

## 1 Corinthians 2:6-13

### *In-Depth Wisdom Is for Spiritual People*

<sup>6</sup>Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature, but it is not a wisdom of this world or of the rulers of this world, who are being reduced to nothing. <sup>7</sup>Instead we speak God's wisdom that has been hidden in mystery—before the ages, God foreordained that this wisdom would result in our glory. <sup>8</sup>None of the rulers of this world knew it. (If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.) <sup>9</sup>But as it is written:

What no eye has seen and no ear has heard  
and no human mind has conceived—  
that is what God has prepared for those who love him.

<sup>10</sup>But God revealed it to us through his Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup>Indeed, who among men knows a man's thoughts except the man's spirit within him? So also, no one else knows God's thoughts except God's Spirit.

<sup>12</sup>What we received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we might know the blessings freely given to us by God. <sup>13</sup>We also speak about these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual truths with spiritual words.

## Real Wisdom: Revealed by the Spirit

### I.

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The forefathers of modern philosophy. Wise men all.

Socrates came up with what we know as the Socratic Method, which is widely used to this very day. Lawyers use it. Teachers use it. *You* use it, whether you realize it or not.

The Socratic Method is a technique that involves asking questions so that someone, often a student, can be led to seek information that gives answers to the world around them. Even children use the Socratic Method, never having heard the term, and not realizing they are doing it. “But, why....?” They seek logical explanations to the world they are growing up in.

Scholars who came along after Socrates and the others used their foundation to build western thought and philosophy and science.

“Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature, but it is not a wisdom of this world or of the rulers of this world, who are being reduced to nothing” (1 Corinthians 2:6, EHV). Nothing? Paul's words come like a blow to the head. Isn't the wisdom of the world responsible for the internet and computers and the iPhone or Android device that dictates your life? This kind of wisdom and these fabulous inventions are reduced to nothing? I don't think any of us would like to give up our modern conveniences and go back in time 100 years and live even the way *wealthy* people did in those days.

One of those philosophers who built on those who came before him was 18<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Immanuel Kant. He said that “reason is the source of morality.” Not God. Not some religious system—even a man-made one. *Reason* is the source of morality.

People like Hitler used reason to explain away the logic behind exterminating 6 million Jews. Because he used his reason to determine his own morality, Hitler did not believe that what he was doing was immoral. Perhaps you think that is not possible. He *had* to know that what he was doing was wrong. But he managed to explain it away.

So do radical Islamists. According to their warped sense of their religion and their reason which creates their own morality, Islamic extremists believe it is moral—even their *duty* to slaughter anyone who is not a follower of Islam—and a radical one, like they are, at that.

## II.

Whether or not Kant intended “reason is the source of morality” to be used for each person to create his or her own system of morals or ethics, that’s what has happened. Have you ever heard the term “situational ethics”? Situational ethics means that you don’t judge a person’s actions based on some absolute moral standard, but on the situation and the circumstances and the surroundings of the individual.

Really, this idea isn’t new to Kant or to modern society, is it? Adam and Eve were convinced by Satan that being like God was not only something to be desired, but something they could grasp by just pulling down a piece of fruit and eating it. Cain was convinced that it was ok for him to kill his brother just because Abel’s sacrifice was pleasing to God, while his own was not. Judas convinced himself that collecting a pile of coin just for turning Jesus in for a reward wasn’t really hurting anyone.

Situational ethics is alive and well. Can you talk yourself into the idea that looking at porn on the computer in the privacy of your own home isn’t really hurting anyone? Your employer has lots of money—you can tell just by the equipment that’s available at your office; *you* are justified in skimming a little off the top when you do the books, or order a little something for yourself on the company credit card. Tax time is coming. Uncle Sam isn’t “fair,” in your opinion, so you’ll just indiscriminately change the rules and be deceitful as you file your taxes. Your parents don’t understand what’s going on in your life, so its ok to disobey them when you decide it is necessary. You didn’t have time to prepare for your test, so—just this one time—it isn’t *really* wrong to cheat on the test.

There are endless scenarios you could think of in which the individual just arbitrarily uses reason to “change” morality to whatever suits the moment—to whatever *feels* right in the situation.

