

Message Three

God's Power and God's Wisdom

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2, 23-24, 30; Rom. 6:6, 19, 22; Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11

I. Before mentioning Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God in 1 Corinthians 1:24 Paul, in verse 23, declares, “We preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness”:

- A. This indicates that the Christ who is the power of God and the wisdom of God for the carrying out of God's economy is the crucified Christ, a Christ who did not do anything to save Himself—v. 24.
- B. In man's eyes, if a person is crucified, he is deemed powerless, because a powerful person would not allow himself to be crucified; nevertheless, the Christ who is the power of God was crucified.
- C. Furthermore, from the human perspective, a wise person would find ways to avoid crucifixion, yet the Christ who is the wisdom of God was crucified—Gal. 2:20.
- D. The crucified Christ is the power of God—1 Cor. 1:24:
 - 1. In the cross of Christ we see God's power.
 - 2. It takes the power of God to defeat Satan, the world, sin, fallen man, the flesh, the natural life, the old creation, and the ordinances.
 - 3. The death of Christ—His crucifixion—has become the power of God—v. 24.
- E. The crucified Christ is the wisdom of God—2:7:
 - 1. In order to accomplish anything, we need Christ as both power and wisdom—1:24.
 - 2. Wisdom is for planning and purposing, whereas power is for carrying out and accomplishing what is planned and purposed.
 - 3. When we experience the crucified Christ, He becomes to us not only the power of God but also the wisdom of God—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20.
 - 4. The crucified Christ as God's wisdom is related to God's deep and profound plan according to His good pleasure and also according to God's way to fulfill His will—Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11:
 - a. Since we have the crucified Christ as God's wisdom, there is no need for us to seek a way to carry out God's will.
 - b. Simply by experiencing the crucified Christ, we spontaneously have a way to do God's will.
 - c. We become very wise in doing the will of God—Col. 1:9; 4:12.
 - d. As long as we experience the crucified Christ, Christ will become to us God's wisdom to fulfill His plan; we will have the wisdom of God to do His will—1:9.
- F. When we experience the crucified Christ, we are terminated—Gal. 2:20:
 - 1. All that we are, all that we have, and all that we can do—all is completely terminated.
 - 2. When we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, as we are experiencing and enjoying Him, His crucifixion will terminate us.
 - 3. Christ crucified is not only the power but also the way for us to be delivered from the flesh, the natural life, and the old creation.

II. As those who are called by God, we need to know and experience Christ's power and wisdom—1 Cor. 1:24:

- A. First Corinthians 1:2 mentions "the called saints":
 - 1. The believers in Christ are called saints, not called to be saints; this is a positional matter, a sanctification in position with a view to sanctification in disposition.
 - 2. To call upon the name of the Lord implies to believe into Him—Rom. 10:14.
 - 3. All the believers in the Lord should be callers—Acts 9:14, 21; 22:16.
 - 4. We have been called to call, called by God to call upon the name of the Lord.
 - 5. To those called by God, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- B. *Those who are called* (1 Cor. 1:24) refers to the believers who were chosen by God in eternity (Eph. 1:4) and who believed in Christ in time (Acts 13:48).
- C. To those who believe in Christ and call upon His name, He is the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- D. Christ crucified is the power of God for saving us and the wisdom of God for fulfilling His plan:
 - 1. Power is the ability, and wisdom is the way.
 - 2. Christ is first our power, and then He is our wisdom, that is, our way.
 - 3. Christ is the power of God to carry out God's economy, and He is also the wisdom of God, the way of God, to carry out God's economy.
- E. Christ as the power of God strengthens us with a dynamic power, supplying and sustaining us in what we are and what we do:
 - 1. In all our circumstances and conditions, Christ as the power of God enables us to suffer, to bear burdens, and to stand firm.
 - 2. He also sustains us to the point of being unshakable; for this reason, Paul declares, "I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me"—Phil. 4:13.
 - 3. Christ as the power of God is daily supplying and sustaining us through His divine dispensing.
- F. Christ as the wisdom of God flows unceasingly from God to us to be our present and practical wisdom in our experience—1 Cor. 1:24.

III. "Of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption"—v. 30:

- A. In this verse Paul does not say that Christ became our wisdom; instead, he says that Christ became wisdom "to us from God":
 - 1. The expression *to us from God* indicates something present, practical, experiential, and ongoing in the way of transmission.
 - 2. For Christ to become wisdom to us from God indicates that there is the transmission of Christ as wisdom from God to us for our daily experience.
 - 3. We need Christ continually as wisdom to us from God.
- B. Christ became wisdom to us from God as three vital things in God's salvation:
 - 1. He is our righteousness (for our past), by which we have been justified by God, that we might be reborn in our spirit to receive the divine life—Rom. 5:18.
 - 2. He is our sanctification (for our present), by which we are being sanctified in our soul, that is, transformed in our mind, emotion, and will, with His divine life—6:19, 22.

3. He is our redemption (for our future), that is, the redemption of our body (8:23), by which we will be transfigured in our body with His divine life to have His glorious likeness (Phil. 3:21).
4. It is of God that we participate in such a complete and perfect salvation, which makes our entire being—spirit, soul, and body—organically one with Christ and makes Christ everything to us.
5. This is altogether of God, not of ourselves, that we may boast and glory in Him, not in ourselves—Eph. 3:20-21.