

I Corinthians 1:18-25

Culture Wars (the wisdom of the world and of God)

- There have always been tensions in the church between Orthodoxy and Diversity, Faithfulness and Flexibility, Resisting the world's values and Resisting God given differences in the church.
 - More often than not the church tends to confuse its Civil Wars (which are unwarranted) with its Culture Wars (which are necessary). The church at Corinth is a classic example.
- A. **In making decisions on non-moral issues, the believer is called to exercise wisdom and spiritual common sense.**
1. We are to make decisions by applying wisdom to life's challenges.
 - a. **Eph.5:15-16** "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as **wise**, making the most of your time, because the days are evil."
 - b. **Col.4:5** "Conduct yourselves **with wisdom** toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity."
 2. **ILLUSTRATIONS:**
 - a. **I Thess.3:1-2** "Therefore when we could endure it no longer, **we thought it best** to be left behind at Athens alone; and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith."
 - b. **Phil.2:25-26** "But **I thought it necessary** to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick."
 - c. **I Cor.16:3-4** "And when I arrive, **whomever you may approve**, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; and **if it is fitting for me** to go also, they will go with me."
 - d. **Acts 6:2-4** "And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. **But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom**, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.' "
 - e. **Acts 15:28-29** "For it **seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us** to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell."

- f. **Acts 16:10** "And when we had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, **concluding that God had called us** to preach the gospel to them."
- g. **I Cor.6:1-6** "If then you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church? I say {this} to your shame. {Is it} so, {that} there is not among you **one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren**, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?"
- h. **I Cor.7:39-40** "A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, **she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. But in my opinion** she is happier if she remains as she is; and I think that I also have the Spirit of God."

3. How does one acquire wisdom?

- a. The attitude that fosters wisdom

1. REVERENCE

Prov. 9:10 "The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

2. HUMILITY

Prov.11:2 "When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the **humble** is wisdom."

3. TEACHABLENESS

Prov.9:9 "**Give instruction** to a wise man, and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man, and he will increase his learning."

Prov.15:31 "He whose **ear listens** to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise."

Prov.19:20 "**Listen to counsel and accept discipline**, that you may be wise the rest of your days."

4. DILIGENCE

Prov.8:17 "I love those who **love me**; and those who **diligently seek** me will find me."

5. UPRIGHTNESS

Prov.2:7 "He stores up sound wisdom for **the upright**; He is a shield to those who **walk in integrity**."

6. FAITH

Jas.1:5-8 "But if any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask of God**, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him **ask in faith** without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he

will receive anything from the Lord, {being} a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

b. The proper approach

1. **PRAYER** (Ask God for it)

Jas. 1:5-6 "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him **ask of God**, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him **ask in faith** without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind."

2. **SCRIPTURE** (Know the Bible)

Ps. 119:97-100 "O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. **Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies**, for they are ever mine. I have more insight than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Thy precepts."

3. **GENERAL INFORMATION** (Become informed)

Lk. 14:28-32 No one builds without counting the cost.

4. **COUNSELORS** (Draw on the experience and insights of others)

Prov. 11:14 "Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but in **abundance of counselors** there is victory."

Prov. 13:20 "He who **walks with wise men** will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."

Prov. 15:22 "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with **many counselors** they succeed."

5. **EXPERIENCE** (Learn from life itself)

Prov. 30:24-28 "Four things are small on the earth, but they are exceedingly wise: The ants are not a strong folk, but they prepare their food in the summer; the badgers are not mighty folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks; the locusts have no king, yet all of them go out in ranks; the lizard you may grasp with the hands, yet it is in kings' palaces."

Heb. 5:12-14 "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who **because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.**"