

BUILDING WITH GOD'S WISDOM

1 Corinthians 1:18-20 NIV

[18] For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. [19] For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." [20] Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

The above passage teaches us:

- Our worldly wisdom can become a stumbling block to us, preventing us from accepting God's wisdom. God's wisdom may fly against our worldly logic or corporate practices.
- In the end, He will prove us foolish.

Discussion Questions

1. Let's discuss some of the common practices/trends in your industry or line of work that are contrary to biblical wisdom.
2. Do you feel pressured to conform to trends and practices that are contrary to the Bible?
 - Do you feel pressured by your superior or peers?
 - Do you fear that if you don't adopt these practices, you may lose out to competitors who adopt them?
 - Are you afraid of being laughed at, or of standing out like a sore thumb, or appearing "holier than thou"?
3. Is anything stopping you from seeking advice and godly wisdom?
 - Has your leadership position at work, and being used to be the one to provide solutions to all kinds of problems at your workplace, prevented you from seeking advice and godly wisdom in church? What do you think you should do about that?
 - Have you felt like other disciples in your group (or perhaps the church leadership as well) will not understand your work/business situation even if you tell them? What do you think is the solution to that?
4. Do you think CPLS can help you overcome the problems discussed in (3)? How do you think the church leadership can work closer with us to help us spiritually?

Some Practical Suggestions:

- For your QT tomorrow, think through the trends and practices in your industry that are contrary to the bible, and for God to give you the strength to adopt His wisdom instead of the world's.
- CPLS is a platform to help foster stronger relationships and communication between the church leadership and us. This will help them to better provide us with the spiritual wisdom we need, and also enable us to better use our talents to serve the God's kingdom. Think about how future editions of CPLS can help us to better achieve these goals too. We'll appreciate your feedback on how CPLS can grow.

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BUILDING WITH GOD'S PURPOSE

Romans 12:6-8 NIV

[6] We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; [7] if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; [8] if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

The above passage teaches us:

- Besides the “basic” purpose that all disciples have (love God, reach out to the lost, etc.), God has given us specific gifts to meet the needs in His Kingdom and to serve/impact His people in the world too.
- It gives various examples, that “if your gift is this, then do this”; and “if your gift is that, then do that”. The passage talks about putting our gifts into action, to serve God’s purpose.

Discussion Questions

1. Who do you think have benefited more from your God-given gifts? Your company, or God and His kingdom? Do you think you have been building with God’s purpose?
2. Have you thought about the purpose that God has given you? Have you discovered what it is or talked to people about it? Or have you even avoided thinking about the purpose that God has entrusted you with?
3. Is anything stopping you from serving God’s purpose?
 - Some usual excuses:
 - I’m too busy... It is natural that those who are blessed with more usually have heavier responsibilities in the world too. But God has also given us the ability to be more efficient and effective, to achieve more with lesser time. There are great examples of disciples with heavy responsibilities at work that have served well in church too.
 - Let someone else better do it... But this is fake humility.
 - It is the job of the staff... But we’re not supposed to have a clergy/laity system
 - Let’s talk about the “Sin obstacles”. Are you hindered by selfishness? Or laziness? Or apathy? Or a lack of faith? Or discouragement?
4. Have you previously served God’s purpose in greater ways, but you are not doing so anymore?
 - What has changed?
 - Do you still believe that God wants to use you for His purpose?
 - How do you think we can help you to serve God’s purpose again?

Some Practical Suggestions:

- For your QT tomorrow, reflect on the purpose that God has given you.
- Over lunch, find someone whom you can discuss the reasons why you’ve not been serving God’s purpose.

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BUILDING WITH GOD'S GIVEN TALENTS

1 Peter 4:10 NIV

[10] Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

The above passage teaches us:

- "... whatever gift you have received...". So we need to find out what gifts we have received.
- "... should use... to serve others...". The word "should" is used here in the bible. It does not sound like an option.

Discussion Questions

1. What special skills do you think God has given you? Do you recognize your talents?
 - There's no need to be "humble" now, let's talk about the talent that God has given you. It is from Him and not yours, so let's boast about God's generosity to you.
 - "I don't think I have many talents. I'm only here because I was asked to come"... You're asked to attend CPLS to help you discover the talents God has given you, and learn how to use them for Him.
 - "I'm only here because my spouse is here"... You may have come because of your spouse, but nonetheless, you have God given talents. So what are they?
2. What if your skills and talents are not in line with the interests you have? What if what you want to do is not what you're talented in?
 - If you love to sing but happen to be tone deaf, you don't need to aspire to be a song leader, but you should keep on singing to God in your QTs. Don't give up on something because you're not talented in that area. You just need to change your aspirations in that area, not give up your interest in it.
 - But what if you have talent in an area where you're not passionate about? Then learn how you can find passion in it. Or discover how to use that talent in a way that you'll enjoy. Nothing should stop us from being creative in the use of our talents, so that we can find a way to enjoy serving God.
3. How do you think your God-given talents can be used to glorify God? Can you think of a ministry or some individuals that can benefit from your talents? Let's discuss this.
4. "I am willing to use God's given talents to serve Him, but I don't know how I can use my talents effectively in church". What should I do?

This is what CPLS is about. It is to open up more communications/discussions between the leadership and us, so that we can work together with greater synergy.

Some Practical Suggestions:

- Find other disciples with similar talents and discuss ideas on how you can do something together.
- Get with your staff to discuss new roles, or the creation of new niche ministries where your talents can be used to serve God.

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BUILDING WITH GOD'S GIVEN WEALTH

Matthew 19:23-24 NIV

[23] Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. [24] Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

The above passage teaches us:

- It is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Discussion Questions

1. God is obviously not against anyone getting rich. But there are some things about being rich that tempt us, or distract us from God. What are they? Are you struggling with any of them?
 - The desire to gain more and more.
 - The material things that our wealth enables us to buy, that we may start leaning on to find contentment or joy.
 - The complacency that may arise from having more than sufficient.
 - The pride that may grow from being able to purchase most of the material things we want, and having more than others.
2. Do you attribute your riches to your intelligence and hard work?
 - Or do you regard them as gifts from God?
 - How grateful are you for what you have? How much do you attribute it to God and thank Him for it?
3. God expects more from those who have been given much
 - Do you regard your wealth as YOURS?
 - Or do you regard yourself as a steward of His wealth, entrusted to use the wealth to serve God and His people? How does your action reflect that?
 - What do you think are some practical ways you can use your wealth to serve God?
4. What are some ways you can use your wealth to help build God's kingdom and serve His people?
 - Are you sacrificial in your contributions?
 - Do you use your wealth to show hospitality, and use it to win people for God?
 - Is there a new project/program you can help to start in church and can support financially?
 - Is there a disciple/family in need that you can silently help on a long-term basis?
 - Is there a philanthropic project that you can initiate, or an existing one that you can support on a long-term basis?

Some Practical Suggestions:

- Have a frank discussion with your spouse about how you can use your wealth to better build God's kingdom and serve His people.
- Discuss with your group and or church leadership about projects/programs that you are interested in supporting financially.

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