

21.11.2020 EDUCATION AND REDEMPTION

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16

The great theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ and His work of redemption for mankind. His Person and work are premised, prophesied and pictured in types and symbols in the Old Testament. The gospels reveal His coming to earth, the truth and beauty of His life. The epistles explain to us the meaning of His death and resurrection. The certainty of His return and victory over Satan is foretold in the book of Revelation.

The author of the Bible is Jesus Christ; His Spirit inspired men of God to write down the story of our creation, our rebellion and the work of the Godhead in redemption. This week's study is how God Himself teaches us of His Redemption.

Every book of the Bible leads us to Jesus Christ and calls us to the obedience of faith. We are called to depend on the Spirit of Christ to give us the strength and power to set our hearts on obeying all the words of this Book – which are ultimately, the words of Christ.

In the Image of God

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Genesis 1:26, 27

The Bible tells why we need redemption. Adam and Eve were created holy, happy and healthy beings living in a perfect relationship with their Creator.

One day however, they decided to believe the lies of Satan and in doing so became sinners with a sinful nature. This sinful nature is now passed on to all their descendants.

This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God... And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. Genesis 5:1, 3

The destiny of sinners is eternal death. But thanks be to God, before Time began, the Godhead had a plan in place to restore mankind to the image of God. This was to be accomplished by Christ Jesus who would redeem mankind and then restore God's righteousness to all who would accept the free gift of redemption. Every person who accepts Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord would experience salvation – freedom from the penalty, power and presence of sin.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:11-13

The Bible (God's Word) and the Holy Spirit are the means by which mankind is taught of God's salvation. The Bible is the word of Christ (God speaks to us through His Son – Hebrews 1:1-3) and the Holy Spirit teaches us all things about Christ and His great salvation – John 14:26).

Jesus as Teacher

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. Isaiah 11:1-3

“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth... I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand. I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people as a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house.” Isaiah 42:1-3, 6-7

In the above 2 passages we learn of Jesus the Teacher. As the Son of Man, He refused to do anything out of Himself. He depended on the Spirit for wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge and godly fear.

He was a gentle teacher...He did not raise His voice to those He taught, He was patient; He recognised those who were bruised by the circumstances of life in a sinful world and did not break them.

By His teaching, He revealed to men the light of the gospel; He Himself was the Light that illuminates everyone who comes into the world. He releases men and women from the prison of sin.

Moses and the Prophets

The Jews called the Old Testament ‘the Law and the Prophets and the Writings’ – the ‘Law’ referring to the books written by Moses and ‘the Prophets’ referring to the books of the prophets. The ‘Writings’ referred to the books called wisdom literature, history and psalms. Jesus made it clear that the Law and the Prophets testified of Him and the redemption He would bring to mankind. Peter made it clear that the entire Old Testament testified of Christ and His salvation. Paul, writing to Timothy, made the same claim.

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24:27

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. 1 Peter 1:10-12

But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Wise Men and Women

“As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.” 1 Chronicles 28:9

And Solomon said to God: “You have shown great mercy to David my father, and have made me king in his place... Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?”

Then God said to Solomon: “Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honour or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king— wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honour...” 2 Chronicles 1:7, 10-12

And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five. Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish. And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon. 1 Kings 4:29-34

In the story of David's advice to his son Solomon and Solomon's seeking wisdom from God, we find how we too may gain wisdom. Wisdom is the gift of God given to us in Christ Jesus; it is accompanied by understanding. Solomon advises us to *'Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5, 6*

If we seek such wisdom we shall apply the principles found in God's Word to our modern life. For example, the instruction given to the Jewish kings (Deuteronomy 17:14-20) are still relevant to those who hold positions of power or leadership. While they may not own horses, the principles are still valid for leaders today. Leaders must not follow the ways of the world (Egypt), he must be guided by the law of the Lord, *'that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left'.*

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Proverbs 9:10

Education in the Early Church

While Jesus was on earth, He was the teacher sent by God. After He ascended to His Father, as promised, He sent the Holy Spirit to His people. The promise to the early church holds true for us today.

"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." Jn. 14:25, 26

The Holy Spirit reveals to us that Christ Himself is our wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30). We are called to grow in grace in the knowledge of Christ our Saviour. As we receive illumination and revelation from the Holy Spirit, we are told that we will be able to understand the deep things of God, the mysteries now revealed since the first coming of Christ. Indeed, we will be witnesses to the universe of the manifold wisdom of God.

We speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God [c]ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God... Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 1 Corinthians 2:6-12

To me (Paul), who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Ephesians 1:8-12

Conclusion:

If we have whole-heartedly chosen Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, then we have made a commitment to serve our Saviour all of the time, in every aspect of life – spiritual, vocational, mental, social and physical.

This requires heavenly wisdom – the wisdom from above. Christ Himself is our wisdom, made known to us through the in-dwelling Spirit of God. He will teach us of Christ’s redemption which guarantees our salvation from the penalty, the power and finally, the presence of sin.

As we experience the blessings of redemption, we in turn, will share the good news of redemption to our fellow men.

For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

Of God you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.” 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31
