

# Worldly Wisdom

(Sermon Notes) BY Warren Zehrung 10/8/2016

Worldly wisdom is real and it is dangerous. But what is it? **Worldly wisdom:** is... We will hopefully fill in the blank in today's sermon... Sometimes I think that we do not realize how much we are negatively impacted by our contact with the world.

No one wants to think so, but everyone is vulnerable to **Worldly wisdom**. We need to know what **worldliness** is – because it is spiritually dangerous – and can be **even** fatal.

After all, God commands us to come out of this world and be separate from it. We need to readily recognize **Worldly wisdom** for what it is.

God guides us by His Holy Spirit **when** we follow His lead. We are advised to come out of the ways of this world that lead only to anguish, hurt, pain and death.

One of the biggest problems in the world today is the near total lack of wisdom, except for **worldly wisdom**.

The wisdom of this age and culture is alluring to most – even those in God's Church.

First, I would like to establish that "**Worldly wisdom**" is a biblical concept that is spoken against over and over in the Scriptures.

We need to know all about it.

1Corinthians 3:19 "Worldly wisdom - the **wisdom of this world** is foolishness with God. For it is written, He takes the **wise** in their own craftiness."

That means that Worldly wisdom will do you in – cost you your eternal salvation.

Most foolish decisions arise out of the fact that people are driven by lust, jealousy, pride, competition, greed, ego, hatred, control and power, but very few individuals are motivated by the **wisdom of God**.

Speaking of **Worldly wisdom's counterpart**, God through Solomon gave us this right instruction about **Godly Wisdom**:

Proverbs 4:7 "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

Only Godly wisdom has a true lasting value. Godly Wisdom is the path less taken in this evil world. When it comes to decision time, we should always ask ourselves, "What is the smart thing to do?" Not, what is smart in this world's eyes, but what is the wise choice in God's eyes.

In our spiritual lives, we should not be hampered by indecision. Why? Because, in most every situation, God gives us the **wise** answer, if we are willing to look and listen for it. God says, "*Choose life,*" "*Keep the commandments,*" and so forth, in effect, making our good decisions for us.

For Christians, when we have to make an important decision, we pray, fast, meditate, measure the options against the word of God, count the cost, etc., and then we choose **wisely** and go forward.

Then we put our full effort into making that Godly decision work out.

Turning our backs on this **world** and its **worldly wisdom** and following **Godly wisdom** in our lives brings us true worth – true value – and spiritual substance and real happiness, because it develops His righteous character in us.

When we choose the right source for our instruction, we are able to become skilled at applying correct **knowledge** and **understanding** with the use of **wisdom**.

With the help of God's Holy Spirit, it is possible to build the exceptional character that accompanies **Godly Wisdom**.

As we get started, let's distinguish between **knowledge, understanding** and Godly **wisdom**:

**Knowledge:** is the accumulation of facts. Knowledge is "information gained through study, experience, reasoning, or being taught." Assumptions and speculation war against knowledge. God says,

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for **lack of knowledge**:

We need to know what the Bible says. That comes through study and believing the word of God.

Proverbs 1:7 The reverence for the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 15:33 The reverence of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is humility.

Pride wars against honor. Humility is doing things God's way... Humility is admitting, "I don't have all the answers"

**Understanding:** is the interpretation of facts and discernment in using knowledge. Understanding is being able to comprehend the difference between good and evil.

Proverbs 9:10 The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy One is understanding.

**Wisdom:** is the insight and character to rightly apply knowledge and understanding in our lives. Wisdom is the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting. Where do we begin to attain wisdom?

Psalms 111:10 The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of **wisdom**: a good understanding have all they that keep His commandments: His praise endures forever.

Wisdom does not come naturally. Wisdom and intelligence are different things. Just by joining a church group or being a church leader does not insure that you will have wisdom.

This Salvational Process a Christian goes through – is the way to come to even greater wisdom. God gives us His wisdom as we submit to Him.

**Higher wisdom:** is the wisdom that comes from living according to God's law, way and ethics.

James addresses Godly wisdom – **Higher wisdom**: '*epignosis*.'

James 3:17 The wisdom that is **from above** is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated [approachable, willing to yield and compliant], full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

The attaining of **wisdom** must be of the highest priority in our lives.

Knowledge and understanding can exist without wisdom, but not the other way around.

One can be knowledgeable without being wise. **Knowledge** is having somewhat to say.

**Understanding** is applying the proper facts to a given subject.

**Wisdom** is discerning when to say something and when not to. Godly wisdom acts to everyone's benefit.

One more definition:

**Worldly wisdom:** is **whatever** our carnal minds dictate it to be apart from God's instructions...

As we saw:

1Corinthians 3:19 For the **wisdom of this world** is foolishness with God.

