***Wisdom

Colossians 1:25-29

COL-220***

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2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Philippians 2:15-16: "That you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent children of God, above reproach, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the Word of Life, so that in the day of Christ, I may have cause to glory, because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain."

We direct your attention this morning to Colossians 1:25-29. Our subject is "The Mystery of the Church," segment number 35.

During the dispensation of the church, every believer is a priest of the living God. We do not have a formal priesthood as they did under the Old Testament of Judaism with the Aaronic line. Now every Christian is a priest, and the core duty of a priest to represent someone before God. The person we represent is ourselves. This is taught in 1 Peter 2:9, where Peter says, "But you are a chosen race (you Christians). You are a royal priesthood".

Also, at the very beginning of Revelation, the priesthood of the believers is again recognized, in Revelation 1:6: "And He has made us to be a kingdom of priests to his God and Father, To Him (that is, to Christ) be the glory and the dominion forever and ever, Amen." We are a royal priesthood. We are a kingdom of priests. As such, the Christian priest proclaims the gift of salvation available through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

We have been observing this statement in Colossians 1:28 where the apostle Paul says, "And we (Paul and his associates, and we as Christians with them) we proclaim Him (the Lord Jesus Christ). What we proclaim first of all is salvation – a salvation that is true; a salvation that works; and, a salvation that will take a person from a destiny in the lake of fire to the destiny in heaven. The Christian priest also goes on after that," Paul says, "admonishing every man".

The priests of God today must admonish each convert, warning him of the temptations for sinning from the world system; the sin nature; and, Satan. Those are the three sources where you'll be tempted to go against the work; the plan; and, the will of God. It will be the world system of Satan; the sin nature; and, and Satan.

Furthermore, Paul says, we also teach every man. The new convert is also taught principles of doctrine in the local church by the pastor-teacher, and the other teachers of the assembly, in order to give that person God's divine viewpoint, by which to guide his life in temporal fellowship with God the Father.

**Admonition and Teaching (Music)**

Admonition and teaching – that is our business as we proclaim Christ. Admonition and teaching are brought together in the Bible, in this very book that we're studying. In Colossians 3:16, the apostle says, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom, teaching, and admonishing one another, with Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God". And here you see the point that we have just been making – that music is one of the ways that God teaches. It is a core feature of worshiping God. And it has the effect of performing the work of teaching and admonishing through music. That's why words are important. That's why music that the world system of Satan has taken over (hymnology of church groups, where it has been converted into a world system) is bad. It has bad melodies.It has raucous noise. And, worst of all, it has repetitive phrases. Something is said over and over again, so that you can sort of hypnotize yourself in thinking that you have a relationship with God.

**Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs**

We can worship with psalms. They did that in the Old Testament. And, for the early Christians, that's the only hymn book they had. We can also worship with hymns (hymns of praise), and then with spiritual songs – a lighter vein of the kinds of songs that we call gospel singing. And we do all this. Why? Because we're thankful to God, with thankfulness in our hearts.

So, music participation, whether as a performer, or as a person in the congregation in the singing, expresses an act of worship and of gratitude to God. Anytime we express gratitude, we transform ourselves in some way.

The book of Romans begins with pointing out that the reason people degenerated into a cesspool of humanity was because they did not appreciate the doctrinal truth that God has revealed in the Garden of Eden, and on down through prophetic utterances. And because they did not appreciate what God was doing for them, with the truth revealed to them, so that they held it in esteem, and used it, and metabolized it, lived according to it. The result was that they lost it. And when they were not grateful, it says, they lost it. And when they lost it, there was no place for them to go as human beings, but down to the animal level.

