

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

You Must be Born Again!

“The habit of preachers today is to address their people as though they were all Christians and just need instruction...men and women are being treated as saved who never knew they were lost.”

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com (blog)

www.lightfordarktimes.com (blog)

Christ Reformation Church – YouTube Channel (Light for Dark Times)

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism – Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians

Part 9 – Wisdom Not of this Age

April 28, 2024

Sermon Text: 1 Cor 2:6-16

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor 2

1Co 1:30-31 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, (31) so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

The church at Corinth, very much like so many churches today, was

exalting what Paul calls the *wisdom of man* or the *wisdom of the world*. It was characterized by attitudes and values which were no different from the world in which they lived. They sought acceptance and greatness for themselves. They were divided as they competed for power and glory.

It is the same today in the typical local church. This worldly wisdom instead of the wisdom of God. Which translates into *a gospel that is no gospel at all. Man in the foreground and Christ put aside*. The Word of the cross, after all, is foolishness to the world.

“Man-centeredness in any form disfigures the kingdom of God. The church at her best is a power in the

world not because of what she says about herself but because of what she is by the grace of God.” [The First 40 Years, Banner of Truth]

The wisdom of the world vs the wisdom of God. This is a theme we dare not rush over. And that is obvious when we consider just how often Paul underscores this subject here and all through the New Testament:

1Co 1:19 For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

1Co 1:20 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?

1Co 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

1Co 2:6 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is

not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.

1Co 2:13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

Col 2:20-23 If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— (21) “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (22) (referring to things that all perish as they are used)— according to human precepts and teachings? (23) These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

There is something seriously wrong with man's mind the moment he is born into this world. That includes YOU and ME. Our minds, because of sin, were

programmed with a devilish software which began in Eden:

Gen 3:1-6 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

(2) And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, (3) but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

(4) But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

(5) For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

(6) So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he

ate.

The wisdom of the world verbalized by the serpent. What are the basic elements of this diabolic philosophy?

1. Man must be exalted. We must raise ourselves up to the heavens and become like God.
2. God’s Word is suspect and must be questioned.
3. God’s motive is suspect. He is primarily concerned for Himself.
4. The Law of God may be disregarded and broken without consequence – lawlessness actually sets man free.
5. The wisdom of man is evangelistic. It craves to bring others into its mindset.

Rom 1:32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give

approval to those who practice them.

The wisdom of man is this terrible thing called *worldliness*. It is a love for the world and the things in the world. It is *lawlessness*. Even the most “moral” person is lawless because, outside of Christ, they are following the world’s laws, not the Lord’s.

When Christ saves us from this insanity, we immediately understand that He does far more than simply forgive our sins. We must be completely re-programmed and this is what the Bible calls, the new birth. You must be born again.

Rom 1:28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, **God gave them up to a debased mind** to do what ought not to be done.

Rom 8:5-7 **For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh,** but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. (6) For to set the

mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (7) **For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.**

2Co 4:4 In their case the god of this world **has blinded the minds of the unbelievers**, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Eph 2:3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, **carrying out the desires of the body and the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Rom 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.

Eph 4:17-23 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, **in the futility of their minds. (18) They are darkened in their understanding**, alienated from the

life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

(19) They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

(20) But that is not the way you learned Christ!— (21) **assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him**, as the truth is in Jesus, (22) to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, (23) **and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds**,

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: **I will put my laws into their minds**, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

This is deep and profound, this subject of *the wisdom of the world vs the wisdom of God*.

When YOU and I were born into this world, we were *by nature* objects of God's wrath. Why? Because of the sin we sinned in Adam. Because we were part of fallen humanity alienated from God. Our entire being was wrong.

Here is the question to put to ourselves, but it will be of NO use if we are not ready to be honest. Jesus said this concerning the necessity of honesty and truth:

Mat 7:7-8 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (8) For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

Many people who claim to be Christians have never *asked*, because they do not really want truth. Many do not *seek*, because they don't want truth opened up to them. Many do not *knock* because they do not want to see what is on the other side of the door – *truth*. Truth about themselves, about God, about the depravity of their

minds.