**Worldly wisdom** is the rejection of God's way in favor of serving the self.

The Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah speak of Jesus having these attributes of **knowledge, understanding and wisdom**.

Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch [Jesus Christ] shall grow out of his roots: [this verse refers to the Messiah – Jesus Christ.]

John 1:32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him.

Isaiah 11:2 And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and [the Spirit of] understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the reverence of the Lord;

Isaiah 11:3 And shall make Him [Jesus Christ] of quick understanding [full comprehension, great comprehension] in the reverence of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears:

Brethren, we too are to grow up, as Jesus did, in knowledge, understanding and Godly wisdom.

In Matthew 7 we find the ending of the Sermon on the Mount.

Verses 15 to 20 are Christ's warning about false prophets, those who appear one way, and yet produce something **spiritually** deadly.

It was true in Christ's day – just as it is today – it's a tendency, a proclivity of people. People flock to flashy, colorful and flamboyant preachers.

Jesus warns:

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves.

They look good – and sound good – but they are a clear and present danger to you.

Jesus says, "Do not go by how a man looks or how silver tongued, and eloquent his speech is, – but ask yourself, "What are the results of his life's work?"

Do peace, accomplishment, happiness and harmony follow in his wake?

If he were a tree – would you get apples or **lemons**? If he were a vine – would you get succulent grapes or briars?

Matthew 7:16 You shall know them **by their fruits**. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Jesus asks, "Are you wise enough to discern the difference?"

Matthew 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a **corrupt** tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Jesus is speaking of ministers here!

Matthew 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Matthew 7:19 Every tree that brings not forth **good fruit** is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Jesus says that we are not to overlook corrupt practices – not for any excuse. Some will say, sure he has his faults – I'll overlook those because he is so effective at preaching. True conversions do not come from false preaching.

Matthew 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Keep your marker here in Matt 7 – we will come back to this issue of false ministers...

Even though Jesus does not give many specifics here about what the false prophets do or say, He does give us a fool-proof test: you recognize them by evaluating their fruit—by recognizing what is produced by their teaching.

Jesus distinguishes between Godly wisdom and worldly wisdom by giving an example of worldly wisdom. Jesus tells the story of a man who is getting fired supposedly for his incompetence.

Luke 16:1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

Luke 16:2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou may be no longer steward.

Luke 16:3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord takes away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

Luke 16:4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

Luke 16:5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

Luke 16:6 And he said, A **hundred** measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write **fifty**.

Luke 16:7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An **hundred** measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write **eighty**.

The unjust steward with his worldly wisdom had just pulled a fast one in order to feather his own nest.

He had committed a misdemeanor at best, and possible a felony for cooking the books of his former employee.

Jesus was **not** recommending that the disciples engage in petty larceny – but that the shrewdness – the **Worldly wisdom** – of the unjust steward was remarkable.

Luke 16:8 And the lord – that certain rich man – commended the unjust steward, because he had done **wisely** [That's worldly wisdom – not Godly wisdom being spoken of – because it is wrong to “cook the books”]: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

So Jesus postulates:

Luke 16:9 And, Do I say unto you? “Make to yourselves friends of the unrighteous wealth of this world? “Is that, what you are to depend on so that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations?

Jesus is asking the question of His disciples, “Do we Bless ourselves – or do we permit God to bless us?”

Then Jesus gives the authentic Christian approach.

Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is **least** is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Jesus said in verse ten that we are to be faithful in the small things of this life, in order to qualify for the large things in the Kingdom of God.

Luke 16:11 If therefore ye have **not** been faithful in the unrighteous world's wealth, who will commit to **your** trust the true riches?

God is not going to reward us for a life of unfaithfulness.

Luke 16:12 And if ye have **not** been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

Jesus is asking if we are faithful with the things of God?

Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve **God** and the wealth of the world.

In Luke's account Jesus was using **oil** and **wheat** for examples of things the unjust steward was unfaithful in.

But what we were just looking at in Matthew was whether or not a minister – who is also a steward – was faithful in handling God's word. If we are seeing consistently bad fruit from a minister, then somewhere in the mix there is a false teaching, and thus he is a false teacher.

A man's **belief** is always going to produce a corresponding **conduct**, so if we see conduct that is not godly, the **source** must be a wrong belief which has been received from a false teacher. You shall know them **by their fruits**.

The worldly wisdom of a false minister always produces a **wrong outcome**.