**Thankfulness**

So, what's your problem this morning? What is the stress that you have in your life? What are the conflicts that keep you from rising to your calling as a Christian to proclaim Christ; to carry on a ministry of admonition and teaching; to exercise your spiritual gifts; and, to be present with the fellowship of the people of God? Thankfulness is one way to solve that. And when you are thankful for something, then you will use it. And when you are grateful for the principles of the Word of God, like the principles of prayer, you'll go to God, and you will say, "Father, here's my problem. This stands in the way of my serving You, and my acting the way I used to. I was a lot closer; I was a lot more involved; and, I was a lot happier when I was walking with You and doing these great things that you gave me the capacity and the means to do, and I don't like the restrictions on my life now." And you bring it to Him, and you say, "Please change this. Change this." And you take it to the Lord to remove these difficulties so that you, as a Christian priest, and you, as an ambassador of Christ, can perform the job of proclaiming Christ within the capacities that you have, and the leading of God that is specifically programmed for you.

So, the apostle Paul tells us teaching and admonition is part of proclaiming Christ.

Now, the local church is the key to all of that. It's the teaching ministry of expository preaching that enables a believer to grow into spiritual maturity. That is taught us in a passage we've looked at many times, in Ephesians 4:14-16. It all begins with the pastor-teacher pulpit performance of teaching the Word. Then people are equipped to do the work of the ministry. Then the work of God is done. Then the work of the body of Christ results in being developed, and built up, and matured.

It is bad when a Christian cannot be associated with the people of God. Anytime this pulpit is open for exposition, and something keeps you from it (either yourself, or some circumstance of life) that's bad. And you need to go to God and say, "I want this changed, please. Give me a different job; give me a different opening; give me different hours; give me a different operation. I cannot sustain myself in the devil's world, with all the bad things that I get acclimated to, without the cleansing effect of the preaching ministry of the Word of God.

So, Paul says in Colossians 1:28, "We proclaim Him, admonishing every man, and teaching every man." And as with admonishing, it goes to everybody. As with teaching again, he says, "every man" – laying stress such that no individual Christian is to be denied instruction. And that's how we do teach. We are not interested in just putting out a widespread proclamation. Our concern is to talk to individual Christians, from the pastor-teacher's instruction of Bible doctrine phenomena, to the full council of the Word of God that covers all the prophetic areas. Every positive Christian is capable, with God's grace system of perception, of learning doctrine, and going on to maturity. There is no excuse for any puny Christians. There is no excuse for any Christian to get sidetracked by the sin nature within him; by the world system around him; or, by Satan himself, with his trickery, and his appeals, and his fiery darts. There is no excuse.

Any Christian who stays in these services, and is positive toward the Word of God, and maintains a principle of temporal fellowship as per 1 John 1:9, that Christian will go to spiritual maturity. That Christian will be under the protective custody of God, whatever comes into his life. And that Christian will not stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ with tears streaming down his face, as he realizes what a wasted life he lived, and what could have been.

**Wisdom**

Then Paul becomes very specific. Colossians 1:28: "To every believer we admonish and we teach with all wisdom." Wisdom: the Greek word looks like this "sophia” (sof-ee'-ah)." "Sophia" refers to the divine viewpoint truth which we find in Scripture. It is exactly the opposite of human viewpoint reasoning of the mind of man.

Now, the pastor-teacher who does not go about his business of studying the Word of God so that he's prepared to teach people the doctrinal principles of the Scripture, cannot deliver "sophia" to the congregation. And if he doesn't deliver God's point of view, they're not likely to get it anyplace else. That is his job. That is his first job. That is his primary job. He has secondary things that he's engaged in. Once in a while, he has to marry somebody (that is, to perform a wedding ceremony. Once in a while, he has to bury somebody. Once in a while, he has to confirm that some knowledgeable Christian is on the right track in applying the Scriptures that pertain to his situation. Once in a while, he has to put out some cautions. But, primarily, all of that takes care of itself when the people of God have "sophia." When they have wisdom, and when they have God's frame of reference, then they know where they are going.

