

BEWARE OF THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD

...the world through its wisdom did not come to know God. 1 Cor 1:21

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. 1 Cor 3:19

My message is to admonish believers to beware of the wisdom of the world. There is indeed a wisdom of the world.

First, what is wisdom? Wisdom, borrowing from the Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. I particularly like this definition because of the focus on knowledge and understanding. Notice from this definition that wisdom is practical; it is the outward expression of the inner attribute of knowledge and understanding. Wisdom is shown in how we decide our course of action and how we make choices. When we say there is a wisdom of the world, we are saying there is a way the world says things should be done and this is based on its faith, or rather the lack of true faith, and on the expectations people have of the things.

I need to point out that the wisdom of the world actually appears very wise to the average person. It is reasonable, in keeping with obvious facts and seems to have an explainable way by which the results being sought can be gotten. It is a fact that the wisdom of the world will not seem foolish at all, that is until you go into the presence of God and see the opinion of the Lord. It is only when you see through the eyes of the Lord that you discover the foolishness in what the world calls wisdom. Now, the fact that the way of the world often seems reasonable is the trap for the people of God.

Let me just quickly add that the life of faith requires us to take our bearing from the word of God. We must be careful not to lean on common sense understanding. The counsel of the Lord must be our guide. For example, if the Lord says not to worry about tomorrow, it is because there is no need about it. He knows the future, He knows where the control of the future is, and for that reason He knows that worrying is useless. The world may send people to university to learn how to worry about tomorrow; they return with lots of knowledge about how to take steps in worrying, and these steps will appear quite good to the eyes; however, the long degrees and the experiences in the things of the world cannot make anyone wiser than the Ancient of Days.

The Lord is the very seat of wisdom; He graciously gives us a word of His wisdom. It is just a word, not an explanation. Maybe this is why people do not often feel comfortable with it. The Lord doesn't tell you how it will work out, unlike the wisdom of the world which gives details and

systematic presentations of its logic. The Lord just says, 'don't worry; I am handling that.' The world wants us to ask Him how He will handle it, but that is something He rarely obliges. He demands we trust Him and not worry about it. We only discover how after He has done what He promised to do. It is always a case of '...that it might be fulfilled what which was spoken by the Lord...'

There was a man who not only refused to believe, but dared to make mockery of the word of God from the mouth of His prophet Elisha; the result was that the man died just after witnessing the way of the deliverance of the Lord (2 Kgs 7). No, the Lord doesn't like people who believe only after they have understood how He would do what He promised to do. He rather delights in those who say simply, 'He said it, I believe it, and that settles it.'

One important issue I like to point out is that many of the prescriptions of the world, which it calls wisdom, are derived so as to solve a problem that was created in the first place by its godlessness. When people reject the counsel of God, they create a set of problems, and then they begin to invent a way to solve it. The solution they invent may seem good, but we must never forget where the problem began from. Let us take examples from the AIDS epidemic, and one from of the leading cancers of women, that of the cervix.

It is a medical fact that HIV/AIDS and this cancer are problems of sexual godlessness in a society. Both of them result from the fact that the world rejected the teachings of the Lord about human sexuality. The result is that there is now corruption in the world (which is what diseases are), so much that even those who didn't sin directly, so as to be blamed, are affected by it. Babies are born with HIV/AIDS disease. The source of all these problems is very simple – the world refused the counsel of God and went after its own lusts.

So what is the solution the world found? Oh no, repentance is out of it, the world rather prefers to solve it by teaching safe sex. What is safe sex? Making condoms available easily to teenagers and having sex clinics in every corner. The words fornication and adultery are out of the window. Billions of dollars is spent trying to get young girls vaccinated against HPV (the causative virus for cancer of the cervix) and to develop vaccines against HIV (which has proven almost impossible). They fight the Pope and the Catholic Church for not advocating the use of condoms as if the Church is saying we are to go ahead and get STDs and unwanted pregnancies. They refuse to acknowledge that if the Pope and the Catholic Church were to be listened to in all they say about sexuality, there would be no need for these things. After all the Church's statement on sex is not limited to the matter of condoms but is also about fornication and adultery; it only sees the condom as an

accessory after the fact of iniquity and a barrier in a godly relationship, and for these reasons refuses to promote it. You may argue with it but that is basically the logic of the Catholic Church and I think it far better than that of the world. Instead of seeing this point, the world would rather say sexual integrity is not normal or practical; they expectedly refuse to accept that if for just two generations we all observe sexual purity, these diseases will all but totally vanish. The word of God says, 'keep the standard up there and let people look at it until they conform to it,' but a godless generation says, 'no no, don't touch our sex; it is a sign of liberation.'

Liberation from what? From God. Sexual freedom is a major sign of loss of godliness. It is not possible to maintain morality apart from godliness. Only God can help us keep our desires from turning to lusts that control us.

I am preaching this time to Christians to be beware of the wisdom of the world. We often buy it and live by it thinking we are doing right.

I like to use a simple verse of scripture to show how subtly we Christians get carried away by the world. I will first present an adulterated version, which I call Today's Worldly Version, of the verse, and then we will see the true word of God afterwards.

Please read this:

"Children are a burden from the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is extra load to carry. Happy are the people who have a small quiver so it fills up with just one or two. That way they can give this burden the Lord placed upon them the best in life, like foreign education and holidays in various parts of the globe. They can quickly get done with it and have the joy of having relieved themselves of the burden. The fewer the arrows in the quiver of a warrior, the better for him." Ps 127:3-5, Today's Worldly Version.