Again, Jesus does not tell us here in Matthew what sort of fruit to look for, only that every teaching—every belief—is going to produce something, good or bad, and it is incumbent upon us to evaluate what is produced to know whether to accept or reject the teaching—or the teacher.

But Jesus does give us all kinds of specifics throughout His word. In short, what matters is if the teaching is correctly pointing to God or away from God.

Think about the **fruit of the Spirit** and the works of the flesh: where the teaching is good, what will manifest at some point is love, joy, peace, and so forth.

But a false teaching is going to produce hatred, contention, jealousy, hurt, pain, wrath, selfish ambition, dissensions, envy, and so forth. We saw this in the breakup of the Worldwide Church of God—even lives destroyed. Those are reliable indicators that there is a **false teacher** or false **principle** involved.

The foundational warning against false prophets is found in Deuteronomy 13.

In Deuteronomy we are given **Godly wisdom** regarding these false teachers. It says,

Deuteronomy 13:4 “You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.”

This is an answer to the message of the false prophet, so the implication is that his message will be against those things in some way.

His teaching will guide people **away** from God, and diminish the reverence of God, and the need to keep the commandments, to obey God's voice, to serve Him (in spirit and truth), and to hold fast.

Those sinful elements of a false minister message will probably be subtle, at least at first. But they are all indicators that a false teacher is influencing belief and leading people away from the true worship of the true God.

Now, we are going to take this principle and apply it to a well-known circumstance in Scripture, and find a lesson that is especially valuable in these end times:

1Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be **no divisions** among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1Corinthians 1:11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

1Corinthians 1:12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of **Paul**; and I of **Apollos**; and I of Cephas/Peter; and I of Christ.

We could say that Paul's epistle degrades from that point forward. The congregation at Corinth was harvesting a bumper crop of bad fruit without even knowing it. We might notice that Paul ends up covering all the works of the flesh except for murder and sorcery, and even those can be found in the spirit of the law.

Now think about that: given Christ's warning, such an abundance of bad fruit would indicate the presence of a **false teacher** who was altering their belief and thus influencing their conduct.

But, **Paul**; **Apollos**; **Peter**; and **Christ** – were certainly good teachers of God's word.

What was the source of the wrong teaching – leading to the bad fruit of carnality?

As we will see, there was a false teacher, and we catch glimpses of him, but it is not what we would expect. It was not a man; it was the very lack of a truly spiritual environment, it was the world, the culture that they were in.

1Corinthians is one of the few epistles that does not directly mention false prophets, apostles, ministers, or teachers.

When we get to 2Corinthians, there is finally a mention of false apostles, but even then the false apostles seem to be on the outside, and something the Corinthian brethren needed to be aware of for the future rather than something Paul was directly addressing. But there is no mention of false teachers per se in 1Corinthians.

Here in 1Corinthians 1:12, Paul gives us 4 recognized teachers. **Paul**; **Apollos**; **Peter**; and **Christ**.

These teachers were part of what the congregation was divided over, even though they were certainly not the source of the division in the congregation.

But let's consider the true teachers they had. Paul was the founder of the congregation, and later he says that he was their father in the faith. Surely he was not leading them astray. Then there was Apollos, whom Paul identifies as doing the watering.

Acts 18:24 describes Apollos as an eloquent man, mighty in the scriptures, and verse 26 says he was able to speak with boldness.

Yet that gift that Apollos had was not enough to raise the Corinthians out of a degenerate spiritually divided state.

Next comes Cephas, or Peter. We do not have a record of Peter serving in Corinth, but we do know he was a significant influence on them. This is significant, because these Church teachers were being held up like today's pastor generals, and pitted against each other.

Some preferred Paul. Others were leaning toward Apollos. Perhaps those in the Peter faction were saying they would only listen to what came from the very top.

But Peter was not bringing a false gospel, nor trying to gather a following after himself.

Finally we come to the Christ faction. "**I am of Christ**" – you can almost see their noses pointed high. On the surface this sounds good, because all followers of Christ are going to say that they are "of Christ." When in reality the Corinthians followed **none** of them.

Paul includes the Christ faction with his assertion of carnality, so evidently they were not nearly as "of Christ" as they believed.

One possibility is that, just as the others were identifying with human servants so strongly that it was causing division, so also these members were swinging to the other extreme by saying that they needed no teacher but Christ Himself, like those who will only listen to old recordings of Herbert W Armstrong.

Obviously the Corinthians were carnal and were violating many Godly principles. Yet Christ certainly was not the cause of such contention.

Paul equates **worldliness** with spiritual immaturity in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3,

1Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

1Corinthians 3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

1Corinthians 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

The epistles depict worldliness as the exact opposite of godliness. The world's wisdom is not wisdom at all.