Now, one of the things that's very interesting about this is in Isaiah 11:2. I'm very fond of this particular passage. Here, the prophet Isaiah is looking ahead, down the centuries, and he's describing what God is going to do for the humanity of the Messiah when He arrives. In this passage, Isaiah says that this Messiah will be part of the Trinity. It will be God who will come, but it will be God incarnate in human form. And in Isaiah 11:1, he gives the family line: "From Jesse, the father of David, through the Davidic line. He will be of the royal line. And then he says, in Isaiah 11:2: "Because He will be of this human line He, Jesus, will need certain things that will be provided for Him, so that that He can live in the devil's world, and be sinless. And that was important, because this coming Messiah was going to die to bear all of our sins. We guilty ones would give Him our guilt, and He would pay for our moral guilt so that we could be justified. So, he gives seven things.

**The Seven Spirits of God**

Now, in the book of the Revelation, we have the opening passage describing (and repeated in other places too) the seven Spirits of God before the throne of God. And what that is connecting back to is these seven factors that God will give to the humanity of the Messiah, to enable Him to live in the devil's world. And wonder of wonders, this is exactly what God the Holy Spirit gives every believer as his dynamic power system, to live in the devil's world. Jesus Christ, in His humanity, lived the way you and I have to live in our humanity. He did not have a sin nature to contend with, but everything else was the same. Therefore, he was hugely victorious. He was a big success. Why? Because of these seven things. And the comforting thing is that you and I can do the same thing.

1. **The Spirit of the Lord**

The first thing is the Spirit of the Lord. God the Holy Spirit would be with the humanity of the Messiah. Here, in the church age, we have that par excellence. In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God came and went. But with us – He now indwells us permanently. Then it says" "The Spirit of the LORD." And notice that the word "LORD" is spelled with all capital letters. That is Jehovah (Yahweh) – the most sacred name of God. This is the third person of the Trinity. He will rest on the humanity of Christ.

1. **The Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding**

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding – intellect.

1. **The Spirit of Counsel and of Truth**

The Spirit of counsel and of strength. Strength means physical well-being. Jesus Christ was a strong man. He pumped iron and all those things. He was a carpenter. This word "strength" gave Him the Spirit of counsel (good judgment).

1. **The Spirit of Knowledge and Fear of the LORD**

The Spirit of knowledge. He's going to know doctrinal information. And one of the things the Bible tells us is that, from a small child, he grew spiritually in his knowledge of doctrine, and the fear of the LORD– the respect in His humanity of God, which He Himself was.

**Wisdom**

Now, our interest is in the word "wisdom." Right here, encased in what is going to be done for the Messiah Savior, is that He will be given the Spirit of wisdom. And this is what is promised to every Christian. When we proclaim Christ; we admonish (we warn) about sin, and we give instruction on doctrinal principles. The result will be all wisdom. You'll have spiritual smarts.

The reason some people are not sitting here today is because they don't have wisdom. The reason some people are meandering around in the life of sin is because they don't have wisdom. They don't have the capacity to know how to make the right choices.

In the Old Testament that we just looked at, this word wisdom looks like this in the Hebrew: "chakma "(khaw-kam'). It's the same thing as "sophia." It is "sophia" in the Greek, and "chakma" in the Old Testament. These two words mean identically the same thing: divine viewpoint – God's frame of reference.

Now, isn't that thrilling, to think that you can think the thoughts of God, and that you can have reasoning that brings you out to the same conclusions that God would do if He were there talking to you? That's exactly what the Holy Spirit is within you to do. But He can't do it if you don't know doctrinal principles that are stored within your human spirit. If nobody has taught you this, you'll have no “sophia,” and you'll have no "chakma." It is gone. And when you don't have wisdom, you're going to be one unhappy person. You're going to be one miserable person. You're going to be one uneasy person about someday facing God, because you don't know where you are. You don't know what you're doing with your life. You're not at ease. And yet, you should have full confidence. You cannot be a soldier in battle, and not understand your objective; not understand the potential of your enemies; and, not understand the capacities that you have for meeting those. And that's what doctrine (wisdom) gives you.

