

The Wisdom of God

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[0 : 0 0] You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation.

So this plan that he's talking about, this revelation, this is something he preaches, not his idea. He didn't wake up one morning and this was a great idea to have.

This all started on the road to Damascus where the risen Lord appeared to him and spoke to him. And it's this personalization of the gospel that has come to him through the appearance of the risen Lord and by the ministry of the Holy Spirit that gives him a gospel to preach.

And this is the nature of the wisdom that he wants the Corinthians to be reminded of. When we go to the end of Romans, we find the same thing, Romans 16, 25 to 26.

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages, but is now disclosed through the prophetic writings and is made known to all nations.

[1 : 3 4] You see how important this personal revelation of all of this is to the apostle. And in a like way, how important it is to us.

God has given you this. My gospel, your gospel. Let's go on and we'll think of the reception of wisdom.

Verses 12 to 13. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the spirit.

So what he's saying in the first instance is that not only have we received wisdom, but we have received the person of the Holy Spirit.

[2 : 5 7] Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. Now for the Corinthians, it's not really narrated as to when this happened.

But there are other statements that he makes in his letters, and there are two words that come to mind which describe this important event. The first of them is legal, and it's the word adoption.

You find it in Romans 8.15. You have not received the spirit of slavery, again to fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

That happened to the Corinthians, and it happened to you the moment you were converted. The moment you received Christ, by the agency of the spirit, you were in a different family.

You were in the family of heaven. Then he refers to something similar later on in 1 Corinthians 12.13.

[4 : 20] For by one spirit, we were all baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and were all made to drink of the one spirit.

Adopted into the family of God, and united in the body of Christ. But there's a second word.

It's not used in 1 Corinthians, but it's the word promise. And it's used in Ephesians in verses 13 to 14. In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, you are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

And there's something very wonderful that's lying beneath the surface of this verse. And it's in a Greek word. Now, in the 19th century, somewhere about 1830, a whole lot of Greek documents were dug up in Egypt.

And they rationalized our thinking of what the Greek is all about that you find in the New Testament. Now, in the main, all of these documents were not religious documents.

[5 : 49] In actual fact, they were higher purchase agreements. Yes, they had that there too. So that in Greek society, if you got it into your mind that you wanted a new chariot, you got a hold of the merchant and arranged a higher purchase deal.

And the word that you would have used for the down payment is arabon. That's the word that's used here. So that when you received the promise, the Holy Spirit of promise at conversion, you got a down payment of heaven.

That's what's being said here. But there's something else. It's the spirit of promise because it's promised by Jesus in his teaching to the disciples in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 1 and verse 8.

You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you. And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

Now the disciples at that stage, before Jesus ascended and before the day of Pentecost, did not have, like you and I, the Holy Spirit living within us, within them.

[7 : 23] But what it is, it's an impartation of power. And it's power for service and power for witness.

Now the Ephesian quote makes clear that they received this, that is the Ephesians, at the moment they believed. In him you also who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, were sealed with this Holy Spirit of promise, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

But yet, it has to be something that's renewed continually.

So that when the apostle writes to the Ephesians, in chapter 5, he says this, verse 16, 17. Do not be drunk with wine in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.

Then he gives you a definition as to how this is to happen. Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

[8 : 54] So what the apostle is saying there is that in this personal or corporate act of worship, as you engage in it, as you exalt God, you will be filled with the Spirit.

There's a second method in Colossians 3, verse 16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

An illustration of this is from one of the earliest new versions, which was done starting in 1944 by J.B.

Phillips. And he came to this as a liberal clergyman. And if you get his little book called The Ring of Truth, a translator's testimony, he makes clear that much to his surprise, when he started to translate the New Testament, it was alive.

Now, why should that be? And the apostle in 2 Timothy 3, verse 16 says, all Scripture is inspired of God.

[10 : 25] That word inspired is a Greek word, theonoustos, which means God-breathed. So when you have this act of personal devotion, your quiet time, and you read the word of God, you will be filled with the life of God.

And so he goes on and he says this. This is the result. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truth to those who possess the Spirit.

Thus, he says, because we possess the Spirit of God as a gift within us, we, me, Paul that is, I am now able to understand a whole lot of things I never understood before.

And this Old Testament that he read every day suddenly became a new book. And how that is true for us.

That if you fall in love with the God who inspired this book, you'll find it becomes a new book to you. It is the truth that are revealed to us when we received the word of the gospel.

[12 : 00] And so he concludes in verses we'll consider again next week, the spiritual man judges all things, but is himself judged by no one.

For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? That's a quote from the Old Testament. But we have the mind of Christ.

Is that an arrogant statement? Or is it a real statement? That is something that is true for you and for me. We received the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we received him, the Spirit of God came to dwell within. That Spirit of God will open up the book to you so that it will become a new book.

And you'll be able to see the wisdom that God has revealed in the gospel. You'll be able to appreciate the depths of the love of God that perhaps you've never appreciated in your life.

[13 : 06] So when he concludes by saying to the Corinthians, we, you and me, we have the mind of Christ.

Amen. The Lord blessed us. The consideration of his word may be to his praise and to his glory. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. All right. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.