

From C. H. Spurgeon:

I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world, is because the world has so much influence over the church!

Lord, though I halt in faith, in prayer, in praise, in service, and in patience, save me, I beseech Thee! Only Thou canst save such a cripple as I am. Lord, let me not perish because I am among the hindmost, but gather up by Thy grace the slowest of Thy pilgrims—even me. Behold He hath said it shall be so, and therefore, like Jacob, prevailing in prayer, I go forward though my sinew be shrunk.

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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21. Q. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it (Rom. 5:12, to the end; Eph. 2:1, 2, 3; James 1:14, 15; Mt. 15:19).

22. Q. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God (Gen. 3:8, 10, 24), are under his wrath and curse (Eph. 2:2, 3; Gal. 3:10), and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever (Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Mt. 25:41, 46).

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Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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BEHAVING WISELY

And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. 1 Samuel 18:14-15

Most people understand the concept of wisdom. A simple definition is “The right use or exercise of knowledge; the choice of laudable ends, and the best means to accomplish them.” The assumption of course is that emphasis is on the idea of “right” with respect to both ends and means. The thought does not normally occur to us that wisdom could be a source of offence or a cause to fear to some. Yet, here we have a man in divinely appointed authority, possessing great skills as a warrior, of superior size and resources manifesting fear of a young man who offered nothing but devotion and submission to duty. Nothing in the behavior of David suggested a threat to Saul or his position. Why then would he be afraid?

The visible part of the answer is that even in the face of threats on his life David “behaved himself wisely.” The part not visible to Saul but in all probability sensed was that the LORD was with David. The evidence that the Lord had departed from Saul was becoming manifest in the anger and jealousy exhibited towards David and even his own son, Jonathan. The actions of David gave evidence of the Lord’s presence with him and Saul could neither understand nor accept that witness against his own pride and disobedience. He struck out and tried to kill what he should be and had forfeited and could never have. To the people who cheered him, David was a beloved and congenial hero. To Saul he was a hated adversary and a source of fear. The proud and the contentious understand

strife and combativeness. They find validation for their own actions there. But, they have no means do deal with the wisdom that is from the Lord and they strike out at the sense of the divine presence.

The lessons to be learned here are great. We are not told specifically what actions of David displayed this wisdom. It is perhaps better understood in terms of his countenance. We are quite familiar with the source of wisdom: *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. Proverbs 9:10.* Where the fear of the Lord is in evidence wisdom has begun and progresses. We are encouraged to get it above all else: *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Proverbs 4:7.* As we contemplate the fear of the Lord, wisdom and understanding, we realize that we are not bidden to accumulate volumes of data. It is rather that Christ is the personification of all these. Thus, it is the Lord with us that makes all the difference and is our sure defense against all threats. After all, Christ has received all the enemy could do and emerged victorious over all for His people. It would become necessary for David to flee the presence of Saul, but only of Saul was it said that he was afraid of David.

We read with amazement of the audacity of the Pharisees and others in the presence of the Lord. How they hated Him and the witness that He provided against their pride and unrighteousness. But, for all their bluster, it

seems that they like Saul were afraid. Certainly, those sent to arrest the Lord refused to move against Him but reported "never man spake like this man." In time He was "delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," but even in that process we learn that the Roman governor was afraid of Him in whom was no guile found. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; John 19:8.* So it was said of the Roman governor Felix that he trembled as Paul reasoned with him of "righteousness, temperance and judgment to come." Paul posed no threat to Felix, but the Lord and His word with Paul caused great fear.

We read of men like Daniel whose wisdom confounded the enemy and caused them to move with fear against him. We read the conclusion of his enemies: *Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. Daniel 6:5.* They so moved against him to their own destruction. With David of old we declare: *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalms 27:1.*

Paul prayed: *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: Ephesians 1:17.* It behooves us to know all that we may know of the Lord. We are directed to learn of Him and from Him and we are to be exercised in the practice of these things. To behave wisely has nothing to do with our own inventiveness or ability. It is rather that all be done in the Name of the Lord. We are to act with a consciousness of the presence of the Lord. This caused Saul to fear David. This is the wisdom that is from above with all its precious attributes: *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. James 3:17.* These things are passive and pleasant to us but they are hated and feared by the enemy of grace and mercy.