Wisdom provides the ability to make the right choice at the proper time. Consistent right choices is a sign of spiritual maturity. The person who goes through life making stupid, wrong choices as a Christian, shows that he may be very religious, but he's not spiritually mature. Children make stupid, wrong choices. Mature people (adults) don't do that. They have perception. They have wisdom.

Wisdom is the divine viewpoint frame of reference in the mentality of the soul. And in James 3:17, James has this to say about it, "But the wisdom from above is first pure; then peaceable; gentle; reasonable; full of mercy and good fruits; and, unwavering, without hypocrisy." Now, these are qualities that develop in a mature Christian only as a result of growing up spiritually. And the only way you grow up spiritually is through the intake of doctrine into that soul, and into that human spirit. Therefore, you'll have the thinking of God. It will be pure; it will be peaceable; it'll be very gentle; it'll be reasonable; it'll be full of mercy; it'll be good fruits (divine good production and good works); it'll be unwavering (you're not going to be a yo-yo, up and down, in your Christian life); and, you will be without hypocrisy. You will not be a lowlife spiritually, and then we will all see you walking in the church door with your Bible in hand, or coming out afterwards, without hypocrisy.

So, I don't care who you are, and I don't care what elevated position you may enjoy in life. If you do not have wisdom (like most people who are prominent in the public eye), you do not have anything.

I was interested recently (this week) to hear one of the potential contenders for the presidency at the next election. Repeatedly, in the interview, he made the statement first: "The nation has problems to resolve, but these problems have to be resolved from people, but they cannot be resolved from the outside. It's because people have to be changed on the inside. What this nation needs is God. And I'm going to announce for the presidency, and my point is going to be to recognize God, and for people to turn to Him, so that the nation can once more return to its glory; to its purity; and, to its integrity, because if it's not in the people, it's not going to be in their leaders." And then he had the audacity to do it two or three more times – to mention the name of God, out loud. And he said, "This is my frame of reference."

Most politicians will say, "Okay. Adios muchacho. You just killed yourself. This nation does not vote for people who are going to say that they are going to operate from the frame of reference of God." And the point is that then we will know what to do. What is he talking about? He's talking about "sophia." He's talking about "chakma." He said, "Then we will have God's thinking. That is what he meant.

Now, the Bible tells us a good deal about wisdom. And it is very interesting for us to get a hold of this, because, with divine viewpoint, you have what is the most valuable thing that any human being can have – whatever else you may have in life. Without wisdom, whatever else you may have in life will not be used properly. You'll not do well with it if you do not have wisdom.

The source of all wisdom is a personal God Who is absolute righteousness. Wisdom comes from God, and God is a person. He is not some imaginary force of the New Age concept. The first book of the Bible to be written was the book of Job. Job is a book of enormous theological understanding. Job 12:13, "With Him (with God) are wisdom and might." With God, you have wisdom.

Job 28:20: "Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding?" Where does wisdom come from? Notice Job 28:23: "God understands its way, and He knows its place." Where does it come from? It comes from God.

Then we have Proverbs 2:6: "For the Lord gives wisdom. From His mouth comes knowledge and understanding." The Lord gives wisdom.

**The Books of Wisdom**

So, the basis of wisdom is God the Holy Spirit giving us instruction through the Word of God, of the thinking of God. You have whole books in the Bible that are devoted to wisdom. Job is one of them. Proverbs, obviously, is one of them. The book of Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon, is another book of wisdom. They provide us with basic information to make divine viewpoint decisions.

If you rear a child, you should steep his mind in the books of Job, and Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiastes is good because so much of it is human viewpoint. And Solomon lays it all out, and he says, "This was a bummer. I did this because I wanted to find happiness. This was a bummer." And he goes all the way through: "This was a bummer." Then he gets to the end of his life. He's has written this book, and he makes a conclusion.

