

G'Day church family

It would be **great to have your Bibles in front of you** - as we look at **both** of those **Bible passages** just read - and you can use the **outline** if you want to take **notes**.

Let me pray first...

Intro/Recap/Wisdom

- This is our **3rd week** looking at the **Apostle Paul's letter** to the church of God - in **Corinth**
- And just to **recap** then
- What we've seen so far - is there is a **problem in the church**

[PowerPoint 1-Problem-Division]

- The problem is - the **Church is divided** over following the "**wisdom**" of **leaders** - by following **Paul** or **Apollos** or **Cephas** - and this was causing **groups** and **cliques** and **factions**
- And Paul argues in chapter 1 - that the **leaders weren't** the ones who were **crucified for their sins** - it was **Jesus**.
- And he argues the **people weren't baptized** in the **name** of **Paul**, **Apollos** or **Cephas** but in the **name of Father, Son and HS** - so they shouldn't be **relying on the wisdom** of the **leaders** but **relying** and **trusting** on the **wisdom of the Lord**
- Also, in 1 Cor 1:17 - **Paul** says the **message** he brought to the Corinthians **wasn't relying on his wisdom** or eloquence - but **relying** on the **power** and **wisdom of the Lord**

- And so, he argues they can't rely on their own wisdom - or the wisdom of the **leaders** of the age - and **boast** about it -
- And it's the **same for us** - we can't **boast** about **ourselves** or our **leaders** - Paul says there's only one thing worth **boasting about** - there in 1:31 - and that is - **boasting in the Lord**

[PowerPoint 2-Relied on Christ crucified]

- And last week - Apostle Paul also said - he didn't rely on his own wisdom and knowledge and eloquence when he came to them (2:1) - he relied on one thing only!
- That was in 2:2- to **know Jesus Christ and Him crucified**.
- Paul said - The **Jews** - in their **wisdom** had been **demanding** miraculous **signs** - and looking for a **military leader** to **save** them - so when **Jesus** came and **died** on a **cross** - a **dead hero** saving people - it didn't fit their **wisdom** - so Jesus on the **cross** became a **stumbling block** - **obstacle** - **scandal** - **offensive** - and they **rejected Him**
- And the **Greeks** - well in their **wisdom** - a **god** had to be **devoid** of **suffering** - and the idea of a **god suffering** for people - was **foolish**. And a **god** - who **involved** himself in **people's lives** - was a **contradiction** in terms. According to **Greek wisdom** - a **god** was fully **detached from humans**. So rather than **seeing wisdom in God sending His Son** to die for the world - the **Greeks** saw it as **foolishness**
- So, what is **wisdom** anyway?

[PowerPoint 3-Defintion]

- **Definition** - *the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgement; the quality of being wise.*

- A couple of quotes about wisdom:
 - *A wise person learns from the experience of others. An ordinary person learns from their own experience. A fool learns from nobody's experience [We can learn from the experience of the characters in the Bible]*
 - *In Jurassic Park 2 (Lost World) - the creator of Jurassic Park - Mr Hammond (played by Richard Attenborough) - says "don't worry, I won't make the same mistake again"- Dr Malcolm (played by Jeff Goldblum) - says "no no, you're making all new ones"*
 - *NASA's Hubble Space telescope - having had a major problem with one of its lenses - at a debriefing by NASA - they reported lesson #1 they had learnt from their experience - never name your mission with a word that rhymes with Trouble*
- A couple of incidents this week which illustrate human wisdom is flawed
- During the torrential rain, storms and floods in the last week - we lost power - at home - from Sunday to Tuesday. My daughter also lost power at her place - and she checked the Ausgrid website - and in Ausgrid's wisdom - they reported there would be no power until at least the end of the week. My daughter has a 3-month-old baby and was becoming quite distressed at the idea of no power for at least another week. She and her husband investigated buying a generator. Sure enough - when they did - they were all sold out - and the power came back on that day. Lesson - if you want the power to come back on - think about buying a generator
- Also, this week - we had planned a visit to Ian's farm with Jaffa children yesterday - but on Thursday evening we decided in our wisdom to

cancel - due to the **wet weather** - and the wise weather **forecast** of **rain and storms on Friday/Saturday**. As soon as we **cancelled** - the **weather on Friday and Saturday** was perfect. So much for our wisdom and the **wisdom of the weather people**

- So, it seems - our human wisdom is flawed in that we **don't always learn from our experiences** - and we **don't have an infinite supply of experience or knowledge**
- Maybe there's a **better wisdom than human wisdom?**
- The Greek word for wisdom is *Sophia* - **female** word -
- In Proverbs 3 **wisdom is personified** as a female

[PowerPoint 4-Proverbs 3]

13 Blessed are those who find wisdom,
those who gain understanding,

14 for she is more profitable than silver
and yields better returns than gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies;
nothing you desire can compare with her.

