

4. THE APOSTLES SOLVE A CHURCH DISPUTE - ACTS 6

In Acts chapter 6 we see the church growing, and one of the programs they had was a food pantry to help out the widows. Now a problem arose when some of the people felt the Hellenists Jewish widows were being treated unfairly, not like the Jewish ones were. The Hellenists Jews were those Jews who lived outside Israel who spoke the Grecian language and lived like the Greeks. The Jews living in Israel looked down upon them, and we need to remember, the apostles were part of those from Israel. Now was there a real problem or not? We don't know, but the issue is they felt like they were being cheated. It is out of this that there could have been a huge church division!

And in Acts 6:2-8 we see what took place and this is a remarkable move and a very wise one! They have the Hellenist Jews pick out seven godly men to oversee this ministry, and they pick seven Hellenist Jews to do the work. We see the problem solved, the critics silenced, and the church grow!

5. JAMES SETTLES THE GENTILE ISSUE IN THE CHURCH - ACTS 15

The Judaizers would come into an area after Paul preached salvation by grace, and they would say that Paul was right, but you also had to be a Jew. You had to keep the Law of Moses. There arose some dispute over this issue, and thus, the case was presented to the church in Jerusalem, of which James was the head. James listened to what Peter, Paul, and Barnabas had to say, and then he gave his recommendation regarding this issue, of whether gentiles need to keep the Law of Moses or not.

James says to the gentiles that they don't have to keep the Law of Moses as part of the basis of their salvation because the Jew's couldn't even keep it. They sent a letter to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas and others, to be read before all. And in verse 30 of Acts chapter 15 we see what transpired.

We read, "**So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement.**" Acts 15:30-31.

Notice, the problem was solved, and these people rejoiced over the words that were spoken by James, as God gave him a word of wisdom to speak forth in a very difficult situation.

6. PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL - ACTS 23

Paul caused a riot in Jerusalem, as the people grabbed him, thinking he was teaching people to negate the words of Moses. They felt that he was telling people to turn against the Jews, and he was accused of bringing gentiles into the Temple. Before they could harm him, the Roman soldiers rescued him. As they were bringing him up to the Fortress of Antonio, on the Temple Mount, Paul asks to speak one more time to the people.

In Acts 22:30-23:1-10 we see what took place. You see, as Paul speaks of Jesus and all that He has done, the people listened, until he said that God told him to forget about going to the Jews because they rejected what He had for them, and instead, to present it to the Gentiles. At this point, when Paul said, "**gentiles,**" they went ballistic. Paul was hauled into the barracks by the soldiers before they killed him.

As you read what took place, you will see that God gave Paul a word of wisdom in this situation. As I said before, the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, (that is why they are sad-u-see)! But the Pharisees, who were very conservative, did. So Paul says he is a Pharisee who had a hope in the resurrection of the dead. Now the Pharisees saw nothing wrong with that, but the Sadducees did. So a conflict broke out between these two religious groups. Paul is removed from the situation by the Roman commander, leaving these religious leaders fighting amongst themselves, as if they were on trial!

As we have seen, the word of wisdom is a supernatural power to speak with divine insight, whether in solving difficult problems, defending the faith, resolving conflicts, giving practical advice, or pleading one's case before hostile authorities. It is a gift that is given during certain situations, not something we have all the time. It is given by the Holy Spirit as He sees fit. **THE WORD OF WISDOM!**

What the Bible says about . . . Gifts of the Spirit Part 2

1. WORD OF WISDOM

Before we look at this spiritual gift we need to understand what wisdom is all about. Solomon tells us in Proverbs 4:7, "**Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.**"

Now, what is the difference between wisdom and knowledge or is there a difference? First of all knowledge is the gathering together, the accumulation of facts and information.

Wisdom, on the other hand, is the proper application of that knowledge. There are a lot of very intelligent people who are very unwise. They have all the information and they don't apply it correctly to their lives. It is so important for the days we are living in, to correctly apply the correct information or knowledge to our lives—**WISDOM!**

First of all we need to understand that this is not just natural or even godly wisdom. The Word of Wisdom is a supernatural gift that the Holy Spirit gives us at various times in our life to help us answer a question, solve a problem, defuse a crisis, and-so-on. Many times as this gift is exercised we see the critics silenced, problems resolved, and people amazed at what was said. One writer put it like this, "The Word of Wisdom supernaturally discloses the mind, purpose, and the way of God as applied to a specific situation." (The Holy Spirit, theholyspirit.com).



