

The Lord Gave You Godly Wisdom!

There were two brothers. The one spent his money as soon as he got it. He was always scrambling to get by. The other lived a modest lifestyle and carefully invested his money. A few decades later, the second brother retired comfortably while the first brother still struggled and complained that life was unfair. That's an obvious example of foolish and wise spending. You can see the effects and add up the numbers. Spiritual, or godly, wisdom, however, can not be measured or analyzed. And yet it's the most important wisdom we need. This morning we rejoice to hear that the Lord gave you godly wisdom.

Chapter 6 is a huge pivot point in the gospel of John. Before this, Jesus was pretty popular. He performed miracles and huge crowds gathered. Jesus miraculously fed a crowd of over 5000 people with just two fish and five small loaves of bread. The people were thrilled. They even wanted to make him their king. When they found Jesus the next day, they wanted more free food. The people were starting to look to Jesus as an earthly Savior, someone who would only help them with life on this earth. Jesus needed to make things clear for them. Here in John 6, he laid it on the line for the people. This dialogue in John 6 can get a bit confusing. I'll try to paraphrase what Jesus said to the crowd, "Food for your belly is important, but it's much more important to feed your soul with the good news of salvation. I did not come to be an earthly king. I came to be your spiritual Savior. You need to accept the fact that I am true God in the flesh who came down from heaven."

The Jews were so focused on earthly things that they quickly dismissed any talk about spiritual matters. They did not like what Jesus said so they grumbled. When Jesus explained that he "**came down from heaven**," and therefore was God in the flesh, they argued that they knew Jesus' father and mother (although Joseph was really his step-father). To their way of looking at things, since they knew Jesus' parents, he was just a normal human being. The Jews were only using human logic. Jesus had flesh and blood. He ate and slept and walked and talked like any other human, so they argued that he was ONLY human. It did not make sense to them that he was also completely, 100% God. The many miracles Jesus performed, especially feeding a crowd of over 5000, should have led them to realize that there was something special about him. They should

have listened to him. Instead, they rejected him. They were not spiritually wise.

The truths of God's kingdom, of God in the flesh, of God dying on a cross as our substitute are beyond human logic. Should we really expect that more mortals like you and me who struggle through each day and are confused about so many things be able to understand everything about the high and holy God? That's why human logic will not convert people. Jesus even explained (:44), "**No one can come to me [believe in me] unless the Father who sent me draws them.**" Faith (trust) in Jesus as true God and true man at the same time in order to live, die and rise as our Savior substitute is something that God gives people. He gently leads them, he draws them, to faith.

In his younger years, renowned author, C. S. Lewis, who is famous for writing *The Chronicles of Narnia*, was an avowed atheist. When he was a young boy, his mother died. Her death wounded him so much that it took him down the path of renouncing God. Left to himself, he would have continued in that path throughout his life. But he was not left to himself. Little by little, the Lord rattled his presumptions and exposed him to the reality of his existence. Little by little, the Lord gave him little nuggets of the good news of who Jesus Christ really is and what he came to do. One key encounter involved a long talk with his friend J. R. Tolkien, the famous author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Eventually, the gospel took root in Lewis' heart and he became a believer. Later in life, he wrote about his conversion. He said that he was "the most reluctant convert." He made it clear that he could not take the credit for coming to faith in Jesus. On the contrary, he trusted in Jesus as Savior only because the Lord had drawn him through the power of the gospel.

The story of C. S. Lewis is really your story. Certainly, the details are different, but the Lord is the one who worked things out in your life so that you were exposed to the good news of salvation and were given faith. God does not force feed salvation to us as if he was shoving it down our throats. In our first reading today from Proverbs, this godly wisdom is described as a lady who prepares a beautiful banquet for us and invites us to come and eat. God does the wooing and the winning. He is gentle and loving. He does not argue and yell at you. He won you with his love.

