

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”,
Message # 23 – “No Wisdom Against God”, Presented in the Adult Sunday School
Class, by Pastor Paul Rendall on February 5th, 2017.**

Chapter 2 – Of God and the Holy Trinity, Paragraph 1 -

The Lord our God is but (a)one only living and true God; whose (b)subsistence is in and of Himself, (c)infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself; (d)a most pure spirit, (e) invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who is (f)immutable, (g)immense, (h)eternal, incomprehensible, (i)almighty, every way infinite, (k)most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute; (l)working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, (m)for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; (n)the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and withal most just (o)and terrible in his judgments, (p)hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the (q)guilty.

Proverbs 21: 30 – “There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the Lord.”

1. The Wisdom of Submitting to God’s Purpose in Christ

Psalm 2: 1-10a – “Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?” “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us.’ “He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision.” “Then He shall speak to the in His wrath, and distress them in His dep displeasure: Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion.” “I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You.’ “Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.” “You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” “Now therefore, be wise, O kings....”

We see here that no matter what Satan or wicked men might concoct against God, although He might allow them for a time to think that they shall prevail with their own wisdom to establish what they want to do in their sin, they shall not ultimately prevail, but God will turn their own cunning and clever strategies against them, and cause His own people to reap the eternal benefits of His great wisdom.

Stephen Charnock says: “There is a wisdom superior to the subtleties of men, which laughs at their follies, and ‘hath them in derision,’ Psalm 2, verse 4. ‘There is no wisdom or counsel against the Lord,’ Prov. 21: 30. You never question the wisdom of an artist to use his file when he takes it into his hand. Wicked instruments are God’s axes and files; let Him alone, He hath skill enough to manage them. God hath too much affection to destroy his people, and wisdom enough to beautify them by the worst tools he uses. He can make all things conspire in a perfect harmony for his own ends, and his people’s good, when they see no way to escape a danger feared, or attain a blessing wanted.”

But sometimes even Christians do not understand the purpose of God and they set their minds on the interests of men more than the interests of God. This was what happened with Peter when he tried to prevent our Lord from going to the cross. Jesus had to rebuke him sharply.

Matthew 16: 13-24 – “When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter

took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

2. The Wisdom of Committing our Way to God in times of trial and testing

You will remember that the last time we were together that I shared with you the truth about Job's difficult situation. He was a man of integrity, and Job was boasting to Satan about him. He was saying: "Have you considered my servant Job?" "There is none like him on the earth." "He is a blameless and upright man who fears God and is turning away from evil." And Satan said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?" "Have you not made a hedge around him, around household, and around all that he has on every side?" "You have blessed the work of his hands and his possessions have increased in the land." "But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And so God delivered Job's possessions and his family members into Satan's hand, but he did not allow Satan to take his life. A little later he permitted Satan to take his health away, but still spared his life. Since he would not confess his sins, his closest friends turned against him and thought that he was a hypocrite, and after confronting him numerous times, they finally ceased answering him. Last time we were together I set before you the truth of what Elihu said to Job in chapter 36, verse 5 – "God is mighty, but despises no one; He is mighty in strength of understanding."

Not everything that Job's 3 friends said was true or pleasing to God in their speeches to Job. In Job 42: 7 God said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." Even though this was true, there were some words which Eliphaz said which were very true and which we can apply to this subject of there being no wisdom against God.

Job 5: 8-17 - "But as for me, I would seek God, and to God I would commit my cause – Who does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things without number." "He gives rain on the earth, and sends waters on the fields." "He sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety." "He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot carry out their plans." "He catches the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them." "They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope at noontime as in the night." "But He saves the needy from the sword, from the mouth of the mighty, and from their hand." "So the poor have hope, and injustice shuts her mouth." "Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty."

Now, we need to see that it is good to commit our cause to God. Why? Because he does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things without number. This is very true. If he is faithful in giving the rain, he will also be faithful to set on high those who are lowly, and lift them to safety by His great and wise ordering of events. It is also good to see that "happy is the man whom God corrects" and Job should not despise the chastening of the Lord. But what was wrong with this speech in terms of applying it to Job? Eliphaz was attempting to apply God's frustrating the devices of the crafty to Job instead of Satan. He was saying that Job had in some way thought that his own craftiness and cunning would secure continued blessing and prosperity to himself, but God had foiled his plans. This was simply not true. And furthermore, God will sometimes allow a righteous man to fall into very grievous situations for a time, so that he can test him, prove him, and bring him forth as gold. This is what He did with Job. He would vindicate him entirely, and bring forth his righteous as the noon-day sun. All of the blessings that Eliphaz mentioned here would come to pass, they would be bestowed in God's good time, after Satan had been defeated and proved wrong in his accusations and after Job had learned the lesson that he should justify God more than himself. God's wisdom would prevail. It was Satan who was trying to prevail by cunning and cleverness.