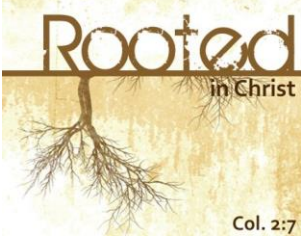


A Student Credo: “In Christ are hid all the wisdom and treasures of God”



Two weeks ago we described the Christian life as being rooted and grounded in Christ through faith. Part of that connection through those roots into Christ is tapping into Christ’s wisdom.

We need of wisdom so we can rightly understand the signs of the times and know how to live. Sometimes understanding the signs is quite literal:

“Parked on the side of the road, waiting to catch speeding drivers, a state trooper sees a car pattering along at 22 mph. Thinking the driver is as dangerous as a speeder, the state trooper turns on his lights and pulls the car over.

As he approaches the vehicle, the officer notices there are five elderly ladies inside—two in the front seat and three in the back—wide-eyed and white as ghosts.

The driver, obviously confused, says, "Officer, I don't understand. I was going the exact speed limit. What seems to be the problem?"

The trooper, trying to contain a chuckle, explained to her that 22 was the route number—not the speed limit. A bit embarrassed, the woman grins and thanks the officer for pointing out her error.

"Before you go," the officer says, "I have to ask: Is everyone in this car okay? These women seem *awfully* shaken." "Oh," she answered, "they'll be all right, sir. We just got off of Route 127." (Submitted by Van Morris, Mount Washington, Kentucky)

Proverbs 4:7 says “*Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.*”

We would all agree with that. But God’s wisdom is different than the world’s wisdom. Fred Smith, a U.S. speaker on motivation and leadership, says: “Certainly God can use a person of great intellect, but only as long as his faith is even greater. *Fred Smith in Leadership, Vol. 10, no. 2.* In our church most of our members are part of academia – either as current students or former students. We rely on the intellect God has given us and pursue our studies with the full strength of that intellect. Which is good and needful☺ However, I think in the realm of life, Smith is right. True wisdom will come in direct proportion to our faith.

Principal Denny in Scotland says “We cannot at the same time show that Christ is wonderful – and that you are clever.”

Theologians base their work, rightly, on the intellect and worldly wisdom. But there is so much more. *Woodrow Wilson, a president of the U.S. said:* I use not only all the brains I have, but all I can borrow. *Woodrow Wilson, Leadership, Vol. 2, no. 1.*

Ah. So what brains are you borrowing for your wisdom? The top scholars in your academic or work-related field? Your parents’ home-spun advice? The results you get from the Google search engine?

Wisdom is more than knowledge. It involves insight into living or a certain discipline based on knowledge, experience, and good judgement. Here the dictionary definition helps☺: “Wise implies having knowledge and understanding of people and of what is true and right in life and conduct, and showing sound judgment... and profound insight...in applying such knowledge.” (World Book Dictionary, L-Z, Eds. Thorndike and Barnhart, 1989, p. 2399). Wisdom is knowledge applied by the direction of God.

Paul tells the Corinthians, *God placed us in Christ Jesus, in him we have his wisdom and his righteousness and his salvation and in him we have his holiness.*” Need wisdom? The true biblical

source is Jesus Christ. Our text again: *In Christ are hid all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God.*

If we want wisdom, we have a choice – we can go deep into Christ and learn God’s wisdom, or we can focus on man’s wisdom. The choice is one we make consciously and unconsciously all throughout the day, so Proverbs 3:7 warns, “*Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil.*”

It’s an issue of how we are using our brain and what we are putting into it. **(pp)***In Christ are hid all the wisdom and treasures of God.* Are these what is filling your brain and my brain?

(pp)So let’s look at 3 questions from our text.Col.2:3.:

- 1.What does this text mean?
- 2.How do we access Christ’s wisdom?
3. And what difference will this make practically in our lives?

