

Discerning the Kingdom of God

October 3, 2015

The word of God cannot be understood with the natural thinking process. It is spiritually discerned. Look at 1 Corinthians 2:9-23. Verse 9 tells us that the things that God has planned for his people are beyond anything that our minds can comprehend. We have nothing to compare it to. We have never seen anything like it, never heard anything to compare it to and those things have never even crossed our minds. God's spirit reveals the truth to the hearts of men. You are the only one who knows what is in your mind until you speak it. God's spirit is the only one who knows what is in the mind of God. God has sent his spirit to us so we can know what is in God's mind. That is why we don't think the same way as unbelievers. That is why we can recognize the blessings that God has given to us. Every word that is spoken in the Bible was taught to the authors by the Spirit of God, not by human wisdom. And this same Spirit helps us teach spiritual things to spiritual people. That is why someone who has God's Spirit can understand spiritual blessings. Those who have not received the Spirit of truth think these blessings are foolish. The people who are guided by the Spirit can make all kinds of judgments, but they cannot be judged by others. The Scriptures ask, "Has anyone ever known the thoughts of the Lord or given him advice?" We can understand God's thoughts because they are revealed through the spirit.

The people missed the significance of the birth of Jesus Christ because they reasoned with their own minds rather than using the Old Testament Scriptures to discern the coming of the Messiah. The wise men came from the East to worship him as they knew the sign of the star in the sky. The shepherds heeded the angels' words "You will find him dressed in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." These people didn't come to the conclusion that due to the fact that he was lying in a lowly manger and his parents were not wealthy, that he couldn't possibly be the promised Messiah. King Herod decided that he would destroy the baby before he was old enough to overthrow his kingdom. He used his own reasoning to think that he was powerful enough to snuff out the life of this newborn king because whatever he commanded happened. He didn't reckon that he was dealing with God. He went berserk when he realized that the wise men had outsmarted him and took a different route to return to their home. He hadn't reasoned that God would send a warning to the wise men not to disclose the whereabouts of baby Jesus because his intent was to harm the baby. Herod's words were deceptive; he claimed that his interest in the child was genuine and that he wanted to go and worship him. God revealed the true intent of the king to the wise men so they avoided meeting with Herod following the discovery of the young child. They worshipped Jesus and presented their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to him.

Luke 2:12. He didn't know that God would appear to Joseph in a dream and give instructions to flee into Egypt with the child and his mother. Joseph was told to stay there until the Lord would give him the word for Herod would seek to kill the young child. Joseph rose, took the child and Mary and fled into Egypt and stayed there until Herod's death. Herod killed all the baby boys 2 years old and younger in Jerusalem and in the coasts around the area because he was angry that the wise men mocked his command.

He fulfilled the prophesy in Jeremiah saying that in Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping for her children and she wouldn't be comforted because they were destroyed. Herod didn't consider that he was just a mortal man and his life was in the hands of the almighty God. His days were numbered and his power was limited.

God reveals his purpose and his plan to those who seek him. His word reveals the limits that Satan has on this earth and the schemes that he has devised to destroy the souls of men. When you read the word of God, the Spirit of God opens up the meaning of the Scriptures to those who have accepted Christ as their Savior.

In Matthew 24:23, it reads "If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ or there; don't believe it. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you ahead of time".

He warns all of us not to follow people even if they perform miracles and claim to have had visions and angels spoke to them. In Galatians 1, Paul began his Epistle with the proclamation that he was an apostle not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Christ from the dead. He continued by declaring the Jesus gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from the present evil world according to the will of God and our Father; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

He went on to say that he marveled that these people would stray from the truth that had been extended to them and the grace of Christ and receive another gospel.

There were people who perverted the purity of the simple gospel that Paul had delivered to those who would believe on Jesus Christ and receive salvation.

He declared that "if we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we preached unto you, let him be accursed". He asked the question, "Is it I that persuade men to believe or is it God? Do I seek to please men for if I yet pleased men, I should not be a servant of Christ?"

He continues by saying that men didn't teach him and he didn't receive the teaching from men, but he was taught by the revelation of Jesus Christ. It was by the grace of God and the will of God that he would come to repentance. Paul preached the same gospel as the apostles who sat at the feet of Jesus for 3 ½ years for there is only one truth.

Saul had persecuted the church relying on his own righteousness to justify his actions until the voice came from heaven saying "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" God saw fit to reveal the truth to Saul as he was on the way to broaden his reach for Christians so he

could destroy them. Jesus stopped him in his tracks. In verse 22, He said “I was unknown there by face in the churches of Judea which were in Christ: but they had heard about the fact that the one who persecuted the church in times past now preaches the faith which once he destroyed”. And they glorified God in Paul.

In Luke 17:20, some Pharisees asked Jesus when God’s kingdom would come. He answered, “God’s kingdom isn’t something you can see. There is no use saying “Look! Here it is’ or ‘Look! There it is’. God’s kingdom is here with you.” They were looking for an earthly kingdom and because they were so focused on the natural things of this world, they missed the King of Glory who was in their midst. In the book of Acts, chapter 6, the apostles were persecuted for preaching in the name of Jesus and doing wonderful miracles. The apostles responded by saying that they wouldn’t obey men, and they declared that the Jews had killed the Son of God, but Jesus rose from the dead and they would be obedient to the call of Christ to spread the gospel so others would receive the Holy Spirit which is God’s gift to all who believe. The high priest and council members were so angry at these words that they wanted to kill the apostles. Gamaliel, a Pharisee and highly respected teacher, warned the council to be careful what they did to these men. Other groups had risen and followed a leader, but when the leader died, the groups dispersed. He advised them to stay away from these men and leave them alone. If what they were planning was something of their own doings, it would fail. But if God was behind it, they wouldn’t be able to stop it anyway, unless they wanted to fight God.

God’s work and his plan will be accomplished. Satan tried to destroy it from the beginning of time, but he doesn’t have the capacity to defeat the God of Glory.

There will come a judgment day when every eye shall behold him and every tongue will confess that He is the LORD. In Luke 21:27 says that the Son of Man will be seen, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. Revelation 1:5 says that Jesus was the first to conquer death and he is the ruler of all earthly kings. Christ loves us and by his blood he sets us free from our sins. He lets us rule as kings and serve God his Father as priests. To him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen. Look! He is coming with the clouds. Everyone will see him even the ones who pierced him. All people on earth will weep because of him. Yes, it will happen! Amen. The Lord God says, “I am alpha and Omega the one who is and was and is to come. I am God All Powerful!

God is a Spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

See John 4:24.