

God's Wisdom in Christ 1 Corinthians 1

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explores how God's wisdom is revealed through human foolishness and emphasizes the importance of relying on Christ for righteousness and redemption.

Scripture: Jeremiah 9:24, Romans 3:23, 1 Corinthians 1:25

Topics: "Righteousness in Christ", "God's Wisdom"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes that the foolishness of man, including that of believers, serves to highlight God's wisdom. He explains that all human righteousness and pride are ultimately broken down in God's presence, leaving no room for boasting except in the Lord. Darby illustrates that true wisdom and righteousness come from Christ, who offers redemption and sanctification, allowing believers to glory in Him rather than in their own achievements or sins. He contrasts the folly of self-righteousness with the divine wisdom found in Christ, who provides a way for sinners to be reconciled to God. Ultimately, Darby encourages believers to embrace their identity in Christ, recognizing that their worth and righteousness are rooted in Him alone.

Transcript

All the foolishness of man, even of the saint, is the occasion of bringing out the wisdom of God; all thoughts are turned into good by Him; not that this is any excuse for our foolishness. There are two things brought out here: first, all that is of man is broken to pieces; secondly, God comes in, and the righteousness of man, his carelessness, sin, everything is thoroughly broken to pieces. No flesh can glory in His presence. Then would He have men not glory at all? Not so. "Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord" And this is perfect in strength, wisdom, holiness; he will never have to be ashamed of that which is perfect, and will never pass away, when everything else does fade away. What a glorious thing for the saint! It seems wonderful for a poor sinner to be able to say he may "glory in the Lord." What a tendency there is in nature to glory in anything else! Man must glory in something; it may even be that he boasts of being the worst of sinners. He may glory in his sins, his wretchedness, anything that attaches to self. When God comes in, there will soon be an end of this, he will hide himself fast enough then, and be ashamed of everything he has gloried in before. The state of man by nature is "without God," even though he may be blessed by Him with all natural things; he would be glad to be out of God's presence if he could, but in one sense he cannot. "If I take the wings of the morning," etc. You cannot fly from His presence; yet you are miserable in it.

If a man sets up to be righteous, God will break that down, as He did in Paul. We are easily satisfied with ourselves; a very little righteousness will do. And there is another thing too: man is content with doing his own will; he knows no obedience. Will that do when God comes in? Christ came not to save the righteous but sinners; therefore, if man is to be saved, he must be treated as a sinner. Where was all the boasted righteousness of Saul of Tarsus? He must be taken up as a poor sinner. All man's self-righteousness turns out to be pride when it is traced to its root. The "elder brother" in the parable says, What, will He take in a prodigal? His pride will not let him come in to be in company with such an one. There are plenty of elder brothers now, and younger ones too. Vain man would set up to be wise: he is like a wild ass's colt. What is his wisdom? He picks up little scraps of knowledge, and calls that wisdom; it is man's wisdom, spinning thoughts to exalt himself. Man is "lighter than vanity." But "there is a path which no fowl knoweth, and the vulture's eye hath not seen it." Real wisdom lies there. All that does not give rest to the conscience is folly and fades away.

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There is love to meet the need: therefore I have no need to hide my sins; it leaves no room for guile in the heart; it offers no temptation to whitewash myself; but when Christ comes, it puts away all this.

Christ Jesus, "has been made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and holiness (sanctification), and redemption." When we got eternal life in Christ, there was death in us; but life is come, and that life is in the Son. Christ is made unto us of God "wisdom." What kind of wisdom? Divine wisdom. How could God love such an one as I am? There is Christ's wisdom. When Christ is made wisdom for me, I can do without my own, and learn of Him as a little child. How was He wisdom? He went down into the place where death reigned, and got the victory over death. The world sinned against God, and He is come into it in mercy: that is wisdom. Wickedness is going on in the world; why does He patiently bear with it? He is saving sinners by Christ the Lord: that is wisdom.

"Righteousness" is God's own perfect righteousness. Not only can I get "wisdom," which makes me calm and quiet, but "righteousness" in which there is not a flaw; and through His grace He is made to me "sanctification" also. The rule and measure, the power and setting apart of the new life, are all in Christ. It is not like Israel, set aside by circumcision, Red Sea, etc., but in Christ. Christ is the key to the puzzle of this world. By Him I may no longer tremble in terror before God. No; but I can glory in Him, worshipping Him who is all I need. The more I weigh and ponder it, the more perfect and the more wonderful does it seem. We are not to be nibbling a little bit of the law, and to think Christ has done all the rest. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. He is a full Saviour; and hence we learn that He is "redemption" too. By this the power of evil and death are set aside. We wait for the redemption of the body. I have got "redemption" now in my Head, and the fruit of it fully I wait for. Why do we wait? It is the time of His "long-suffering." "We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." Now, in the best and highest sense we are redeemed to Him. "We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ." We not only have the life of Adam, but are of God in Christ - this is balm to the heart. What a different position we are in from a sinner trembling before a judge! Whence does all this come? He has taken our hearts up in grace, and will wring them, as He took

Job and wrung him, to shew what was in it. What came out was in it, or it would not have come out. "Glorying in the Lord" is real humility: in it I confess I am ashamed of myself, but I acknowledge Christ.

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