1 Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

1Corinthians 3:19 For the **wisdom of this world** is foolishness with God. For it is written, He takes the [worldly] **wise** in their own craftiness.

They always do themselves in.

The message of [Christianity] is foolishness to those with worldly wisdom who are perishing (1 Corinthians 1:18) because true wisdom comes not from man's philosophies, but from God's Word. True Godliness is always opposed by the world. Scripture draws a clear distinction between friendship with God and friendship with the world.

James 4:4 tells us that "friendship with the world is hatred toward God."

Political Correctness is a form of **worldliness** – for the great majority – that is not the problem in God's church. The problem is seeing this world in action – and then allowing it to rub off on us. And if you are a part of this world – you cannot but help have it rub off on you.

An Example:

Movie ratings when I was young were A, B, and C. "B" - Divorce was frowned upon – everyone knew it was wrong to divorce.

Movies made divorce an option. "I don't ever want to get a divorce – but if things get bad...it's an option. And finally what once seemed to be only an option – became acceptable... To the point where in the world today, living together is not frowned upon. Brethren, We can be in the world or in the kingdom, but not both.

To avoid worldliness, we must mature in the faith, growing up in all things in Christ so that we are no longer spiritual infants, tossed about by the lies of the world.

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more [immature] children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

Thus Paul mentions 4 outstanding teachers—including the very best Teacher— **Paul**; **Apollos**; **Peter**; and **Christ** and yet the Corinthians were still carnal.

These named teachers were **not** the source of the problems in Corinth. The source of the wrong influence was elsewhere. This bad source of influence caused God's people to go from one ditch to the other.

This bad source was the one influencing the brethren to be puffed up, to let down in their reverence of God, and become negligent in their obedience.

This bad source was the one **drowning out** the voices of these Godly teachers, such that the very best instruction had not borne the **fruit** it should have.

This bad source was the **false wisdom of the age**. This bad source was the voice of the world's bad influence.

This bad source was the ideas and attitudes originating with the prince of the power of the air, which are re-broadcast by every unconverted person, and even the converted who allow it.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, it was to address their **worldliness** – their **Worldly Wisdom**.

In the first 4 chapters of 1Corinthians, Paul mentions **wisdom** or **wise people** 29 times, and 2/3rds of those times are **false** or negative references.

This was what Paul addressed first, and then he got into the specifics of their carnality.

So let's look at some of Paul's identification of **Worldly Wisdom**.

In 1Corinthians 1:17, Paul contrasts the gospel message he brought with what he terms the "wisdom of words." [*sophia logos*]

The Greek culture highly valued eloquent arguments, and this cultural preference—this **Worldly Wisdom**—this wisdom of this world—this wisdom of the age—was causing Paul's teaching—that of an apostle—to **not** be well-received by the Corinthians.

In 1Corinthians 1:19-25, Paul continues to **contrast** the wisdom of Christ's message with the wisdom of the Greeks and the understanding of the Jews.

These were the prevailing ideas which **badly** damaged the faith of the first century church.

When people came in contact with the truth, they evaluated it **through the lens** of the prevailing culture and ideas of the day, rather than using the truth as the **standard** for the wisdom of men.

Brethren, we are guilty of doing the same thing to some extent.

The Gnostics of the day took the message of Christ, and they looked at it through the lens of Gnosticism, and ended up with a belief system which was an admixture of truth and error.

Others took the gospel message and studied it through the lens of Judaism, and also created a syncretistic mess - an amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of ungodly thought.

Today, the word of God is evaluated through the lens of liberals, sociologists, movies and Hollywood.

**Worldly Wisdom** is always in a state of flux: The **wisdom of the age** changes over time, but it always undermines the truth, spoken by true servants of God.

1Corinthians 2:6 Howbeit we speak [Godly] wisdom among them that are perfect: yet **not** the—**Worldly Wisdom**—**wisdom of this world**, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

1Corinthians 2:7 But we speak the **wisdom of God** in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Paul again identifies **Worldly Wisdom** as being against the wisdom of God.



1Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, **not** the spirit of the **world**, but **the spirit which is of God**; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Paul points out that the new spirit they received from God was **unlike** the spirit of the world.

The **Worldly Wisdom** had inundated them so much that it was difficult for them to discern the spirits.

1Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1Corinthians 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Paul brings up defiling the temple of God's spirit. Please do not just apply this scripture to take care of our physical bodies.

The context is still about **Worldly Wisdom** - the wisdom of the age, and so the defiling of the temple has even more to do with what goes into our minds than our mouths.