Another writer put it like this, “The gift of the word of wisdom is the application of knowledge that God gives you (I Corinthians 2:6-7). This type of wisdom is a gift which cannot be gained through study or experience and should by no means try to replace them. The gift of the word of wisdom is seeing life from God’s perspective. . . . The gift of the word of wisdom is also the revealing of prophetic future; it is speaking hidden truths of what is not known. It is a supernatural perspective to ascertain the divine means for accomplishing God’s will in a given situation, and is a divinely given power to appropriate spiritual intuition in problem solving.

Furthermore, this gift involves having a sense of divine direction, being led by the Holy Spirit to act appropriately in a given set of circumstances, and rightly applying knowledge. The gift of wisdom is the wisdom of God. It is the supernatural impartation of facts; it is not natural. You can’t earn it. . . . The gift of the word of wisdom works interactively with the other two revelation gifts: knowledge and discernment.” (The Word of Wisdom, David Holt Boshart, Jr.).

Now this is one of those gifts that most, if not all of us, wish we had all the time. We wish that no matter what situation we are in, this gift is in Operation. But that is not the case. You also need to understand that this is not a gift that you can turn on and off like a light switch whenever you want to. The Scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit gives it to us in certain situations, as He wills. In saying that, we are going to look at several examples of this gift being exercised in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

WORD OF WISDOM SEEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. SOLOMON - I KINGS 3

God gave to Solomon Godly wisdom, and yet, we also see Solomon using the word of wisdom, given to him by the Holy Spirit, to settle a very difficult problem that was brought before him. In I Kings 3:25-28 we see that Solomon, as God gave him this gift of wisdom, was able to discern who the living baby belonged to and who the dead baby belonged to. That was the word of wisdom that God gave to Solomon and we see that it resolved the problem and everyone was amazed at what Solomon said.

2. JOSEPH - GENESIS 41

In Genesis 41:33-40 we see Joseph not only interpret the dream that Pharaoh had, but he also came up with a plan to save the people from the coming famine. And as Pharaoh saw how Joseph applied the knowledge he had received wisely, he made him Prime Minister over Egypt. Joseph exercised the word of wisdom that resolved a problem and the people were amazed!

WORD OF WISDOM SEEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. JESUS QUESTIONED ABOUT TRIBUTE MONEY - LUKE 20

The religious leaders always tried to catch Jesus by the words He said, and in Luke chapter 20 it was no different. The question they presented before Jesus was simple. It was a pretty straight forward question, “**Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?**” Luke 20:22.

But there was no way He could answer it and be correct. This was a no win question to answer. You see, if Jesus said “Yes”, that it was lawful, then the Jews in the crowd would walk away, for they hated Rome and looked for any way to separate themselves from Roman authority. If He said “No”, that they should not pay taxes to Caesar, then the Jewish religious leaders would alert the Roman authorities, telling them that Jesus is a rebel, and He would be dealt with.

It was a no win situation and yet in Luke 20:23-26 we see Jesus answer them and put them to silence by what He said. As the word of wisdom was working in Jesus they were stunned! The word of wisdom given to Jesus in this situation solved the problem, silenced the critics, and amazed the people.

2. JESUS IS CONFRONTED BY THE SADDUCEES - MATTHEW 22

Here in Matthew chapter 22 we see the Sadducees, who were the liberals of their day and did not believe in miracles or the resurrection, present Jesus with this situation.

There was a woman who married a man and he dies not having any children. His brother marries her and he dies before having any children. This happens with 7 of this man’s brothers, all dying not having any children. (First of all I would like to know what she is putting in their drinks.) But in the end, this woman dies also. And the question they ask Jesus is this, “**Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.**” Matthew 22:28.

In Matthew 22:29-33 we see that Jesus shows them that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. He was not the God of Abraham, but He says, “**I am the God of Abraham.**” They did not understand resurrection life. They were trying to deny that there is a resurrection with this story and Jesus nails them here. Again, the problem was solved, the critics were silenced, and the people were amazed as Jesus spoke forth the word of wisdom.

3. JESUS CONFRONTS THE PHARISEES - MATTHEW 22

In Matthew chapter 22 we see Jesus confront the Pharisees, the keepers of the Law you might say. Jesus comes and asks them a question. You see, they lived in a patriarchal society, where the father was always the leader of the family. A father would never call his son lord, but it would be the other way around. Also, the religious leaders believed that the Messiah would be a man, and not God incarnate, from the lineage of David.

So Jesus says to them beginning in verse 42 of Matthew chapter 22, “**. . . ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The Son of David.’ He said to them, ‘How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool!”?’ If David then calls Him ‘Lord,; how is He his Son?’ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.**” Matthew 22:42-46.

Jesus nails them on this one. You see, the only way David can call his son, “lord” is if he was more honored, and being the Son of God He **was** more honored than David, and thus, David calls Jesus, the Messiah, Lord! The result of this word of wisdom is the critics were silenced, and the people amazed!