16 Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.

17 Her ways are pleasant ways,
and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her;
those who hold her fast will be blessed.

- So is there is a better wisdom than human wisdom

God is Wisdom (Isaiah 40:12-14)

In our OT reading

The prophet **Isaiah** says yes - there is a **source of wisdom** far greater than **human wisdom**

A **wisdom** from **God**

[Turn to Isaiah 40:12-14]

Isaiah asks some telling questions

[PowerPoint 5-Isaiah 40:12-14]

- V12 - **Who** is able to have any **control** over **God's creation** - we've certainly seen that with the bush fires and floods. Isaiah asks - can we scoop up the oceans in two hands? Can we put all the Earth's dust in a basket? Can we work out how much mountains and hills weigh? **Maybe** we're **not** so **smart and wise after all?**
- V13 - **Isaiah continues** - Can anyone **understand God's mind?** Can we **tell God what to do?** Can we be **God's counsellor** and **advise Him?** No! **Maybe** we're **not** so **smart and wise after all?**
- V14 - **Which expert did God go to** for advice and instruction? **Who taught God** how to **behave** the right way? **Who taught God** what He knows? **Who showed God** how things work?

The **conclusion** from **Isaiah** is - **God's wisdom** is way **better** than any **human wisdom**

In fact - we could say - **Real Wisdom** comes from **God** - and **God** is **wisdom**

God's Wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:6-16)

Which leads us to our **NT passage** - from **1 Cor 2:6-16** [Turn there now]

Paul has something important to say about **God's wisdom...**

3 points he makes...

[PowerPoint 6a-Real]

1. God's wisdom is real wisdom (vv6-9)

First point, then, **God's wisdom is real wisdom**

- So far in his letter Paul has preached the **fundamental message** of the Gospel - the *Good news* of Jesus - which is **Jesus Christ and Him crucified** (1 Cor 2:2)
- But now here in v6 - he says there is **something more** - for those who are **mature** -
- What he means by **mature** - is **not someone** who is old
- But **those Corinthians** who've **gone from** being mere **babes** in Christ - to **mature** followers of Christ - there is **more than just the basics** of Jesus coming and **living** and **dying** for our sins and **rising** again - to know
- There's **something more** as we **grow** as Christians
- That's why we have our **Bible Study growth groups** - to **grow** in our **maturity** as Christians
- He says still v6 - he **spoke a message** of **wisdom** to the mature in Christ
- But it's **not wisdom of this world** - that the rulers of the age have - because eventually these rulers come to nothing
- No - v7 - this **wisdom** Paul brings is **God's wisdom** - he describes it as wisdom that is a **mystery** -
- **Mystery** (musterion) here **means** something whose meaning is **hidden from those who haven't** given their **lives** to **Jesus** - but whose meaning is **crystal clear** to those who have given their **hearts** to **Jesus**

- And this **mysterious wisdom of God** is given to us - and designed for our glory - for our **benefit** - so we can **know God and His son** - in an **intimate relationship** - and so we can **experience the glory of God** - in **forgiving us** and giving us a **glory in Heaven** - **living with Him forever**
- He goes onto say in v8 - this **mystery is not known and understood by** the **intellectual activity** of people - it's actually a **gift from God** and it came into this world **with Jesus**. So, Paul's argument is **what we learn from God** is **not** so much what **our minds** found out - but more what **God** has **revealed** it to us.
- This **doesn't free us** from the **responsibility of learning from God** - the **more we strive to understand** the things of God, the **more God** can tell us and show us - and there is **no limit** to this process - because **His riches** are **limitless**
- Still in v8 - the **rulers at the time of Jesus' life** on Earth - they **didn't have this mysterious wisdom from God** - King **Herod**, people like **Pontius Pilate**, most of the **Jewish leaders** and **priests** and **teachers of the Law**. Paul says - **if they** had **God's wisdom** - they **wouldn't have crucified Jesus**
- Verse 9 - Paul says - **no one has ever seen or heard anything like this wisdom from God** - **no one** could ever **imagine** in their wildest dreams what **God has planned for those who love Him** - God's plan are unknowable by our intellect - and only known because God has chosen to reveal them to us through his **mysterious wisdom**

