

# God's Wisdom and Mercy



Divine versus Human Understanding

Godlike Compassion

Forgiving Others

## Divine versus Human Understanding

*"The awe of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Proverbs 9:10)*

*"Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh but those who live according to the Spirit the things of the Spirit, for to be fleshly minded is death/Death but to be Spiritually minded is life/Life and peace--because the carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the Law of God nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:5-8)*

*"The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men, for you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But, God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty. And, the insignificant things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen. And, the things that are not to bring to nothingness, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But, of Him you are in Christ Jesus, Who became for us the wisdom of God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.'" (I Corinthians 1:25)*

How can we utilize the resource of the vastness of God's mind in our own affairs and stop being only directed by our physical senses, or, as the Bible calls it, our "flesh"? In harmony with everything else that concerns a relationship between Him and humanity we have to permit its application. God's knowledge and wisdom are available 24 hours a day; His office never closes, nor does the Holy Spirit ever sleep. He never takes a nap or a coffee break and leaves His position unstaffed. He is sort of a Heavenly "Bank"--One with unlimited resources and answers to every human question or need.

*"Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened unto you, for everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or, what man is there among you who if his son asks for bread will give him a stone or if he asks for a fish will give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give good things to those who ask Him?" (Matthew 7:7-11)*

*"My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)*

We have to discover how to withdraw these assets for ourselves in order to apply them. Otherwise, the solutions to our conflicts will remain to us as the *hidden* mystery of God, something that He has said in the Bible that He expressly does not desire. If He did, why did Jesus even come here? As a "vacation"? (Get real.)

*"Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5)*

*"And, do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2)*

*"God has revealed (His mysteries) to us through His Spirit for the Spirit searches all things, yes, even the deep things of God. For, what man knows the thing of a man except the spirit which is in him? Even so, no one knows the things of God, except the Spirit of God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual. But, the natural man does not receive the things of God for they are foolishness to him. Nor can he know them because They are Spiritually discerned." (I Corinthians 2:10-14)*

When the male and female Adam tasted a single bite of a piece of fruit, they had no comprehension whatsoever of the consequences of what that one disobedient action would initiate. They did recognize that God would be angry at their behavior though, because subsequently they hid from Him. However, they had no notion as to why their single, small rebellion was like an entire revolution against the Trinity. Those impetuous and seemingly insignificant, bites triggered a domino effect that started to spread immediately throughout the extension of God's Kingdom on earth--the Garden of Eden. Within a very short span of time the Adams began to sin repeatedly; thus distancing themselves more and more away from God, and they quickly became ashamed in His presence. This behavior gave birth to infinite repercussions which still affect everything on this planet today, even many centuries afterward.

First, they realized that His protection had vanished--they perceived that they were naked to the outer world. Although they did not realize it, the nakedness that bothered them most likely was not that they had no clothes. They had always lived that way and the notion of modesty was foreign to them. No, they sensed the void that was left within when His Spirit that He had breathed into them could no longer remain there or else divide His Kingdom entirely.

Second, for the first time the Adams hid themselves from God, instead of going to Him when they heard Him walking in the Garden. Fear took over as the dominant emotion in their minds and hearts instead of the absolute, unconditional, and non-sporadic Godly love that had been there before. They began to panic at the idea of being near to or with Him and tried to re-cover themselves with things that they could see and touch. Their human physical senses already had begun to take the upper hand, interrupting their faith in God's invisible Kingdom.

Third, the man accused the woman of the predicament and initiated division between the two of them instead of total unity. Adam immediately started to think about his own safety over hers and blamed not only her but also even God Himself for creating a situation in which he freely committed sin. (Talk about foolish.) A wedge had been driven between the two sexes, which remains evident today, even to people who ignore God.

Not taking the responsibility for our own decisions and responses is an attitude that has become increasingly present nowadays. Too many people refuse to accept any accountability for their own actions. They avoid disciplining themselves so that they can continue to be irresponsible instead of maturing emotionally. However, this deception that we are not even ever remotely responsible for our conditions is very dangerous.

*"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted by evil nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived it gives birth to sin and when it is full-grown brings forth death/Death."*  
(James 1:13-15)

Too many of us have made ourselves unhealthy to varying degrees simply because we do not eat properly or exercise our bodies enough. Yet, we still may blame God for our own foolishness. Instead of searching for and going to Him for assurance, comfort and love, far too many of us have turned to food, TV, video games, computers and the Internet, cigarettes, drinking, drugs, or psychics to soothe ourselves. Whereas, God always has been ready and available to satisfy our needs, and without any negative consequences. We have continued to follow the foolish example set by the first man and woman, who heeded a voice and succumbed to an impulse that was in direct contrast to their Creator's. We should be concentrating all of our energy on attempting to get closer to God, not running away from Him. We must turn around, follow, and begin to imitate God as Jesus did, not other people.