And so, *do you want to know? Ask, seek, knock* – and here is the very first thing that will be opened to you –

Your mind, the mind you had when you came into this world, the mind everyone has outside of Christ, is the mind of the world's wisdom, the mind of the devil. Your mind operated with the fundamental axiom – I will be as God. Your values were of this world. The Law of God was something you hated. You chose what Paul calls “the elementary principles, (the ABC's) of this world.” And as such, you were an enemy of God, God was your enemy, and even the “good” you claimed to do was designed to exalt yourself, not to exalt God.”

THAT is what is behind the door when you knock. THAT is what will be given to you, the first thing, when you ask. THAT is what you will find if you seek.

And so I put this to you – *have you ever seen this? Have you EVER admitted this? Has your very*

MIND ever been radically transformed by the Spirit of God who taught you the truth as it is in Jesus? Do you think now the same way, fundamentally, that you have always thought?

Isa 55:6-9 “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; (7) **let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;** let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (8) **For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.** (9) **For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.**

How? How then are we to forsake OUR very mindset? To do so, it would seem, would require that *we become a brand new person.* And so it is:

1Co 2:13-14 And we impart this in words not taught by human

wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. (14) The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

The Holy Spirit must give us a new mind and an entirely new wisdom – the wisdom of God. ONLY the Spirit can do this – it is impossible for the natural man to transform his own mind. The wisdom of God is *spiritually discerned* and this requires the Spirit of God in us. It requires, in other words, the new birth.

Now, what do you suppose is going to be evident in a person who is born again? In a person who *has been given and entirely new mind that operates according to a Godly wisdom which this world has not known and cannot know* –

1Co 1:22-31 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, (23) but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to

Jews and folly to Gentiles, (24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

(25) For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (26) For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

(27) But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; (28) God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

(29) so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (30) And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, (31) so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

What is necessarily going to be the experience of a person who is born again? Whose very MIND has been transformed? Whose values and fundamental assumptions – their “operating system” we might say, are now Godly rather than according to this world? What will be such a person’s experience – the *Christian’s* experience in this world which functions according to a completely different mindset?

“Who are you? We don’t recognize you? We used to have great fun together – what happened? You think what? That’s stupid! What has gotten into you?”

And the answer to that last question is – the Spirit of Christ.

I ask you all once again – *have these things ever happened to YOU? I am not asking if you professed to believe in Christ, or if you are a church member, or if you have been baptized, or if you believe the Bible – those things are all excellent. But what I am asking is, are you a radically new and different person than you used to*

be? Have you been given a new mind by Christ? Do you now regard the wisdom of God as wisdom and the wisdom of the world as foolishness. Do you embrace Christ’s people as YOUR people or do you regard them as fools?

Because, and make NO mistake here – *unless your very mind has been re-created by Christ, then you are still on Broadway headed for hell.*

Mat 19:30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.
--

Some years before my father died I visited him in the hospital – I only found out he was there from another relative who happened to mention it. He recovered later, but that evening I visited him and I felt I owed him a kind of apology. I told him that I had come to realize how selfish and unthankful I had been growing up. But I also told him that I had changed and was not the same as I used to be.

But before I could tell him why –

that Christ had changed me – he shifted in his chair and I could tell this made him uncomfortable. He just said is a kind of dismissive tone, “Oh well, we all change.” And that was the end of that. God’s Wisdom, spiritual truth, truth about Christ and the things of God – always had the same result with my father and as the years passed I could tell that he increasingly considered me to be a fool. His mindset was that of this world. He belonged to a different flock than me.

Not only individuals but entire churches are dominated by the wisdom of this world – and that condition is going to increase among the visible church as the day of the Lord grows nearer. The world kingdom of the Antichrist will be dominated by the wisdom of the serpent of Eden and anyone who doesn’t comply will be cast out.

Jas 3:15-18 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. (16) For where jealousy and selfish

ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. (17) But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. (18) And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Let’s end with a word of thankfulness to the Lord for what He has done for His people in Christ. Who can say it better than the Apostle Paul -

Eph 2:1-10 And YOU were dead in the trespasses and sins (2) in which YOU once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— (3) among whom WE all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

(4) But God, being rich in mercy,

because of the great love with which he loved us, (5) even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

(6) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (7) so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (8) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, (9) not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.