9 of 16

Objective: To help people know that wisdom is found in God - and He desires to give us His wisdom.

Opening prayer

Doobie Brothers - "What a Fool Believes"

Foghat - "Fool for the City"

Cinderella - "Nobody's Fool"

BTS - Troye Sivan - Diane Birch - "Fools"

Robert Plant - "Ship of Fools"

Aretha Franklin - "Chain of Fools"

The 1997 movie, "Fools Rush In"

Think of all the social media posts where video of someone doing something foolish uploaded for the world to see!

There was an entire TV show created around the idea of showing videos of people doing foolish things: AFH - America's Funniest Home Videos.

Our supply of 'fools' and foolish things probably outpaces the demand.

But what is harder to find is wisdom.

It's much more difficult to find someone who is wise.

Someone who makes wise choices - and thinks wisely about things.

Today the attribute / perfection of God we're considering is His wisdom.

“God is Wisdom”.

Our culture values many things - but I’m not sure wisdom is high on the list.

But as those seeking after God - those who are followers of Christ - wisdom should be a high priority for us.

Proverbs 16:16

“How much better to get wisdom than gold! To get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.”

Proverbs 19:20

“Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.”

Humility and wisdom go hand-in-hand - which is why wisdom is a rare commodity today.

Let’s look at Webster’s definition of wisdom - which I actually find a bit lacking - falling short.

Merriam Webster: Wisdom

1:

a: ability to discern inner qualities and relationships

b: good sense

c: generally accepted belief

d: accumulated philosophical or scientific learning

2: a wise attitude, belief, or course of action

3: the teachings of the ancient wise men

When speaking of the wisdom of God, Wayne Grudem offers this definition in his Systematic Theology.

“God’s wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals.”

(Systematic Theology, by Wayne Grudem, p. 193)

God is omniscient - He knows all things - but His knowledge is not the same as His wisdom.

His wisdom means that He always applies His knowledge in the best possible ways.

Wisdom is about making good choices with the knowledge you have. (Something the Merriam Webster definition fails to connect.)

Let’s take a closer look at God - His wisdom - and why this matters - why it’s so important for us to understand.

The Bible is clear: God is wise.

I don’t want to spend a lot of time on this, but I do want to show you how clear and explicit the Bible is on this point - that God is not only wise - but He is the source of all wisdom.

In the book of Proverbs - and some of the Psalms - the Bible often contrasts the wise person with the fool.

Proverbs 10:1

“A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.”

Proverbs 10:23

“Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool, but wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding.”

Proverbs 12:15

“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.”

Proverbs 28:26

“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.”

In fact, one of the big decisions each of us must make is will we live life as a fool - or will we seek wisdom from its source - from God Himself.

We must decide if we will pursue what the world calls wisdom - which the Bible refers to as foolishness.

Or will we pursue God’s wisdom?

But there are numerous passages that speak of God’s wisdom.

They speak to the perfection of His wisdom and the unsearchable depths of His wisdom.

Job 12:13

“With God are wisdom and might; He has counsel and understanding.”

Psalms 104:24

“O LORD...In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures.”

Proverbs 3:19

“The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens...”

Daniel 2:20

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might.”

Romans 11:33

“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!”

Romans 16:27

“to the only wise God...”

After doing a summary study on this matter it is obvious that God is the ultimate source of wisdom - timeless wisdom.

The other obvious choice - the wise choice, is to pursue a life of applied wisdom - a life that aligns with God's wisdom.

God's wisdom in His plan of salvation.

One of the more dramatic expressions of God's wisdom is in His plan of salvation - the incarnation of Jesus, His death, burial, and resurrection.

God's plan of the indwelling presence of the Spirit in each believer and the Church being the primary means of redeeming the nations and preparing a people of God.

To the world - the things of God appear to be foolish - backwards - outdated.

To the world - the Church does not appear to be an expression of divine wisdom, but of useless traditions and superstitions.

1 Corinthians 1:18

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing...”

Worldly wisdom is different from Godly wisdom.

The wisdom of men vs. the wisdom of God.

As a result, the things of God - the ways of God - are viewed as foolish - especially to those in the world who are wise according to the world's standard of wisdom. Those who the world looks up to for guidance and wisdom do not compare to God's wisdom, which is vastly different.

vs. 19-20 - For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."
Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age?
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?"

Man's wisdom cannot compete with God's wisdom.

Not only is God's wisdom vastly different from the world's wisdom, but the world can't fathom the magnitude of the depths of God's wisdom.

Even God's foolishness - if God could be foolish - would be greater than the world's best wisdom.

vs. 25 - "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

God is not foolish - nor is He weak.

Paul is making a hyperbolic statement to make a point - contrasting God's wisdom to the world's so-called wisdom.

This is one of the great spiritual battlegrounds.

If you were raised in the church, you likely entered this field of battle in your teenage years - when you're questioning everything you were raised to believe. If you weren't raised in the church - but later in life you were drawn to Christ, you have to engage in this battle as you move away from the world and toward Christ. Whose truth - whose values - whose philosophies will you embrace?