So, what's the conclusion? Ecclesiastes 12:13: "The conclusion, when all has been heard." And he keeps repeating in this book: "Everything I've done is wind empty. It's just nothing. Everything is blown off, and I thought it was great stuff I was doing. I didn't have wisdom." The man that asked God for wisdom; the man that God said, "I will give you wisdom as no one ever before you had or ever after will have." Yeah, even the man who had that got out of fellowship, and went negative. Anybody who has 700 wives, and 300 concubines is not very smart. He is hardly a man of wisdom. If he ever had to identify how far off-track he had gotten from the smarts that God gave him, there it was.

So, the conclusion is in Ecclesiastes 12:14: "When all has been heard: Fear God." Respect God, and be afraid to disobey Him: Keep His commandments, because this applies to every person: "For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or bad." He gets back to saying that the important thing is divine viewpoint. Learn His commandments. Keep His commandments. That is what life is all about.

In these books of wisdom: Job; Proverbs; and, Ecclesiastes, you will have guidance to prevent sexual immorality. You will have guidance in the training of children, including the spanking of children at a certain early age, when they learn the consequences in that way of doing what is wrong. Put that in your pipe, Norwegian parliament, and smoke it. In these books, you will learn how to treat the poor. In these books, you will learn how to act in marriage. In these books, you will learn how to deal with your finances. In these books, you will learn about the place of government, and where government should butt out. In these books, you will learn about the importance of personal integrity, whether anybody sees what you're doing (let alone, thinking), or not. In these books, you will have guidance for emotional stability. You will not be going off in a frap, trying to think with your emotions. In these books, you will have guidance for various kinds of social relationships with other people, and people of the opposite sex.

True wisdom, God says, belongs to Him alone. You will not find wisdom from the smart people of this earth. Daniel 2:20 points this out to us: "Daniel answered and said, 'Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him.'" Wisdom is not to be found in your friends. Wisdom is not to be found in the prominent people of our society. Those are the people that are constantly being interviewed on the TV programs. Why? Because they've got money, and they're famous. But that doesn't mean that they know anything in terms of divine viewpoint wisdom. That is especially true for people in the entertainment world. They're among the dumbest that there are. And yet, people want to dress like them, and look like them, and talk like them. And any immature Christian will chase after those empty-brain heads. Daniel 2:20 tells us very clearly that wisdom belongs to God, and for that, He is blessed forever and ever. So, you have to go to God. How do you do that? Right here in the local church through the Word of God.

Wisdom is not found, then, in human speculation. It is not a matter of your IQ level. Just because you may be very smart on a human level does not mean that you have insights into the things of the spiritual world, and into all the things that pertain to the spiritual life. Now, you can send a rocket to the moon, but that doesn't mean that you are a person of any insight when it comes to spiritual things.

In Job 28:12-13, the writer says, "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living." Now, that's a very big piece of information. You cannot find what God thinks in the land of the living. You don't find it from people. You don't get it by consulting with people. You only get it by consulting with the Word of God. That's the only place that you're going to find wisdom.

Then we go back to that other wisdom book of Ecclesiastes again. In Ecclesiastes: 7:23-24, Solomon says, "I tested all this with wisdom, and I said, 'I will be wise,' but it was far from me." Now, what he's talking about is that he went from one thing to another. He went to trying to become very wealthy. He went to great building projects. He went to having great international relationships. He went to doing one thing after another, including multiple marriages. All of this he's trying to do to find: what's the smart thing to do, such that he can have happiness? And he said, "I tested all this with wisdom, and I said, 'I will be wise,' but I wasn't. It was far from me. What has been is remote, and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it?" He said that it eluded him.

Then he comes to the end of the book, and he said, "The reason was that I was looking for it in the wrong place. I was consulting with people in my court who were my advisors. They had no wisdom. I was consulting with my own high IQ. I had no wisdom. My friends, and my peers – they had no wisdom. But when I got to Scripture, then I had wisdom. Then I knew how to deal with all these areas."

So, men are to listen. People are to listen to God's wisdom with attentive ears, because only from God can this wisdom be found. Proverbs 2:2 says, "Make your ear attentive to wisdom. Incline your heart to understanding." Every one of these chairs, which is empty this morning, represents a person whose ear is not attentive to the wisdom that is being dispensed this morning, and which they knew would be dispensed this morning. They believe that they have wisdom. They believe that they can find it some other way. They believe it's not all that important.