Do we sometimes take our faith for granted? When was the last time you thanked God for the people and circumstances that the Lord used to bring

your to faith? Faith literally makes an eternity of difference in your lives. If the Lord did not intervene in our lives, we would be just as lost and clueless as those Jews in John 6. In our second reading, the Apostle Paul describes God's wisdom as a "**mystery.**" He explained that no human mind could figure out the plan of salvation on its own. Unless the Holy Spirit works in us, we won't trust the plan of salvation. Even though it does not make sense to human logic, you know, you know, you trust, that Jesus is the God-man who lived, died and rose for you. A miracle took place inside of your heart. How blessed you are! The Lord gave you godly wisdom, which is nothing but faith, simple trust in the heart that Jesus is your Savior.

The Jews rejected Jesus when he said that he was true God in the flesh. That, however, is the heart and core of salvation. Jesus needed to be fully human so that he could take our place and be our substitute as he lived a perfect life and died an innocent death, a death that we deserved. Jesus also needed to be fully God so that he could be perfect and so that he could connect with every human being of all time. If Jesus was just a man, then his perfect life is only an example and his death on the cross is nothing but a terrible miscarriage of justice. But since Jesus is also true God, his death takes away the sin of the world, including yours, including mine. Jesus said that he would give his flesh for the live of the world. Your sins have already been forgiven. You have already been saved. In the creeds that we recite in our services, we keep reminding ourselves of the important truth that Jesus is true God in the flesh, our Savior.

Having Godly wisdom is like you've been given a spiritual set of glasses. When you look at the world with human eyes, human wisdom, you see things as the world sees them. But when you look at the world through the eyeglasses of faith, you see things differently. You have a whole different view of yourself and of the world around you. Every thing that you experience, every encounter you have, is an opportunity to look at things from an earthly point of view or a spiritual point of view. For example, when things do not go the way I want, I get upset. If I look through the eyeglasses of faith, though, I remember that the Lord is in loving control of all things for good.

- Earthly wisdom says that any suffering or discomfort in life is bad and the result of cruel fate. Godly wisdom sees that all the troubles in life are under God's control. God uses them as reminders that we and the world are sinful. That leads us to hang on to Jesus as our Savior even tighter and so, in the end, the so-called bad things, are a good thing.

- Earthly wisdom says that our lives are our own and we can do whatever we want and no one can tell us otherwise. Work, earn money, eat, drink and try to be merry! Godly wisdom sees that we owe our very existence to God as humans and as believers. God sacrificed his Son's life for us. So, whether we eat, drink or whatever we do, we do it all the glory of God to give him praise and thanks, and he smiles at our efforts.
- Earthly wisdom says that you are not just a name connected to a social security number, just a worker at some job, just a student, just a citizen who pays taxes, just widow, just a widower, just a loner, just a loser, just a nobody. Godly wisdom sees that you are a child of God, adopted by him in baptism and an heir of eternal life in heaven.
- Earthly wisdom says that death is the end. You are just like a candle getting blown out after 7 or 8 decades. We simply cease to exist. Godly wisdom sees that death is just a doorway to a whole new world where you will enjoy peace and happiness forever. You are saint bound for glory.
- Earthly wisdom leads to confusion and frustration, discouragement, depression, and despair. Godly wisdom fills each day with meaning and purpose as you shine the light of God's love with your sympathetic thoughts, kind words, and helpful actions.

My problem, and I bet yours too, is that I keep looking at the world and my life with human eyes. I see things from the eyes of the world. Then I panic, worry, stress, and stumble into sin. But here's the good news. I know you do to. Remember that the Father lovingly draws you. Through and Word and Sacrament, the Lord forgives your sins, strengthens your faith and draws you closer to him. He loves you and won't let go.

This crowd in John 6 was only looking at life with earthly wisdom. Jesus was standing right in front of them, pleading with them to trust in him and be saved eternally. Sadly, they only cared about getting another free meal. By God's grace, you see things from God's perspective. You see Jesus as true God in the flesh. You see that life in this world is just a waiting room until you get to your real home of heaven. Rejoice and give thanks every day! The Lord gave you godly wisdom and you are saved. Amen.