## III.

“We speak God’s wisdom that has been hidden in mystery—before the ages, God foreordained that this wisdom would result in our glory” (1 Corinthians 2:7, EHV). What wisdom can not be found by using logic and asking questions about your surroundings? What wisdom far surpasses a bluetooth connection between your phone and your car? What wisdom is even better than the app that lets you zip through a special check-out lane at Meijer?

What wisdom is hidden in mystery? God’s wisdom.

“None of the rulers of this world knew it. (If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.)” (1 Corinthians 2:8, EHV). God’s wisdom is not wisdom at all, according to so many brilliant scholars. It doesn’t seem to even be worth looking for in the eyes of worldly people. They would rather focus on social platitudes, or mock God for making decisions or taking actions that their finite minds cannot understand or don’t think of as “reasonable” or “logical.”

“But God revealed it to us through his Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup>Indeed, who among men knows a man’s thoughts except the man’s spirit within him? So also, no one else knows God’s thoughts except God’s Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11, EHV).

Do you ever *really* know what another person is thinking or feeling? Only a person’s own inner self really knows the precise thoughts, motives, and desires that person has. What the individual says or does may be only a carefully crafted veneer—letting you see only a portion of the real person.

The Holy Spirit knows the exact thoughts and desires of God. The Holy Spirit searches even the depths of God and tells us what our Heavenly Father wants us to know. He wants us to know “God’s wisdom that has been hidden in mystery—before the ages, God foreordained that this wisdom would result in our glory” (1 Corinthians 2:7, EHV).

That mystery has been revealed. It is not logical, which is why it is a mystery to the human mind. God knew of the sin of the world. He knew Adam and Eve would use their situational ethics to try and become like God. He knew that you would fail to follow his moral law for human sexuality. He knew of your situational ethics as you sit in the classroom taking a peek at the test of the student next to you. He knew the furtive glances you would throw as a few items find their way into your bag when you leave work, and the company credit card magically sends a few things your way instead of to work. He knew of the thousands and thousands of other sins you would commit throughout your life.

“What we received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we might know the blessings freely given to us by God” (1 Corinthians 2:12, EHV). God’s way to deal with sin is far beyond human logic. He sent his Son, Jesus. Both truly God and truly human, Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty of eternal death for sin. Not just for one person, but for the whole world. This is the blessing God has freely given for the whole world. Because “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16, EHV). God wants you and me—he wants the whole world—to have eternal life.

It’s not logical. One Man should die, and that would be enough to pay for the sins of the whole world? He’s not just any man. Jesus is the God-Man. Jesus is both truly human and truly divine. God’s logic was to make possible your salvation *himself*, not leaving things to the whims of mankind’s situational ethics. That’s why he made it possible by sending his One and only Son into the world.

#### IV.

“We also speak about these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual truths with spiritual words” (1 Corinthians 2:13, EHV). God did it all, so that you and I could reap all the benefits. We have eternal life because of the work of Jesus.

As a believer in what Jesus has done, you have been given wisdom from on high—wisdom from God. Use the God-given wisdom of his Word to continue to grow in faith. Use the Sacrament he has provided you to be strengthened and nourished for this week today, and use it often to continually be strengthened to confront a world where human logic trumps godly wisdom.

Use the wisdom God has given you in his Word to do as Paul did and speak about these things—about the mystery of God’s salvation that was purchased for all people in Christ Jesus. Combine spiritual truths with spiritual words in the way you live your life so people might see Christ in you.

When your life of faith causes others to use the Socratic Method and inquire of you, “Why does God love people this way?” “Why are you so confident that you will be going to heaven?” “But why...?” Be prepared to answer their questions. Read and study your Bible on a regular basis. Examine the Scriptures so that you will have the answers. Use the Socratic Method right back with them. Take some of their questions and flip them, asking questions of your own, which help lead them to see the reason for the hope that you have.

You have far greater wisdom than all the wise philosophers of the world. You have God’s Word. You have the autobiography of the One who has been here before time began, and has told you everything you need to know for salvation, and everything you need to *share* salvation with others. God bless your use of real wisdom—wisdom revealed by the Spirit. Amen.