However, when you play the game by human wisdom, you ask for grief. You will bring grief and frustration into your life, if you think that you can do this (be wise in your life) on the advice of people or your personal, rational processes.

Again, Solomon found that this was a mistake. In Ecclesiastes 2:9-11, Solomon says, "Then I became great and increased more than all who seated me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me." He said, "I got a big reputation. I went for big reputation. I wanted to be renowned in the ancient world," and he was: "And all that my eyes desired, I did not refuse them.

Ecclesiastes 2:10: "I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labors, and this was my reward for my labors." He said, "I'm doing all these things, and trying all these things. And anything my heart desired, I indulged it.

Ecclesiastes 2:11 "Thus, I considered all my activities which my hands had done, and the labor which I had exerted. And behold, it was all vanity: nothing; striving after wind; and, there was no profit under the sun." He said, "I'm out there trying to grab something, and it is like grabbing a handful of wind: no profit. And this particular context of chapter two tells how he went about getting himself to be so rich. He was an enormously wealthy person. He could do anything he wanted to, and he was reaching for something that he could not find. The satisfaction was not there.

So, human wisdom ultimately is doomed to be exposed as a monumental stupidity. In 1 Corinthians 1:19-21, "For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.'" So much for your high IQ: "and the cleverness of the clever, I will set aside." So much for your smarts. "Where is the wise men? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 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." Where is the wise man? God has made all their wisdom foolishness. And when it came to the big issues of life. Heaven or hell is your destiny. God said, "The wisdom came from what people consider ('Oh, it's nice, but it's not critical or vital) – the pastor-teacher's expository instruction.

However, God says, I was pleased through what people call the foolishness of preaching – to bring my mind to those who were willing to be taught. That was great. And anything else that man comes up with, God says" Is nothing. It is a self-delusion."

Then, in Romans1:21-23, (what I had alluded to earlier): "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks." They were not grateful: "But they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened." People began speculating about religious matters, and we have speculation about religious matters all over the place today, including the revision of the moral code, because people are so wise. In Romans 1:22, God says, "Professing to be wise, they became fools." And those of us, who are well-versed in Scripture, experience this all the time. We listen to public leaders, and we shake our heads, and say, "What fools these mortals be?" We listen to people who are put up in prominent places, because they're in the entertaining world, or the sports world. And they get up, and they pontificate on TV, and we shake our heads, because we have the frame of reference of wisdom of the Word of God, and we are amazed that people can be such fools.

In Romans 1:23, here's where the human race went: "They exchanged the glory of the incomparable God for an image in the form of corruptible man, and made themselves idols of birds, and four-footed animals – crawling creatures." And that's what they worship.

So, the source of all wisdom is a personal God – a God who is absolute righteousness, and who will give us the information to be able to live up to that standard.

Furthermore, we should be aware of the fact that this is something that God is eager to give us. Of all the things that God would like to do for us is to give us wisdom. And James 1:5 points out, "But if any of you lacks wisdom (and who of us does not), "let him ask of God, Who gives to all men generously, and without reproach, and it will be given to him." Now, don't sit on a mountainside and ask, "God, please give me wisdom. I'm surely botching up my life." No, you're not going to get it that way. He means to ask God to give it to you as the result of the fact that you placed yourself under the instruction of the Word of God. You're studying the Bible. He'll give you wisdom. You're in a church service where the instructions being given. He will give you wisdom. God will see to it that it's made clear to you. He will see to it that your mind is able to grasp the principles that are involved.

A prerequisite for divine wisdom, however, is your personal respect for God (the fear of the Lord). Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction." Those who do not respect God, and who do not have a sense of awe of God – they will be the fools. But those who respect Him, and who fear Him – those are the ones that God will honor.

