

According to His Will

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes that God's will is supreme and that true wisdom is found in loving acceptance and faithful obedience, not in human wisdom or words.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:12-25, 1 Corinthians 1:31, 1 Corinthians 4:20, 1 John 3:18

Topics: "Divine Wisdom", "The Power of the Cross"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes that all glory must be directed to the Lord, as human wisdom and achievements are insufficient for true understanding and acceptance of God's will. He points out that the Corinthians had begun to overlook the divine wisdom that comes from loving obedience rather than mere eloquence. True wisdom is demonstrated through actions and the power of God, particularly through the message of the Cross, which is seen as both the power and wisdom of God. North asserts that the essence of God's kingdom lies not in words but in the transformative power of Christ's sacrifice. Ultimately, he calls for a recognition that true wisdom is found in Christ crucified, which challenges human notions of wisdom.

Transcript

According to verse 31, this is in order that all glorying should be in the Lord. Glorying must not be in men (verse 12), nor in whoever it was that baptised us in water (verses 13-17), nor in the wisdom of men (verses 18-25), nor in anything we inherited by reason of, or that was imposed upon us from, our first birth, God has deliberately chosen to do everything in the Church according to His own will, so that no flesh should be able to glory in His presence (verse 29).

It would appear that among the Corinthians there were those who had ceased to regard this wisdom as being characteristic of God. Not that the Word of Wisdom as a gift was not highly regarded among them; quite possibly it was still being faithfully spoken among them through some person or other, for verses 5-7 declare plainly that they were enriched in all utterance and knowledge. The testimony of Christ was so confirmed among them, that all the gifts were present and functional in the church.

But wisdom does not reside in utterances of wise words; it lies in loving acceptance and faithful obedience to them. Wisdom is in life and deed, not in gift and word; as it is written in 4:20, 'the kingdom of God is not in word but in power'. God, who is Wisdom, rules by power not by words. This fact is confirmed by John when speaking of love in his first epistle, chapter 3, verse 18, 'let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth'. The fundamental and enduring principle governing all life and words and work in God's kingdom is that life and work are greater than gift and word. This is true, both in the elementary

matters of the outward Kingdom of Heaven, or in the more advanced spiritual elements and developments of life within the inner Kingdom of God.

Paul brings to our notice the most fundamental exhibition of this in 1:17-25; 'the word of the Cross' is God's greatest 'word of wisdom'. While man seeks after wisdom, thinking that wise words proclaim the presence of an Oracle whom they may admire, we preach 'Christ crucified ... the power of God and (therefore) the wisdom of God'. All the wisdom and understanding of man must be destroyed, and not the least reason for this is that for the major part it is contained in sayings and writings. Wisdom is not a collection of wise words, although they may have been spoken by the wisest men of the ages. True Wisdom is accounted to be foolishness by men; there is no wisdom in them, for they despise the Christ of the Cross, who is made unto us wisdom.

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