

## Building by the Book Pt. 4: "The Bible is Necessary"

**1 Corinthians 2:6 ESV** Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. **7** But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. **8** None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. **9** But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"— **10** these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. **11** For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. **12** Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. **13** And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

- I. John chapter 6 is an amazing chapter. Indeed, it is one of my favorites in all of the Gospels.
  - A. John 6 begins with Jesus journeying with his disciples to the southern shore of the Sea of Galilee, opposite the city of Capernaum.
    1. A large crowd had begun following him because of the miraculous healings that he was performing.
    2. Soon a crowd numbering 5,000 men, as well as an unknown number of women and children, had joined with Jesus and the disciples atop a mountain.
    3. Jesus, moved with compassion, asked Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?"
      - a) Philip was incredulous! He told Jesus that it would take the modern day equivalent of \$14,500 to feed them all. They simply did not have that kind of cash on hand!
      - b) Andrew, Peter's brother, did a little better. He found a kid with five loaves of bread and a couple fish in his Spongebob lunchbox. "But what are they for so many?", he asked.
  - B. Well none of those guys understood what Jesus can do when you place what you have in his hands! The Bible says that Christ took the bread and and fish, blessed it and broke it, and began to distribute it to the assembled masses, until everyone of them had eaten their fill, with 12 baskets of leftovers to boot!
    1. The people were amazed! They were convinced that Jesus was the prophet that Moses had prophesied would come into the world.
    2. But Jesus, sensing that in their enthusiasm, they would come and try to make him their king by force, withdrew to the mountain all by himself.
      - a) That night, at Jesus direction, the disciples got into a boat to cross over to Capernaum. When they set sail however, the winds were against them and the seas were rough.

- b) But Jesus, ready to rejoin them, simply walks across the waves which are so troubling to them, and gets into the boat, sailing with them to their destination.
- C. This is where the story really gets interesting! The next morning the crowd from the other side notices that, even though Jesus hadn't gone with the disciples, the one boat that had been on the shore was now gone and there was no sign of Jesus! So everyone packed up in other boats and headed over to Capernaum to find Jesus.
1. When they find him there, they try to play it coy, saying to Jesus, "So Rabbi, when did you get into town?"
  2. But Jesus wasn't fooled! **John 6:26b ESV** "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."
- D. Jesus then begins to show them that are chasing the wrong food; he says it is he who is the bread of life that satisfies the hunger of the world. When they balk at his words, he ups the ante; telling them, **John 6:53b ESV** "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink his blood**, you have no life in you. **54** Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. **55** For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. **56** Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. **57** As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. **58** This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. **Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.**"
1. Yet sadly, the people on the beach that morning heard only with physical ears. This saying of Christ's was too much for many of his disciples.
  2. Jesus, however, never apologized for this hard saying, but rather pressed the power of the truth, telling them, **John 6:63b ESV** "The words that I have spoken to you are **spirit and life.**"
  3. All the people could see was something bloody and macabre, but when Christ told them to consume him, to devour him, to take him **fully** inside themselves, he was showing the only way for them to reconnect to the eternal realm of the Father and the only way to know, experience and truly enjoy life.
- E. But Christ had drawn a line in the sand that many in that crowd of over 5,000 people could not cross, and the scriptures tell us that many of them stopped following him after that day.
1. Jesus, after watching the great crowd leave, turns to the original 12 disciples and says to them, "Do you want to go also?"
  2. But Peter, speaking for the rest, recognizes something that we all must recognize in order to be a follower of Christ; that we are doomed without him and his words, no matter how uncomfortable or hard for us to grasp they are at times.
  3. **John 6:68b ESV** "Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life, 69** and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