Let me read Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 once more, where the prerequisite for divine wisdom is the fear of the Lord. Solomon said, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God; and, keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, and everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil."

You've heard me say on many occasions that every difference of opinion that you may have in spiritual things (perhaps something that you may hear from the pulpit) will be resolved. Whether that was good or evil, it will be resolved. And you want to be sure that, when you want to resist what you may have heard from the Word of God, or from the pulpit, or for the instruction, the day that comes when you say, "That's it. I've heard something in that church. Now, I know this day that Berean Memorial Church is not the church for me. Well, you're going to find out whether that was true or false. You won't just say, "Well, I made a mistake." It'll be an enormous mistake. It will not just be something that will not be resolved. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, every act, God will bring to judgment – everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. All those hidden motivations that propelled you will be acted upon.

Now, the skeptics (those who are on negative volition) will never secure God's wisdom. Therefore, they will never know the real answers to life. Proverbs 14:6-35 is an extended passage, but it's a high note for us to end on. What about the person who doesn't care about having the wisdom of God; to have the real answers to life; or, who is willing to compromise those answers when he does know them?

Proverbs 14:6: "The scoffer seeks wisdom and finds none. The knowledge is easy to him who has understanding. Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge." Don't hang around people who have human viewpoint. It'll rub off on you: "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of fools is deceit." We won't get to it this morning, but this evening, be sure that you're not absent. We are going to deal with what I have suddenly become aware of – the violation of one of the most important, divine commandments of the ten commandments, that is suddenly at the core of everything that is happening; with every news report; with every action in this country; and, with everything that has taken place. There is one commandment that is in high-focus violation in this country now; and, this touches upon it.

Proverbs 14:9: "Fools mock sin, but among the upright there is goodwill. The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not share its joy." This means people who are skeptical about the importance of divine wisdom.

Proverbs 14:11, "The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish. There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. Even in laughter, the heart may be in pain, and the end of joy may be grief. The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied with his. The naive believes everything, but the prudent man considers his steps. A wise man is cautious, and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless. A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated. The naive inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge. The evil will bow down before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous. The poor is hated, even by his neighbor, but those who love the rich are many. He who despises his neighbor sins, but happy as he who is gracious to the poor. Will they not go astray who devise evil? But kindness and truth will be to those who devise good. In all labor, there is profit, but mere talk leads to poverty. The crown of the wise is their riches, but the folly of fools is foolishness." You can see all these great contrasts between those who take wisdom of God (divine viewpoint frame of reference from doctrinal principles) seriously, and those who do not.

Proverbs 14:25, "A truthful witness saves lives, but he who speaks lies is treacherous. In the fear of the Lord, there is strong confidence, and His children will have refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death. In a multitude of people is a king's glory, but in a dearth of people is a prince's ruin. He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly. A tranquil heart is life to the body, but passion is rottenness to the bones." So, the next time you want to fly off the handle, and get yourself all emotionally on a jag, just remember this little piece of wisdom here: a tranquil heart enables your immune system to work well, but an excitable, emotional lifestyle will rot your immune system.

Proverbs 14:31, "He who oppresses the poor reproaches his maker, but he is gracious to the needy, honors him. The wicked is thrust down by his wrongdoing, but the righteous as a refuge when he dies. Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, but in the bosom of fools, it is made known. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people. The king's favor is toward a servant who acts wisely, but his anger is toward him who acts shamefully." And I'll guarantee you that, while this is true of the king, it is infinitely more true of the King of Kings, the Lord God (Yahweh), our heavenly Father: "His favor is toward the servant who acts with the wisdom (if he has gotten the wisdom from Scripture), but his anger is toward those who hang shamefully because they have no guidelines."

God our Father, we want to thank You for these admonitions, and we thank You for the fact that the Word of God is so focused upon that which we must have to be able to live lies which are significant, and victorious, and of such great value. We pray, Father, that You will seal these things to our hearts. Bring us together tonight to continue, and to look at the application of wisdom in a society that has lost its way. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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