1. What does the text mean?

I remember learning as a new Christian that in Christ are hid all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God.(Col.2:3). That was a great encouragement to me as a college student. I didn’t want a Christianity that was a continual rehashing of simple Bible stories; I wanted to love Him with my mind and be able to ask the hard questions and be led by God to discover the deep things of God (I cor. 2:9-10), to know the height and breadth and depth of His love, to KNOW Him more intimately and be known by Him – in the depth of all His wisdom and life.

The text says that wisdom is *hidden in Christ* – but it is not hidden so we can’t find it. In earlier centuries God’s promises of the Messiah were all about Christ but the nation of Israel could not understand it. Now that the Holy Spirit has been given to those who believe in Jesus, believers CAN understand the deep thoughts of God – including how Christ fulfilled all those prophecies. First Corinthians 2:9 says: *No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him, but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit....We have received the Spirit who is from God that we may understand what God has freely given us.*” God is the great initiator and communicator, so God is not playing hide and seek with us in accessing his wisdom. Instead we can think of finding the treasures of wisdom in Christ **as** we know Christ better and seek His perspective, his help, his thinking on any issue.

In addition, we can take great comfort from Col.2:3 as the source of our maturity. It is not possible to outgrow or out-tap this supply. Christ has inexhaustible riches that we can mine as treasure our whole lifetime and they will always be fresh and new.

2. So, How do we access Christ’s wisdom? By studying Him in the Bible.

Eugene Peterson, who wrote the paraphrase *The Message* says: “When we find ourselves deficient in wisdom, it is not because the Word of God has pages missing, but because we have not seen all there is on the pages we already have. It is not another book we need, but better attention to the book we have; it is not more knowledge we require, but better vision to see what has already been revealed in Jesus Christ. *Eugene H. Peterson in Living the Message. Christianity Today, Vol. 40, no. 7.*”

Paul challenged Timothy” *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*” 2 tim. 2:15. I memorized that verse decades ago in the King James as *Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.* That word “study” speaks to our intentionality and diligence to be students of the Word. To memorize passage that God pinpoints as

truth in your life, to go in-depth in learning about Jesus , as he lives and works and speaks in the gospels. All the fullness of the Godhead is in Him, so as we learn about Him, we learn about the Father and what He *promises and commands for all who follow Christ. This is one way we fulfill the Great commandment – to love God with all our hearts, souls, mind and strength.* We show we love God with our minds by giving him the best of our intellectual abilities as we learn about Him and then apply what we know to live wisely and godly in the world.

Study to be approved by God requires the same kind of discipline of time we put into school assignments, or reading you do as you are learning about any topic. When I was a new Christian, I never forgot the picture booklet: My Heart Christ's Home. Ever read it? It's a classic. The author compares our heart to a house where Christ comes and what it means to meet Him there. Two rooms struck me in this area. First, when Christ came into the library, he his piercing eyes took in all the pictures on the wall which were the thoughts we had been thinking about and the media sites we frequented and the books we read, and the owner of the house felt a bit uncomfortable. Actually, God does see all the thoughts and intents of our hearts, and we [pass over that truth as though it wasn't mind-blowing, but the Bible also says all we think and say is also blared out over the rooftops on the day of judgement. That's a little close to home!

Christ went into the recreation room and was there in the midst of all we do for fun and relaxation and pleasure. He went into the dining room and surveyed all our desires and appetites and obsessions – with food, with sex, with wanting to be loved. But then he went into a smaller room with some books and 2 comfortable chairs and a lamp and said, this is a lovely room. Bring your Bible in here and let's meet together here every morning. I want to help you understand what is written in this precious book and think will be our special time to be together – just you and I. I want to be with you.” And at the beginning it was a wonderful time the believer had sitting with Christ morning after morning. But then days went by and her schedule got crowded and she rushed out the door before being with Christ. One day she glanced into the study as she was rushing out and there was Jesus, sitting, patiently waiting for her. Perhaps that is the strongest picture of God's love for us and desire that we do take the time and the discipline to meet with Jesus every day. If he is the source of wisdom, He is the one whose wisdom we need to seek – not just the wisdom of human authors and thinkers.

