

"Faith and Wisdom IV"

James 1:5-8 with 2Corinthians 3

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5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. (Jas 1:5-8)

This is the fourth message on the relationship between faith and wisdom. We began an examination of this text in James by looking at the text first, and considering the contrast between the double-minded, unstable man, and the single-minded man whose mind is fixed on the Lord Jesus Christ. After that, I preached two messages on the relationship between faith and wisdom, looking first at 2Tim. 3, that the scriptures are profitable to make us wise unto salvation, for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness. We compared that with Proverbs 16; it is wisdom to know that God directs our steps.

Then, in a second message on faith and wisdom we looked last week at Isaiah 29, how that unbelief causes us to dig a hole for ourselves from which there is no escape, for we subvert our very relationship with God, trying to become the potter and molding Him into our own image, as Israel did. Last week, we looked at the relationship of faith and wisdom by using the middle portion of Psalm 19 which speaks of the excellencies and benefits of the Scriptures.

Today, I would like to close the circle and come back to the singlemindedness that sees Christ and is transformed by Him. In order to do this, I want to examine Paul's doctrine in 2Cor.3 to see that Paul is not talking in empty abstractions, but in the spirit and in truth.

The source of wisdom is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the fountain from which all good things come to us. We are by faith to seek understanding and wisdom of God alone who has given unto us the Lord Jesus. But let us examine this chapter in broad outline.

I. Paul is speaking of His ministry of the word among them. 2Cor. 2:14-17

- A. The knowledge of Christ was revealed everywhere Paul preached.
- B. This knowledge was life to life; or death to death.
- C. He preached the word of God faithfully.

II. Paul's ministry was of the Spirit, not of the letter. 2Cor 3:3-6

- A. The word of God was not being written on stone; but on the fleshly tables of the heart.
- B. The New Testament is of the heart; not of stone. Not the letter, but the Spirit.
- C. Letter: symbols; Spirit: reality.

III. The ministry of Moses compared to the Ministry of Christ: 2Cor. 3:7-18

- A. Both are glorious: So glorious Moses put on a veil; because their hearts were veiled.
- B. Veil: hidden speech; symbols and figures, instead of reality.
- C. Unveiled: great plainness of speech.
- D. If the heart is veiled, then the speech is veiled.
- E. How is the veil removed: by turning to the Lord. As long as they were occupied with commandments and ceremonies and such, their hearts were veiled. Seeking the symbols of Christ and not Christ himself.
- F. We see as in the glass the Lord Jesus, and are transformed into His image by the Spirit of God.

IV. Conclusion: the open face of Christ: in the Scriptures. 2Cor. 4:1-6 The gospel reveals Christ clearly; but to the heart renewed. Hid to those who are lost.

- A. 4:2. Not handling the word of God deceitfully. The Scripture can be death unto death if the heart is far from God, hardened in unbelief.
- B. The gospel is hid to them that are lost: Turning away from Christ is turning to nowhere.
- C. The light shines into our hearts, just as God commanded the light to shine out of darkness.
- D. It is a hard heart that keeps you from the Scriptures, that comforts you in your self-sufficiency, thinking that you do not need to see the face of Jesus Christ.
- E. Faithful preacher: we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

Amen and Amen.

God bless you.