

4Ws

what's
wrong
with
us?

WISE UP! CHOOSE GOD'S WISDOM

JULY 9, 2023

WORSHIP

Spirit of the Living God, You Have Made Me Glad, Great Things, Anchor of Our Lives, Ordinary People, My Worth is Not In What I Own,

WELCOME

What do you recall was the most foolish thing you have ever done in your life? What life lesson did you learn from that experience?

WORD

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-21 (READ 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-2:13)

¹⁸ For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE." ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

We all have our own "compass" or "GPS" – accumulated knowledge that guide us through life. We make decisions based on this – and if it is inaccurate, we will arrive at wrong destinations in life. We must think carefully when we make decisions. Our topic is: WISE UP! CHOOSE GOD'S WISDOM.

Knowledge is the acquisition of truth; we must discern which is right and wrong. Wisdom is the application of knowledge. Godly wisdom is the application of God's truth in our lives. It is the God-given ability to evaluate and make decisions based on biblical truths.

The church at Corinth had big problems, and had the reputation of being the most problematic church in the New Testament, fighting and splitting into various camps and factions. There were lawsuits, immorality issues and strife. Paul spent three chapters discussing godly wisdom and secular wisdom where he mentions wisdom 15 times. God knows what is best for us, and we must follow His standards. We must begin to WISE UP and choose God's Wisdom.

There are 2 kinds of wisdom (**James 3:14-16**) --- a wisdom that doesn't come from above, but "earthly, unnatural, and demonic". It springs from jealousy and selfishness. Wisdom from God is pure, peaceable, gentle, and reasonable, the fruit of the Spirit (**vv.17-18**). Earthly wisdom used in resolving conflicts usually involve cancel culture, leaving the person, no readiness to forgive, revenge, etc. Godly wisdom resolves conflict differently – with humility, choosing not to retaliate, forgiving those who have done us wrong, blessing and praying for those who fight us, being at peace with all men (**Romans 12:18**). The Apostle Paul describes the wisdom of God clearly:

1. CENTERED ON CHRIST

1 Corinthians 1:18 refers to the WORD OF THE CROSS – God's wisdom is FOOLISHNESS to the world, but to us who appreciate it, it is the POWER OF GOD. Romans 1:16 talks about this power – it saves us! **1 Corinthians 1:19-20** makes a contrast of man's wisdom (foolishness) against God's wisdom. Paul continued to talk about this contrast in the succeeding verses – we do not come to know God just through our intellect. The wisdom of the world is not the venue by which we know Him. Once you preach the gospel and talk about salvation through Jesus, the world responds with disbelief and offense. To say that all people are sinners and imperfect is being insulting, intolerant to the world and they think this offensive. But for those who understand, we know that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (**vv. 24-25**). In figurative speech, Paul even says that if there is foolishness in God, it is still way above our own human wisdom. **2 Corinthians 4:3-4** tells us that the gospel is veiled and hidden to those who are perishing. The enemy blinds the minds of those who are not believers and cause them not to see the light of the gospel.

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2. COUNTERINTUITIVE

Isaiah 55:8-9 is a reality that God is way above all of us – and yet the height of human arrogance causes us to insist on our own ways and opinions. Choosing God's wisdom is very counterintuitive (**1 Corinthians 1:26-29**) – he reminded the Corinthian church that not many of them are wise, noble, nor mighty, but God purposely chose ordinary people for one main reason alone – so that no man may boast before God (**v.28, Jeremiah 9:23-24**) and the key to wisdom is knowing God through Jesus Christ. God is amazing – He encourages us to get to know Him deeper, because that is how we gain wisdom from Him. We can do this by reflecting and studying the Bible, not for the sake of knowledge, but for deeper intimacy with Him.

God uses ordinary people – Joseph, a slave and prisoner, became Egypt's prime minister. Rahab was a prostitute and outsider, but she became part of Jesus' genealogy. Moses' staff was ordinary, as well as David's sling and stones, the little boy's five loaves and two fish – but when surrendered to God, they accomplish great miracles. We have no excuse, because whatever we have and surrendered to the Lord, He'll use for His ministry!

3. CHANGING POWER THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

When we talk about POWER, we think of atomic bomb, typhoons and hurricanes, but the greatest power is the power to change the hearts of people. Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:30-31** that through Jesus Christ, we find our wisdom, and greater benefits like righteousness (dikaiosune, declared not guilty), sanctification (hagiasmos, holy and set apart, forgiven), and redemption (apolutrosis, ransomed, set free through payment made by Christ). Because of Christ, we have access to all these benefits (**2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 10:10, Ephesians 1:7**). Paul demonstrates this in his own ministry (**1 Corinthians 2:1-3**) – he was an example of putting his confidence in the power of God, the gospel truth, not in his own efforts nor excellence. He did not rely on wisdom and eloquence to impress people (**1 Corinthians 2:4-5**), and he ministered to them through the power of God through the gospel. He continued to exalt the wisdom of God (**vv.5-8**) – and the sad reality that the people of this world did not understand it. This has been made clear also in **Ephesians 3:9-11** – those of us who believe declare this wonderful plan of salvation that even the angels and demons did not know! We are the showcase of God's wisdom to the universe!

1 Corinthians 2:9-12 shows us the magnificence of this wisdom, and that it is revealed to us through the Holy Spirit, our able Helper in our Christian journey. We have an amazing future that God has in store for all of us IN CHRIST JESUS! God's Word + God's Spirit + Our Obedience – this unleashes God's Power. **Romans 8:9** reminds us that the Spirit must dwell in us, and we must belong to Christ in order to access this power. May we surrender to His Spirit and His wisdom forever!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What "worldly" wisdom have you used before to manage conflicts? How did it go?

2. Setting It Right.

What aspect of godly wisdom did you appreciate the most? How will you apply godly wisdom in resolving conflicts?

3. Living It Out.

How will you know if you are resting on the wisdom of men or the power of God?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Do pray for those that God has placed around you who do not know Jesus and cannot access the wisdom of God yet. Ask God to open their hearts to the truth of the gospel through your and other believers' loving and Spirit-powered witness in life and words.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

1. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

2. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

3. Church

- That CCF members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches world-wide

4. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

5. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

¹⁸ For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.