4. By the Spirit of the Lord, Peter recognized that though the Word of the Lord was often difficult, Christ's words were positively indispensable to those who desire real life.
- II. For the past three weeks, we have been studying the attributes of scripture. We began with the sufficiency of Scripture, the fact that the Bible is enough, and that we need no further revelation to know God. Pastor David then talked to us about the Clarity of scripture, how the Bible can be understood by anyone who really wants to know what its central message is, even without the aid of academic degrees or the counsel of popes or other religious professionals. Last week, Eric talked about the Authority of Scripture, how that what scripture says is absolute, and must be the final word for all true believers, to which all other voices submit. Today we will turn our attention to the fourth and final attribute of the Word of God: its necessity.
- A. The doctrine of the necessity of scripture, simply put, teaches that we cannot know God, his will, or the way of salvation apart from the truth found in the written Word of God.
  - B. In the book upon which we have based this series, Kevin DeYoung's, "Taking God at His Word", the author points out how the Bible is different from every other book in the world because of three important factors:
    1. It reveals a different kind of wisdom.
    2. It comes from a different source.
    3. It tells of a different love.
  - C. It reveals a different Wisdom.
    1. In 1 Corinthians 1 and 2, the Apostle Paul is diligent to differentiate the Gospel from the type of so-called "wisdom" that was dispensed by the Greek philosophers of his day.
      - a) First, he pointed out that though the Greeks celebrated great oratorical skill, powerful rhetoric and sophisticated speech, you would not find such things in the proclamation of the cross.
      - b) **1 Corinthians 1:18 ESV** For *the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing*, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
      - c) Next, he said that his sermons were not engineered to impress or to grow his reputation.
      - d) **1 Corinthians 2:1 ESV** And I, when I came to you, brothers, *did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. 2* For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. **3** *And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom*, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, **5** so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.
      - e) Lastly, he says that the message of the gospel isn't built on the "cream of the crop", or the elite of society; that this new type of wisdom is bestowed freely by God on the uneducated, the weak, and the common.
      - f) **1 Corinthians 1:26 ESV** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose what is foolish in the

world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **28** God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, **29** so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. **30** And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, **31** so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

2. When Paul described the wisdom represented by the Gospel in our text today (1 Cor. 2:6-13), do you remember how he did it? He said it was...
    - a) A wisdom for the spiritually mature, meaning it has nothing to do with the wisdom this world pursues.
    - b) He said that it is not a wisdom of this age, meaning this earthly realm or passing moment, but rather it is an eternal and is heavenly in nature.
    - c) Similarly, it is not a wisdom found in the rulers of this age. It is far superior to any scheme that a politician, philosopher or warlord could come up with.
    - d) God's wisdom is unique and is therefore not immediately obvious to all or universally appreciated by all.
  3. Kevin DeYoung points out in his book that it is really easy for us to get frustrated when people don't see the truth that we have discovered in the Bible. We can feel this in the face of the humanistic and atheistic arguments of the day. We can feel it in the face of false religions like Mormonism or Islam.
    - a) I remember asking a formerly Mormon friend who had become a Christian how he could believe something as easily disprovable as what the Latter Day Saints teach.
      - (1) "If you study Mormon doctrine, you will quickly find that it collapses under any rational examination when tested by even the most basic logic, archaeology, or anthropology", I said.
      - (2) But my friend reminded me that Mormonism is not primarily a rational deception, but a spiritual one.
    - b) Because of this, should we be frustrated or surprised when people don't immediately embrace the truth of our gospel? Not at all! Paul says in 1 Corinthians that God's wisdom is a secret and hidden wisdom.
    - c) This doesn't mean that we can't know it, or that we must somehow intellectually grasp (or in some way qualify to attain) God's knowledge, it simply means that God must speak to us if we are to be truly wise.
    - d) In other words, no one has simply **attained** God's wisdom; on the contrary, it must be divinely **revealed** to them by the Holy Spirit through the word.
  4. The world can only give you what appears to be new, and what is novel. But God alone can give you what you need - a wisdom that is beyond you, outside of you, that will never fail you - these are the things that God has revealed to us through the Spirit, according to 1 Corinthians 2:10.
- D. God's Word comes from a different source,

