2 Christmas 2021 Wisdom

Luke 2: 40 - 52

There are two very different kinds of wisdom. Wisdom from the world and wisdom revealed by God. The one wisdom leads to death and eternal separation from God. The other: to life.

To be wise before the world is not the same as to grow in the wisdom of God. The worldly wisdom does not impress God, nor will He take it into consideration in the moment of Judgment. God will destroy the wisdom of the wise. But the power of God is seen in everyone who believes God’s word about the folly or foolishness of the cross of Jesus.

Therefore, IQ levels cannot measure faith. All of the combined wisdom of the world’s way of thinking mean nothing in God’s kingdom of grace. Just ask newly baptized babies and you will learn that wisdom cannot be gotten, worked on, aspired to. God’s wisdom does not come from reading self-improvement books nor from google.

Yet we do not want to be ignorant and still want to grow in the wisdom of God. Proverbs and Psalms teaches that wisdom’s beginning is found in the fear of God. If the fear of God is but the beginning of wisdom, how does one gain it?

At the age of 12, Jesus was filled with wisdom. You might say that Jesus was already all-knowing or omniscient since He was God. But then how could he grow in it? Scripture is clear in saying that the boy Jesus “increased in wisdom”. Did he actually develop mentally and psychologically as we do? Or did He already know all there is to know at the moment of His conception?

If He did develop any differently, then he could not be one of us. He obeyed his parents and was submissive to them. He willingly placed himself under their authority and so is well on the way to perfectly fulfilling the fourth commandment: Honour your father and your mother, for us!

But he knew his father at the age of 12. He claimed that the one to whom the Jerusalem temple was dedicated to, was His Father. He thought that Joseph and Mary should have known that he had to be in His father’s house, doing what His father sent him to do.

Jesus was sent into the world to keep God’s law perfectly, and to be a sacrifice for all sin. He knew that. But what about Joseph and Mary? At that time, they did not. They like the rest of their generation had to grow in the wisdom of God that the perfect Jesus had to die so that we could live with His father.

Every believer in God partakes of the life that is found in Jesus only. Every believer will be seeking Him and eager to learn more about Him so that they become certain of their salvation. It is one of life’s most important quests to know just where you stand before God. What Christian says that he or she know all there is to know about Jesus and leave it at that? That is the sign of a dying faith.

Mary and Joseph must continually learn where Jesus must be and what he must do on the cross. And if that is true of his parents, it most certainly applies to you.

The wisdom of the world can be learned and students spend large amounts on tuition to gain it. But the more it is sought after, the more that money can buy of it, the further away it drifts from the wisdom of God.

St. Paul teaches in his letter to the Ephesians 1, that wisdom is a gift from God. God blesses you in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in the same way that God chose you before He laid the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.

That answers two more important questions about wisdom. First that it comes from God as pure gift and blessing, totally undeserved and by grace. Secondly that in Christ Jesus, all who were called from eternity to believe, are holy and blameless in the presence of the Almighty.

Paul says that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, through which comes the forgiveness of all our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

This is what faith does. It simply trusts as a child does. It does not question or try to figure out how or why, it simply rests in it and is gladdened by it. It knows what the world could never decipher, which the mystery of God’s salvation.

So to gain wisdom, God leads you away from yourselves and gives you faith to trust in the great promises of Christ for you. Pride tempts us to trust in our commitment to God. That wisdom cannot come from God and is poisonous to faith.

On the other hand, doubt makes us worry that we are not committed enough. We need to do more and to trust more and seek more, instead of receiving Jesus and being blessed in every way in Him.

Mary, not the mother of God, but the other one, from Magdala who stood weeping outside the empty tomb on Easter morn, could not see the Risen Jesus even though he was standing in front of her. The best she could come up with, was that Jesus was the gardener. That’s a good barometer of how far our abilities can take us when it comes to God’s mystery of salvation.

God’s gift came when He opened her eyes after her ears heard the Lord call her name, Mary. By the word of the Lord faith was born in her heart. She received the wisdom of God as gift as do all Christians.

What Jesus knew at 12 he demonstrated at his empty tomb. He had finished his father’s business of giving us the privilege of calling his father our father. Our father is heaven is kind and loving and merciful in His son, called back from death and now lives forever.

See the mystery of God in that the brightest and best of Judaism’s doomed religion were amazed at the answers and questions coming out of a 12 year old boy from Nazareth. Jesus was there for three days while his frantic parents were in a panic looking in every nook and cranny for him.

Jesus was three days in the tomb when death, all death, our death met its match. He rose again. He lives. And little children, baptized children, know the voice of their Lord. They hear and follow. Their eyes are opened to know that sin is paid for, death has been undone and that they will live with their loving heavenly father forever.