1Corinthians 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

Don't just hear "Food" in this verse:

You can see this same admonition here in 10:21, where Paul warns about trying to drink the Lord's cup as well as the cup of demons, or partaking of the Lord's Table and the table of demons. His concern was their **spiritual** food, for that was the source of their **worldliness**. And yet, it was not coming from what we normally think of as a false minister – but their culture and **worldly** environment.

What was leading them astray wasn't coming from the pulpit one day a week, but from a multitude of sources every day of the week.

**Worldliness** was getting far more "air time" with the Corinthians than the true teachers were, and **Worldly Wisdom's** influence was winning out.

Satan knows how many **lies we can see** and hear on the evening news before we become calloused to the truth.

Sharon and I have completely cut-off the news on television – we could not take it anymore.

Satan knows how much violence we can watch before we become calloused to the loss of life.

Satan knows how many portrayals of adultery or fornication we can consume before we become numb to the immorality of it, and it stops being a big deal to us.

It doesn't mean we are going to carry out the next mass shooting. It just means that we stop **valuing** the gift of human life given by God.

**Worldly Wisdom** knows how much **profanity** we can hear or read before those defiling words start popping into our minds, and then get re-broadcast from our mouths and keyboards.

How do we counter **Worldly wisdom's** influence in our minds?

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are **true**, whatsoever things are **honest**, whatsoever things are **just**, whatsoever things are **pure**, whatsoever things are **lovely**, whatsoever things are of **good report**; if there be any **virtue**, and if there be any **praise**, think on these things.

Our influenced minds are the source of our conduct, so if we are aware of ungodly fruit in our own lives, there is a good chance we are taking lessons from **Worldly Wisdom**.

Maybe we accepted a bit of **worldly wisdom** decades ago, and now take it for granted, but it is still interfering with the activity of the spirit of God.

2Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore **come out** from among them, and **be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

Every show that we watch, every article, post, editorial, commentary that we read, every talk show, every song—all of it is going to impart some of the wisdom of the age— **worldly wisdom**.

Unless we actively guard against it, it will color our views of fashion, of politics, of beauty, of parenting, of health, of leisure, of **masculinity** and **femininity**, of relationships, of what we value and what is beneath us.

And if we fall for that, we are in serious trouble because **doctrine** is next.

I am not suggesting that we cloister ourselves in fear, and I hope you understand that.

I am suggesting that if there is fruit in your life that you know is not befitting of God, a place to start is in evaluating where **worldly wisdom** is speaking to you, because he is speaking to us all.

And then comes the hard part of actually choosing to tune out what does not lead to life, so that the truth of God does not become neutralized in our lives.

**Worldly wisdom**—the **wisdom of the age** saps our spiritual strength because it interferes with the words of spiritual life, and the divine reality behind them.

Even reading the Word of God every day, and having the best human teachers—like in Corinth—is insufficient, if we are paying heed to **Worldly wisdom**.

The evidence can be found in our manner of life, because we cannot walk in the spirit when our mind is continually conforming to **Worldly wisdom**.

Our minds adjust to the darkness, to the stench, to the drumbeat of a world that is passing away, and our thoughts move just a little bit further away from God's thoughts.

This ungodly world – that we have to live in – **hates God**.

In 2Timothy 4:3-4, Paul warns that the time is coming when believers “will **not endure sound doctrine**, but ... they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth...”

Perhaps we have interpreted that scripture **too narrowly**, and only applied it to ministers, teachers with a religious message.

This can apply to anybody who is teaching us—our cohorts at work, movies, advertisers, entertainers, authors, talk show hosts—even our friends and family.

They can affect how clearly we hear the word of God.

Remember how quickly the Worldwide Church of God changed its doctrines once the new regime took over. Remember how people so easily rolled over to accept doctrines which they had disproved earlier. It is because in the years leading up to the changes, the ears had been gradually tuned to accept this wisdom of Protestantism. Many brethren were already accustomed too much to **Worldly wisdom**, and were already spiritually weak.

The false ministers and false doctrines were simply the result of something that had been going on for many years.

It happened in Corinth. It has happened in the lifetimes of many of our loved ones.

It will happen again if we do not take meaningful steps to discern and **avoid** that Worldly Wisdom that influences us - - **by holding fast** to the word of God.

1Peter 2:1-3 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

I will leave you with this final thought.

We will close with the words of Godly **knowledge, understanding** and **Wisdom**:

Speaking to converted brethren, Paul said:

Ephesians 1:16-19 "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

...That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the **spirit of wisdom** and revelation in the **knowledge** of Him:

...The eyes of your **understanding** being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power."

End: Worldly Wisdom