Which brings us to the 2nd point - Paul makes

God's wisdom is **known to us by the Holy Spirit**

[PowerPoint 6b-Known]

2. God's wisdom is known by the Holy Spirit (vv10-11)

- See v12 - **these things** - this mystery wisdom of God in sending Jesus to rescue us and bring us to glory - is only known by us because God gives us **His Spirit**
- Remember **before Jesus left** this Earth - he **promised** his **disciples** in John 14:26 - **But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**
- We too - as **Christians have** this **Holy Spirit**
- **When we** come to **believe** in **Jesus** - we are **born again** in a spiritual sense - as Jesus says in John 3- ⁵ ... **"Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.**
- Paul's point is that the **only one** who can tell us about **God** is the **Spirit of God.**
- He uses a **human analogy** -in v11
- **We** have **feelings** which are so **personal**, things which are so **private**, **experiences** which are so **intimate** and **no one** knows them except our own spirit.
- Paul says - the **same** is **true of God**
- There are **deep** and **intimate things** of **God** which only **God's spirit** knows
- And it's **God's Spirit alone** who can lead us into a **really intimate knowledge of God**

Which leads to Paul's 3rd point

We have access to **God's wisdom** through **God's Spirit**

[PowerPoint 6c-access]

3. We have access to God's wisdom through God's Spirit (vv12-16b)

- In verses 12 to 16
- Paul compares **two types of people**
- **Spiritual** people (pneumatikoi) and **Natural** people or **non-Spiritual** people (psuchikos)
- **As Christians** - v12 - we become Spiritual people by **receiving God's spirit** - which is something that **non-Christians don't** have
- And it's **God's spirit** that **helps us understand** what **God** has given us in **Jesus** - and **helps us understand God's mysterious wisdom**
- So for **example** when we read **God's word** - **God's Spirit living inside us** - as Paul says in v13 - **explains spiritual realities** with Spirit-taught words - in other words the **Bible and God's plan** - **comes alive** when we read it having the Holy Spirit inside us - the **Spirit brings the Word alive** and gives us **Aha moments!**
- However, Paul says - V14 - the **natural person** - the person without the **Spirit of God** - a person who **lives like** there is **nothing beyond this physical life** - and whose **values** are **physical and material**
- A person like that - cannot **understand nor accept spiritual things**
- **For example** - a person who thinks there is **nothing more important** than **satisfying their sexual urges** - cannot **understand** the meaning of **chastity and marriage faithfulness**.
- Another **example** - a person who sees **accumulating wealth and possessions** as the **supreme purpose** in life cannot **understand generosity and compassion**.

- **Another Example** - a person who has never thought beyond this world - cannot understand things of God
- To such people - things of God seem foolish
- It's easy to become so involved in the world that nothing exists beyond it
- Whereas - v15 - the person who has God's spirit -has God's spirit communicating with their Spirit - and is spiritually alive and has access to everything God's spirit is doing - so the natural person without the Spirit - can't really judge or criticize a spiritual person - because they don't understand God's way
- So, Paul concludes in v16 - that Isaiah's question which he asked - in our OT reading - *can anyone know the mind of God* and know what He's doing?
- Paul says yes there is someone that understands all this - it's Jesus Christ - He knows the mind of God

So, our response - is given at the end of v16

Response (1 Cor 16c)

[PowerPoint 7a-Mind of Christ]

We must have the mind of Christ

The Greek word for mind is *nous*? Which means - to have intellect, thought and feeling

What does it look like to have mind - the *nous* - of Christ?

Phil 2:5-8 tells us

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
 by taking the very nature of a servant,
 being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
 he humbled himself
 by becoming obedient to death—
 even death on a cross!

So, the **mindset** of **Christ** is: **wise, humble, servant-like, obedient and sacrificial**

So - we ask in every situation

[PowerPoint 7b]

WWJT?

WWJS?

WWJD?

And - how do **we get this mind** of Christ?

[PowerPoint 7c-Pray]

James 1 tell us:

⁵ If any of you ***lacks wisdom***, you should ***ask God***, who ***gives generously*** to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. ⁶ But ***when you ask***, you ***must believe*** and ***not doubt***, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. Let's pray...