Let's face it, it is the usual thing these days for 'enlightened' people to speak as if a small nuclear family is better, and you hear this kind of talk even among Christians. You are looked at like you came from Mars or more like out of West Africa 1000AD if you say you love many children. Someone actually said something like this in my hearing: "what would one want to do with them? You want to sell them?" I replied to this end: "No, it is a joy to love them." Unfortunately, the world has taught us either directly or by keeping us occupied with the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the lust for the vanities of the world, that a thing that the Lord categorically said is good, is bad. Please don't even think about what my personal likes or dislikes may be; this is about the word of God. I am using this to show how the world has led us away from divine counsel.

Now let us see what the word of God says on this matter.

Behold, children are a gift of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth.

How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;

They shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate. Ps 127:3-5 NASB

This is the true word of God, nothing added. Instead of us arguing about whether we all have the same size of quiver, let us realize that in the context of the scripture here, abundance was the focus and not the size of individual quivers. It is clear, if we are not trying to justify the opinions of the world, that it was likened to a man in battle having an abundance of ammunition. The man with a small quiver is definitely not a person to envy.

Let us quickly see another genuine version.

Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a real blessing.

The sons a man has when he is young are like arrows in a soldier's hand.

Happy is the man who has many such arrows. GNT

One would have thought it so clear but the world has so filled the thoughts of Christians.

Woe to the world! They have rejected the word of God and have invented their own ideas. And the church is following them in the blindness occasioned by their hatred of God. Now, that is real carnality.

Please I am not at all here preaching on whether you should have a large family or not; I am just trying to say to Christians to beware of the leaven of the world. Take the word of God as it is lest you partake in the woes of the world. Let the word of God teach you what is good and what is bad. Woe to those who overturn the word of God (Is 5:20 KJV)

How terrible it will be for people who call good things bad and bad things good,

who think darkness is light and light is darkness,

who think sour is sweet and sweet is sour. Isa 5:20 NCV

We are either Christians or we are not. When people want to advocate for you that a small family is good, all they ever tell you are worldly things, and of course they never forget to tell you that El-Shaddai has gone on leave and so He is not aware of the cost of education and clothing. We are told to worry about what the children will eat, and what they will drink and with what will they be clothed. Poor Jesus was not aware of what perilous times we will have to live in when He was

speaking. People forget that we are people of faith who are to invoke the will of God unto the earth. It is to us according to our faith, remember.

Let me get back to the matter of the wisdom of the world.

The world emphasizes how we must save up for retirement (and this is part of the reason why they say that a large family is bad since it reduces your ability to save). The world says to lay up our treasures on the earth even though we see the moths destroy things again and again (one appropriate word for moth and rust in our modern day financial system would be inflation).

Do not store up riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, store up riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are.
Matt 6:19-21 GNT

We are encouraged to ignore these words of the Lord Jesus even though we see thieves in the name of big banks and financial institutions wizards breaking in to steal again and again as they collapse with depositors' moneys. The world teaches us how to worry and have anxiety about tomorrow. And Christians follow them. It appears like our faith is for Sundays alone.

Now, remember what I explained earlier about how they look for a solution to problems they caused by disobeying divine order. All this 'wisdom' is how to live when the family structure of God has been broken down. (Again that is part of the problem we Christians often have; we do not realize that we have to create a fully encompassing life of faith, and not jettison the word when we don't like it and then expect it to work for us in certain areas when we need it).

The world liberated children from families and created families without structure. Single parents are all over the place. This is because of sexual 'liberation.' People live in isolation here and there with no extended families or brotherhoods of love. In this kind of system you have to make preparation for your life by yourself. You need health insurance, disability insurance, old-age insurance, etc. You have to save up in a decaying and unreliable world in case things go south, like Americans would say.

I just thought about a godly system being in place.

A man and a woman have a large family and raise their children in true godliness (Js 1:27). They don't need a pension plan if they are investing so much in their children. Even if they don't have abundance of wealth to last them into old age, their children are commanded by God to be

there for them (Ex 20:12, Pr 19:6, Mk 7:11, 1 Tim 5:8). How blessed will they be, and the children too, if they indeed have a quiver full of them. I thank God for my mum; she worked as a school teacher for decades and retired. She has a pension, but what I and my siblings do for her far exceeds what any pension will ever do. We are young, and it is our turn; not a big deal. I know that many reading this understand this from personal experience. It is a joyful thing to do. Some called it African culture but that is so so untrue. It is the culture of God for any human society. It vanishes only as people modernize away from godliness, when they start calling evil what the Lord called good and calling good what the Lord called evil. In a godly society, with children that the Lord blessed, who needs old people's homes? The home of the old people is to be provided by their quiver of children. How blessed are they if that quiver is full.

The system of God says the more we are the better. Thank God for large families in Christ where we are careful to bear one another's burdens. We are automatically insured and have no fear of tomorrow. It was so good at a time that the apostles had to put in measures to prevent abuse. So Paul said, 'let the one who will not work not eat.' It had to be commanded because the brethren would have ensured that there was food for such. The purpose of work, Paul also explained, is to have something to contribute to help the lives of others (Eph 4:28).

In summary, please don't let the world teach us its wisdom when we have the word of God as the source of eternal wisdom with us. Let us never reason away the word of God but work hard to obey it and prophesy it until it produces results for us. If we are indeed people of faith, we shouldn't be the ones explaining away the word of God. We must stick with it, look up to it, and desire the hidden wisdom in it; that is what it means to be a believer. We are to put the word of God up there and look up to it attentively, be absorbed by it and contemplate it until we become like it in our thoughts, and then the experiences of blessing will follow.

Oh, by the way, the El-Shaddai is not on leave; we are the ones that have been on leave from making demands on His power while we commit iniquity with the wisdom of the world.

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. 2 Chron 16:9 NKJV

SELAH

