

THE WORD OF WISDOM

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom" (I Corinthians 12:8)

THIS GIFT IS NOT....

- 1...Natural wisdom which is a result of intellectual reasoning and experience.
- 2...Academic brilliance or administrative genius.
- 3...Diplomacy, human skill, psychology or glorified intelligence.
- 4...The development and education of natural talents and abilities.
- 5...Spiritual wisdom which is gained by time spent in prayer (Psalm 119:10) or in the study of God's Word (Joshua 1:8).

*James tells us that we may ask for wisdom (which is an understanding of what is true and right, or of how to conduct oneself as a Christian); we may ask for this wisdom from God and expect to receive it liberally (James 1:5).

*Paul distinguishes the gift of the word of wisdom from this spiritual wisdom by saying, "To one is given the word of wisdom" (I Corinthians 12:8) distributed as the Spirit wills (I Corinthians 12:11), not as the believer asks. For spiritual wisdom (James 1:5) we may ask and receive bountifully; but the word of wisdom (I Corinthians 12:8) is given only as the spirit wills, supernaturally and spontaneously.

WISDOM DEFINED:

The dictionary defines wisdom as "the power or faculty of forming a sound judgment in any matter". God is infinitely wise "His understanding is infinite" (Psalm 147:5). He sees everything from beginning to end, and so can make judgments that are flawless.

THE WORD OF WISDOM IS...

- 1...The miraculous giving of wisdom to make proper judgments for a wise course of action to meet a particular need.
- 2...A particular portion of God's wisdom or wise insight to apply to a specific situation.
- 3...That gift of the Spirit which enables us to answer a particular question or solve a particular problem.
- 4...The gift of God enabling the believer insight into the purpose of God which can be translated into the ordinary problems and issues of life.
- 5...The gift which allows a person to get to the heart of a problem quickly, bring a resolve to it; and when this person speaks, other members of Christ's Body recognize that truth has been spoken and the right course of action recommended.
- 6...A "word" (utterance) which implies that this wisdom is neither exhaustive nor universal, but a "flash of inspiration" at a particular time. It is not the transfer of great reservoirs of wisdom, but a "word" - a revelation or expression sufficient for the occasion of the wisdom of God. This wisdom is in Christ (Colossians 2:3) not us, and is manifested sovereignly by God as we walk in unbroken communion with Him.
- 7...Whereas the word of knowledge is a revelation of facts in the mind of God, the word of wisdom is a revelation of how the facts apply to the overall purpose of God. God enables us to make proper judgments based on the facts.

WHY SO IMPORTANT?

The life of every church provides a constant need for the manifestation of this gift. In counsel and in government, wisdom will always be necessary. Problems and delicate situations will occur among the most spiritual believers. Carnal principles of wisdom will never suffice.

When deacons were first chosen, we have the command, "Choose seven men, honest, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom, to oversee this business" (Acts 6:3). Why? because honest men filled with the Spirit and wisdom are far more necessary than men who have proved successful in business or brilliant in a profession. Only spiritual men can do a spiritual job in the spiritual building of a spiritual kingdom.

The body of Christ will be edified by a sense of guidance and good judgment as God ministers this gift through members of His Body. There will be a divine sense of the right thing being said, done and a direction as to the right course of action being taken.

(over)

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF THE WORD OF WISDOM

1. GENESIS 41:25 - 39...God gave Joseph a word of knowledge, revealing to him the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream. After the revelation of the dream, Joseph shifted to advising in light of his information received. Joseph's wise advice made proper judgments and Pharaoh recognized both the interpretation and the advice as being the result of divine revelation to Joseph.
2. EXODUS 3...God called Moses to deliver Israel from Egypt's bondage, and Moses needed the word of wisdom many times as he dealt with a rebellious people.
3. EXODUS 31...God called Bezaleel and filled him with supernatural wisdom to work with gold, silver, brass, stones, timber, and to do the principle work of building the Tabernacle.
4. II CHRONICLES 20:12 - 23...The Lord gives Jehoshaphat a word of wisdom in fighting the enemy nations. Instead of going out with his finest warriors, he simply sends out men to sing and praise the Lord - and lo and behold, the enemies proceed to ambush each other. What proper judgment for a wise course of action!
5. I KINGS 3:16 - 28...Solomon is given the word of wisdom in handling the case of the disputed infant.
6. DANIEL 2:20 - 22...Daniel had intellectual knowledge and wisdom, and was chosen to teach in the king's palace. However, even greater was the supernatural word of wisdom which God gave him from time to time in dealing with the king.
7. MATTHEW 21:23 - 27...Jesus was given or displayed again and again the word of wisdom 22:15 - 22 to meet challenging circumstances.
8. ACTS 6:1 - 7...God manifests this gift through the apostles in meeting a crisis need in the church. God gave such wisdom to the twelve as they dealt with the problem of the daily ministrations to widows, that it "pleased the whole multitude" and added a great many more to the faith.
9. ACTS 6:8 - 10...God gave such supernatural wisdom in time of need to Stephen that, "they were not able to resist the wisdom by which he spoke".
10. ACTS 15:1 - 22...At the first general conference of the Church at Jerusalem, there was "much disputing" until James offered his simple formula. Harmony and oneness of spirit resulted; "Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church" (v.22).
11. ACTS 16:35 - 39...Paul before the magistrates of Philippi.
17:22 - 32...Paul using the altar to the unknown God as a theme in preaching in Athens.
27:21 - 35...Paul wasn't naturally trained in seamanship.
23:6 - 10...Paul uses the resurrection to divide his enemies in the Sanhedrin.
12. LUKE 21:12 - 15...You and I today - "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (v.15). Yes, Jesus has promised He would give us wisdom today, to make the proper judgments to make the right decisions.

Need wisdom? Ask of God and He will give it to you!!!

"For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous" (Proverbs 2:6,7)

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" (Prov. 3:13)

"Get wisdom, get understanding, forget it not..." (Proverbs 4:5)

"For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it" (Proverbs 8:11)

"Through wisdom is an house builded, and by understanding it is established" (Proverbs 24:3)

"Wisdom is better than strength" (Ecclesiastes 9:16)

"Be filled with all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Colossians 1:9)

"Wisdom from above (pure, peaceable, gentle) is easy to be entreated" (James 3:17)

O GOD, HELP US TO BE "WISE AS SERPENTS, AND HARMLESS AS DOVES" (Matthew 10:16)