As it is with all else in salvation such wisdom is the gift of God and we are encouraged to seek it of Him: *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. James 1:5. bhs*

THE MIND OF JESUS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" — Philippians 2:5 "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" — 1 Peter 4:1 THE MIND OF JESUS! What a study is this! To attain a dim reflection of it, is the ambition of angel — higher they cannot soar. "To be conformed to the image of His Son!" — this is the design of God in the predestination of His people from all eternity. "We shall be like Him!" — this is the Bible picture of heaven! In a former little volume, we pondered some of the gracious Words which proceeded out of the mouth of Jesus. In the present, we have a few faint lineaments of that holy Character which constituted the living expositor and embodiment of His precepts. But how lofty such a standard! How all creature-perfection shrinks abashed and confounded before a Divine portraiture like this! He is the true "Angel standing in the sun," who alone projects no shadow; so bathed in the glories of Deity, that likeness to Him becomes like the light in which He is shrouded — "no man can approach unto it." May we not, however, seek at least to approximate, though we cannot adequately and fully resemble? It is impossible on earth to associate with a fellow-being without getting in some degree assimilated to him. Just so, the more we study "the Mind of Christ," the more we are in His company — holding converse with Him as our best and dearest friend — catching up His holy looks and holy deeds — the

more shall we be "transformed into the same image." "Consider," says the Great Apostle (literally 'gaze on') "Christ Jesus" (Hebrews 3:1.) Study feature by feature, lineament by lineament — of that Peerless Exemplar. "Gaze" on the Sun of Righteousness, until, like gazing long on the natural sun, you carry away with you, on your spiritual vision, dazzling images of His brightness and glory! Though He is the Archetype of all goodness — remember He is no shadowy model — though the Infinite Jehovah — He was "the Man Christ Jesus." We must never, indeed, forget that it is not the mind, but the work of Emmanuel which lies at the foundation of a sinner's hope. He must be known as a Savior, before He is studied as an Example. His doing and dying is the center jewel — of which all the virtues of His holy life are merely the setting. But neither must we overlook the Scripture obligation to walk in His footsteps and imbibe His Spirit, for "if any man has not the Spirit of Christ — he is none of His!" John MacDuff

From Paul Washer

Men must understand that when they sin, they have not rebelled against some minor deity or the superintendent of some small province, but against the great King above all gods, the Lord of heaven and earth, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords!²³ They must see every sin as a declaration of war against the very One who created the universe with a word and governs the same freely and effortlessly. He commanded the stars to set their watch in the midnight sky, and they took their place. He gave word to the planets to find their orbits, and they followed His degree. He ordered the valleys to be cast down and the mountains to be lifted up, and they obeyed in fear. He drew a line in the sand and told the brave sea to come no further, and it bowed in reverence. Yet in spite of the unaltered obedience of creation's greatest powers, man continues to lift his puny fist in the face of God. He is as pathetic as a mite beating its head against a world of granite, and as self-destructive as a man on life support who seeks to rip the power cord from the wall. As preachers of the gospel, we must make much of the sovereignty of God and thus prove to men that their sin is an atrocious crime that reveals the insanity and self-destructive nature of the fallen heart. However, if we refuse to make known the fullness of God and speak these hard truths to our hearers, then we do them a great injustice and condemn them to a life of ignorance and idolatry. The Scriptures tell us that God revealed Himself to Israel so that they might fear Him.²⁴ In turn, we must preach the full counsel of God's revelation concerning Him so that all nations might fear and be saved. To the degree that they know Him, they will comprehend something of the heinous nature of their sinning and possibly seek a remedy for it in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

By faith, when we think of Christ, we should see ourselves in Him. As we glimpse at the manger of His birth we can say, "This is my brother, my flesh and blood." As He grows and matures and continues to do the will of God, we can say, "This is my brother, my flesh and blood." As He goes to the cross and bleeds and dies, we can say, "This is my brother, my flesh and blood." When we see Christ seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, we can say, "This is my brother, my flesh and blood." And when we see Christ return on clouds of glory to take us home to be with Him we will say, "This is my brother, my flesh and blood." Because of the incarnation, believers can say of Christ what Adam said of Eve—"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh"—and what the apostle Paul says to the Ephesians: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (5:30). Joel Beeke