- The worlds?
- The truth, values, and philosophies of Jesus?

Romans 11:33

“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!”

We see God's wisdom most explicitly in His plan of salvation. We also see it in Creation, and the person of Christ.

Each of us must decide: *‘Will you pursue God's wisdom?’*
‘Will you pursue what the world has to offer?’

You can't do both!!!

Apply it... So What?

Attaining a measure of God's wisdom.

God's wisdom is what we refer to as one of His communicable attributes.

A communicable attribute is an attribute (trait / characteristic) of God that we can have and experience at some level.

It's part of the image of God in us.

Animals are not made in the image of God and as a result they don't have a portion of God's wisdom.

But men and women do.

But just because it's part of God's image in us doesn't mean we naturally seek it, develop it, or use it in life!

Just because someone gets older it doesn't mean they grow up.

Just because someone is smart doesn't mean they're wise.

There are plenty of highly educated fools walking around!

Wisdom is the right application of knowledge to life.

Wisdom is something we must seek - we must ask God for wisdom.

God is eager to give us wisdom - to help us develop wisdom.

This is what Solomon did.

In **1 Kings 3**, God appears to Solomon in a dream and said to Solomon, "Ask what I shall give you." (vs. 5)

Solomon begins to describe the daunting task that lies before him of being king over the nation - and all the decisions he would need to make - and he told God, "I am but a little child" (vs. 7) - meaning - '*I don't know anything.*' -

'How can I make all these decisions that will affect so many people?'

So, he answers God's question / offer to him with this.

vs. 9 - "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern Your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this Your great people?"

The next verse says, "It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this."

And in the following verses God not only blesses Him with great wisdom, but with many other blessings.

The account in **1 Kings 3** tells us how Solomon received wisdom from God.

In **1 Corinthians 2:16** the Apostle Paul spoke of "having the mind of Christ."

Having "the mind of Christ" seems be the same as having the wisdom of Christ - the wisdom of God.

I think that's a safe statement.

The wonderful thing is "the mind of Christ" - the wisdom of God - is something God wants us to have!

But how do we attain this God-sourced wisdom?

1. Fear God.

Psalm 111:10

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom..."

(See also Prov. 1:7; 9:10)

“...fear of the LORD” is not fright or terror of God, but a proper reverence and awe of God.

This “fear” requires a self-humility where we recognize our need for God and His greatness and worthiness. (e.g., Solomon - **1 Kings 3:7**)

We recognize our place before the Almighty God. When we recognize God in His majesty, we are then ready to follow Him and receive His blessings - and receive His wisdom.

2. Ask God for wisdom.

James 1:5

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.”

It’s that simple.

Ask God for His wisdom.

See **Matthew 7:7-11**

But know, He doesn’t give it to you instantly.

You will grow in wisdom - and He will give you wisdom as you grow.

Luke 2:40

“And the child grew and became strong; He was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on Him.”

“He was filled” - present tense verb (ongoing action) - middle or passive voice.

Middle: He was filling Himself with wisdom.

Passive: He was filled - meaning someone was filling Him with wisdom. It was being done **to** Him, not by Him to Himself.

Even Jesus gained / increased wisdom as He grew.

Wisdom is often said to be knowledge, informed by life experience, can then be applied as wisdom.

That might be partially true.

But knowledge and life experience alone do not produce wisdom.

There are plenty of stupid people who are educated, and have many experiences, yet they are pretty foolish with their life decisions.

After we “fear the LORD” ...

Only when we fear God are we ready to ask Him for wisdom.

Then...

3. **Study and meditate on His truth.**

When we read the Bible - study and meditate on the truths / the testimony of the Bible - when we fill our minds with God’s truth - then He can help us apply His truth in life.

Psalm 19:7

“the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple...”

The “testimony of the LORD” - is what God says - His Word - the Scriptures.

The Psalmist says, they will “make wise the simple”. God’s Word will make the simple-minded person wise.

It will, as Paul mentions in **1 Corinthians 2**, take the natural man or woman - and make them spiritual - so they can then understand “...words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.” (2:13)

The spiritual truths of God are “...are spiritually discerned.” (2:14b)

This is why the natural man / woman - those who don’t have faith in Christ - cannot understand the wisdom of God.

The wisdom of God is spiritual in nature.

It’s not limited to spiritual things. His wisdom applies to all areas of our life, but it is spiritual in nature - which is why the world can’t supply it.

Since God has revealed Himself in the Bible - it only makes sense if we want to cultivate the “mind of Christ” - then we need to read and meditate on His Word - the Bible - to attain a portion of God’s wisdom in our own mind and heart.

A good question is: What part of the Bible should I read to start attaining Godly wisdom?

I recommend working through:

1. The *gospels* - the life of Jesus.
2. The *wisdom literature* of the O.T. - *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.*

Closing prayer