

DON'T BE DECEIVED (Part 9)

“...about the Folly of Human Wisdom”

INTRO: Satan and the world he rules succeeds by lies and deception. Since the Garden and the Fall deception has been his strategy to divert people from finding God and doing His will. Since it still works, no need to change. Scripture then warns us to not be deceived—about specific deceptions: salvation, God’s goodness, laws of the harvest, power of the Gospel, etc. You may recall my word for 2021 is wisdom.

TODAY: Don’t be deceived about the folly of human wisdom. Read 1 Cor. 3:18-20...1:17-2:16. By this I mean philosophy of humanism, where man’s wisdom is supreme. Corinthian’s context: Show map—Greece birthed philosophy (phileo—love and sophia—wisdom). In Athens Paul argued with the philosophers (Acts 17). The Christians in carnal Corinth were saved out of some form of Greek philosophy, which they brought into the church, creating divisions over differing philosophies and opinions. Paul writes to warn to not be deceived by human wisdom. All began in the Garden when Satan promised she’d be “wise” if listened to him (Gen. 3:6)—and she did, and we will too if not informed and alert. In our passages (3:18-20; 1:17-2:16) wise or wisdom mentioned 20+ times. In our text Paul explains why human wisdom must be avoided and heavenly wisdom must be acquired.

I. AVOID HUMAN WISDOM (3:18-19)

- A. Divisive (1:10ff)—Church was divided
- B. Deceptive (3:18) works because it is attractive and seductive, esp. when it appeals to our pride (and the enemy knows it).
- C. Foolish (moronic)—stupid (1:20; 3:19)
- D. Entraps us (“crafty”)—(3:19; Job 5:13)
- E. Futile (3:20; Psa. 94:11)—worthless. Human philosophies are nothing and they lead nowhere.

II. ACQUIRE HEAVENLY WISDOM

- A. Because of its Superiority (1: 17-31)
 1. God’s wisdom is *Permanent* (1:19-20)—quotes Isa. 29:14. God doesn’t need human wisdom (Pro. 14:12; Jer. 8:9). It is inferior to lead people to God. All (wise, scribe, debater) pass away.

2. Superior in its *Power* (1:21-25)—It can’t change lives. Only helps us to be comfortable in our sins. God’s wisdom offers the power of the cross to change us. Jews and Greeks wanted proof and missed the meaning in the cross.
3. *Paradoxical* (1:26-28)—so simple most miss it, esp. the intellectuals, influential, socialites. He selected plain old folks! Foolish, weak, base.
4. *Purpose* (1:29-31)—so there’s no room to boast. Once in Christ we are wise. In addition to wisdom, there’s more (v.30)—and He alone gets glory (v.31).
5. *Presentation* (2:1-5)—Paul’s presentation was a perfect illustration. He didn’t come as a philosopher but as a witness. He came humbly , relying on the power of God’s Spirit.

B. Because it is the opposite—God’s wisdom provides all we need.

1. Not humanly discovered (2:6-9)
2. Is divinely revealed (2:10-16). Ultimate truth is God’s wisdom in the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - (vv.10-11) Revelation—The Message
 - (vv.12-13) Inspiration—Method
 - (vv.14-16) Illumination—Meaning

So, how do we acquire the wisdom and not be deceived? Revealed in His Word, by His Spirit, godly counsel.

1. Humility—see your need
2. Hunger—want Him

CONC: Human wisdom (philosophy) is folly—only deceives us from finding God and His true wisdom.