1. There are many ways that we look for wisdom about life and the way of the world today. Some people look to academia, others to religion and spirituality, still others politics and business.
  2. But the testimony of Scripture is that only God can tell us about God, and if He is truly the source of all life, only he can tell us how life is meant to be.
    - a) **1 Corinthians 2:11 ESV** For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. **12** Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.
    - b) DeYoung says, "The only being knowledgeable enough, wise enough, and skillful enough to reveal God to you is God Himself."
  3. Some may argue that when Paul speaks here of the necessity of the Spirit of God to know the mind of God that he is speaking of some sort of inner, still, small voice from the Holy Spirit as opposed to the scriptures.
    - a) While it is true that all of us need the Holy Spirit to illuminate and interpret the scriptures in order for us to understand them completely, the context of 1 Corinthians 2 is clearly the way the Spirit helps us to understand the unique and objective teaching given by the Apostles to the church.
    - b) It was that apostolic teaching that became the New Testament. That new Testament was based entirely in the promises and predictions of the Old Testament.
      - (1) The point being that when God speaks to you, he will always base what he says in the written word of God.
      - (2) Whenever someone feels that a word has been given to them, yet they cannot verify it's consistency with the written word of God, God has not spoken.
  4. Spirituality is not something generated by navel-gazing gurus sitting atop mountains or mystical, prophetically gifted people inside the church. True spirituality is not something that comes from us at all! It comes from outside of us, from the Holy Spirit.
    - a) It is the Holy Spirit who helps us understand the things of God.
    - b) And to hear God's spirit, we do not need to find some allegedly gifted person, or travel to some nationally recognized revival, we simply need to go to the place where he has entrusted people to write down what he has breathed out.
    - c) This is the essence of the doctrine of the necessity of Scripture: We need the revelation of God to know God, and the only sure, final perfect revelation of God is found in scripture.
- E. Perhaps you would think that understanding the type of wisdom found in scripture, and its divine origin is enough to understand how necessary the Bible is. But there is one thing more... God's Word displays a different love.
1. The purpose behind God's word and the thing that makes it most necessary, is that it is the one place where we might discover God's mercy and be saved. This is what makes the Bible distinct from every other book.

- a) DeYoung says “Our God speaks, and he speaks not simply to be heard and not merely to pass along information. He speaks so that we can begin to know the unknowable and fathom the unfathomable.”
  - b) **1 Corinthians 2:9 ESV** But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— **10** these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.
2. It is only through the revelation of God’s love demonstrated on the cross that can we ever become spiritual.
- a) Spirituality does not consist in constantly meditating, using extra-spiritual language, being an especially demonstrative worshipper, etc. These things in and of themselves profit nothing!
  - b) But the Bible says that the spiritual person understands spiritual truths. **1 Corinthians 2:13 ESV** And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.
3. And what are the “spiritual truths” that only spiritual people can understand? Paul says it has to do with the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory.
- a) **1 Corinthians 2:7** But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. **8** None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
  - b) The spiritual person is not the one who speaks in tongues, or sees angels, or fights demons, or who understands all mysteries. The truly spiritual person cherishes the cross, for in so doing, they understand the love of God.
  - c) **Jeremiah 9:24 ESV** “but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices **steadfast love, justice, and righteousness** in the earth.
  - d) It was steadfast love that drove Jesus to the cross, justice that nailed him there, and righteousness that flowed out from its crimson streams forevermore.
- III. Is the Bible necessary? Jesus, after fasting in the wilderness for 40 days was hungry. The serpent came and offered him a shortcut. “Command these stones to become bread” he said. Jesus answered him from the book of Deuteronomy.
- A. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.
  - B. There are many things that will clamor for your attention, promising to satisfy you hunger, but inly the Word of God delivers.
  - C. Are you living by every Word the comes from the mouth of God?