

When Man's Wisdom Dilutes the Power of God

A strong attachment to the wisdom of men is diluting the real power of God in the church today. We've got to go back to waiting on the Lord to hear His wisdom and plans for us.

What we usually do—and I know I've been guilty of this myself—is we make our own plans and ask God to bless them instead of finding His plan, which is already blessed. The more we follow God's plan, the more God will move and manifest His power, favor and provision on our behalf.

Hearing and obeying the Lord cause His Spirit to move. The big problem today is men are doing all the moving.

Here are some differences between the wisdom of men and the wisdom of God:

The wisdom of men is very visible, popular and appeals to the flesh. The wisdom of God is hidden and must be searched out.

The wisdom of men glories in the might, power and riches of men, but the wisdom of God glories in the Lord.

The wisdom of men often has the appearance of good and smart while the wisdom of God esteems the foolish and weak things of the world.

The wisdom of men also sounds smart. But does that man's smartness cause a moving of the Holy Spirit and a working of the effectual power of God?

If not, then how much consideration should you give to his smartness?

We are admonished in Scripture not to put any confidence in the flesh or the wisdom of man (1 Cor. 2:5).

The human wisdom or smartness the apostle Paul opposed was not intellect or education, but rather it was a conceit and self-sufficiency.

Here is a description of the wisdom of God:

“For observe your calling, brothers. Among you, not many wise men according to the flesh, not many mighty men, and not many noble men were called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And God has chosen the base things of the world and things which are despised. Yes, and He chose things which did not exist to bring to nothing things that do, so that no flesh should boast in His presence” (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

The wisdom of men is aligned with the will of man and often looks pretty, sophisticated and smart according to the flesh, but it is more aligned with the glory of this world. The wisdom of God is aligned with the will of God and has the marks of the cross—humility, brokenness and sacrifice. As I see it, that is the real indicator of whether we are moving in God’s wisdom or our own. The marks of the cross are where the real wisdom and power of God are found.

Many times the wisdom of men will even masquerade itself as a great opportunity for more influence, power and money, but it has no marks of the cross.

Here are three examples of men who understood the wisdom of God and refused such good and glamorous opportunities in order to obey God.

1. Many years ago, Dr. Billy Graham was offered \$6 million by someone to build a university. He rejected the offer because it would have interfered with his evangelistic calling. Sadly, most ministers today would not have refused it. Dr. Graham loved souls more than mammon, and obedience to God was most important.

2. Mr. J.R. and Carmen Goodwin, affectionately known as Dad and Mom Goodwin, pastors of an Assemblies of God church in Pasadena, Texas, in the 1950s and '60s, were offered television time to widen the influence of their prolific and supernatural ministry. They prayed about it, and the Lord let them know that this was not His will for them.

Most ministers today wouldn't even pray about such an opportunity but would automatically assume that it was a promotion from the Lord. After all, how could such an opportunity to reach many more people not be from the Lord?

The Lord's ways are not man's ways.

3. Then there's the late Kenneth E. Hagin's reluctance to build a Bible college, even though the Lord directed him to do it. He begged God to let someone younger than him do it to no avail.

He never wanted to be a prophet. He never wanted a big ministry. For a man widely known for teaching prosperity and healing, few know of the spiritual stature and maturity of this general of faith. Unlike multitudes of ministers today, he never wanted the limelight. Here is a direct quote from him that has blessed my life:

"I could care less if God used me. I wish He'd take me off the platform. I'd be perfectly happy in a prayer room never being seen or heard. If you want to be seen or heard, you shouldn't be on any platform. The people don't need to see and hear you, but Jesus anyway."

How refreshing are these statements in a day when so many are insatiably covetous for more power, more influence and more money and are always endeavoring to climb higher in ministry. We need reluctant ministers, in a sense, who are still willing and obedient to the Lord but have been stripped of selfish ambition.

Jesus was taken up high by the devil, who offered Him all the kingdoms of this world and all its glory if He would only worship him (Luke 4:5-7). Jesus refused it and so will all those who truly love the Lord and bear the marks of the cross in their lives.

Oh, people of God, resist those men who have no marks of the cross in their lives and preaching. Resist those voices that are diabolically aligned with the spirit of this world. Beware of men who constantly strive for higher positions, bigger and better possessions; the finer things of this life, more and more success and popularity. Flee from them!

If we all did this, we could shut down every huckster and charlatan ministry in America overnight. The landscape of Christianity would be cleansed.

Instead, find that preacher whom the devil has taken to the top of the mountain and offered him all the things of this world—and he turned it all down. Find that man and listen to him. Or better yet, be that one.

May God give us such men of no compromise who are not only known in heaven but in hell as well (Acts 19:15).

The church and the world is waiting for them.