3. So, what will be the practical result if we learn to rely on Christ's wisdom?

a. We can have wisdom in our academic pursuits.

I think an incident that happened to me in college set the stage for all my other graduate degrees. Some of you remember the story. I did my senior thesis as an English Literature major on John Bunyan's Pilgrim's progress. It was an 80+ page thesis and I unpacked the various analogies Bunyan uses for the Christian life. I was attending a secular college so my lit professors were all non-Christians. And their comment in the evaluation was: Mary Lou how did you come up with all these interpretations? They are amazing! It was a direct fulfillment of Psalm 119:98-99: *“Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers for I meditate on your statues.”* And that is the amazing practical result of learning to rely totally on Christ's wisdom. He has given us our mind but if we are smart, we will use that mind to search out all the wisdom He has and apply that to every paper we write, every decision we make, every vision we have for the future, everything. *“In Christ are hid all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God* and we have the privilege of discovering those treasures throughout our entire lives. It is never old; it is never reruns. It is fresh and new every morning – just like His steadfast love and faithfulness.

b. We can make wise choices and speaks wise words. James 3:7 says *the wisdom that comes from the heaven is first of all pure, then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.* The world and its leaders all needs more of this kind of wisdom day to day.

c. We can speak words to build up and help each other. Col. 3:16: *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God*". That's the level of healing, encouraging and challenging conversation we can have with one another so church really does become a place we don't neglect because we can "*encourage one another, spurring one another on toward love and good deeds.*" *Heb. 10:24-25.*

d. We will see God's wisdom in leading us to do things that God will bless.

Austin Carty, a former contestant on the television show Survivor, shares about a mission trip to Indonesia:

Spending a couple of days in this Indonesian environment was quite rewarding for me. The country is 99 percent Muslim, and just this past March, *Time* magazine deemed the small nation "the crossroads of the Muslim faith." Therefore, we were prohibited to talk about Jesus in the Indonesian villages... But not being able to speak about Jesus in the villages didn't mean he wasn't there. On the final night of our stay in Indonesia, we met on the beach. A bonfire had been lit, and as it stood tall as a man, violently ripping with flames, it spoke of the refining process God had been doing on all of our hearts that week. That night I, along with one of the young boys from the school, played guitar and led a chorus of praise songs that lasted for nearly an hour...

And that's when a remarkable thing happened: a kid fell to his knees to give his life to Christ. And then another followed...and then a third. Ultimately, seven children dedicated their lives to Jesus that night. I would learn the next morning that the seven kids who gave their lives to Christ were, in fact, the seven very kids for whose salvation the staff had been praying for nearly a year. *Austin Carty, "Redemption Songs," Today's Christian (9-13-07)*

e. we will learn the wisdom of trusting God's timing. "It's better to wait a while and have things fall into place than to rush and have things fall apart." Indeed.

f. We will learn to live in joy – never ceasing in our praise or prayer or thankfulness. We will have that "*cheerful heart which has a continual feast.*" Prov. 15:15. These are the people who can change the world.

g. and finally, we will hold fast to God's wisdom even when the world scorns it. Supreme Court Judge Anthony Scalia, in speaking to the Knights of Columbus Council in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, said: "God assumed from the beginning that the wise of the world would view Christians as fools and he has not been disappointed... If I have brought any message today, it is this: Have the courage to have your wisdom regarded as stupidity. Be fools for Christ. And have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world." *Penny Brown Roberts, "Scalia: Faithful Live for Christ," theadvocate.com; submitted by David Slagle, Atlanta, Georgia*

Judge Scalia was known as a wise man. It reminds me of the famous saying at Christmas: Wise men still seek Jesus. Amen.

Why? Because in Him are hid all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Need Wisdom. God offers it to those who follow Him and choose to treasure His wisdom above all others. Amen.

Song of response: "May the mind of Christ my Savior live in me from day to day. By his love and power controlling all I do and say. May the Word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour. So that all may see I triumph only through His power."

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