*"Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children and walk in love as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us--an offering and a sacrifice to God...."*  
(Ephesians 5:1-2a)

*"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.'" (John 14:6-7a)*

When we rehearse what God tells us to practice instead of deciding that we already know the best course of action we become more joyful, healthier, and fruitful. A computer works the same way, "junk in, junk out". It is imperative that we recognize God's desire to influence our lives only for our well being, and follow His directions to the letter without

veering even slightly off of the course He sets.

As an easy illustration of decision-making without sufficient knowledge and wisdom, ask just about any very young child, "Which do you think is better for us to eat, green beans or a chocolate bar?" Unless coached, their most natural response is that the candy is better. The first reason might be something along the lines that the beans have to be prepared. This takes up some of the time that a person already could be enjoying the candy. Anyone who wants to eat green beans normally needs to get a pot, turn on the stove, heat them, get a plate and fork, etc. From a child's perspective, this is a lot of trouble. The chocolate bar only needs to be unwrapped to eat. You don't even have to sit down, and, it tastes better, too. (Then the child might even give you a look implying that any idiot should have been able to deduce the right answer, let alone have to ask the question in the first place.)

The child would recognize that both are edible and safe to consume. But, he/she would not be aware of what a calorie is, or a fat gram, nutrition, a cavity, gum disease, etc. Hence, like the blind men referred to in Chapter 1, the child would believe that he/she knew the only correct answer when they did not. Whereas you, the adult, would recognize that they were judging merely by superficial reasoning and did not possess nearly the awareness and experience that you did. They would come up with and believe in the wrong answer for lack of knowledge and experience. If the above mentioned child did not change his/her view, eventually he/she would get sick and die on a diet consisting only of "candy".

Have you gotten the point yet? If not, here it is again: God knows *infinitely* more than we do. Any human being whatsoever only has limited knowledge about the entirety of time, history, and the universe. We have not even found a cure for the common cold, merely medicines that mask its symptoms for a while. It is smarter to listen to God than our own ideas or another's, regardless of their credentials. Even Jesus deferred to His Father's superior knowledge and wisdom when He expressly did not wish to do so, and thus died being nailed to and hung on a cross. His doing so, however, became the catalyst for our protection from eternal evil. When Jesus seemed to be the weakest was actually when He accomplished His greatest feat.

## Godlike Compassion

*"The wages of sin is Death." (Romans 6:21)*

*"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9)*

*"The Lord is: merciful and gracious slow to anger and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins nor punished us according to our offenses, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy to those who fear (or respect) Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a Father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him, for He knows our frame. He remembers that we are dusts."*

*As for man, his days are like grass. As a flower of the field so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it and it is gone and its place remembers it no more. But, the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him and His righteousness to children's children--to such as keep His Covenant and*

*those who remember His Commandments to do them." (Psalm 103:8-18)*

That pretty much sums up God's attitude towards mankind. He loves us despite who we are in even our most contemptible moments, those times when we ourselves are ashamed of our behavior even when we are confident that no other person knows what we have done. Like it or not, God sees everything that we ever do. Yet, He loved the world so much that He sent His Only Son to us as recompense for our sins when He Himself was blameless. God the Father's all-consuming love for His children far surpasses anything that we ever could do to restrain it, no matter how hard we may try.

There is a testimony that clearly records some of the extent God's forgiveness and mercy towards us. It is a love so deep that it is so deep that it is impossible to understand fully with just our human intellect, except in rare moments. As you read and meditate on this passage, please try to feel the dusty ground and smell the atmosphere, taking into account that these incidents unfolded over a much longer period of time than it takes to recount them.

There was an unnamed person caught committing a crime. It could have been someone of either sex and Jesus' responses would have been identical. However, in this particular instance a woman was apprehended committing a sin that under the Law was punishable by being stoned to death. It just happened to be adultery, but just like the sex of the sinner the offense was immaterial to Jesus.

She was dragged very publicly from where she had been found to where He was standing teaching the Gospel and plunked directly in front of Him in the center of the gathering, rudely interrupting His preaching. Her accusers were some religious leaders of the area, in outward appearance pious and very upright standing people in that community. And, they had God's Law given to Moses as their authority to condemn her. Superficially, it seemed that they were reacting to the sin precisely how God would have them act in that situation. However, read between the lines: if they knew for certain what God's wishes were, why did they haul this unfortunate individual all the way to where Jesus was? These men really did not care about her at all; they simply wanted to show Jesus as a fraud in front of the crowd.

*"Now, early in the morning, He came again into the temple and all the people came to Him and He sat down and taught them. Then, the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery and when they had set her in the midst they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery--in the very act. Now Moses in the Law, commanded us that such should be stoned, but what do You say?' This they said, testing Him that they might have something of which to accuse Him.*

*But, Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, 'He who is without sin among you, let him cast a stone at her first,' and again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.*

*Then, those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?'*

*She said, 'No one, Lord,' and Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you.'*

*Go, and sin no more." (John 8:2-11)*

The woman's accusers, supposedly acting in God's best interests, brusquely pushed into a peaceful circle where people were sitting and listening quietly to someone teach from the Scriptures. These supposedly pious and "godly" men evidently were not thinking at all about the other people in the scenario, who in all likelihood were members of their temples. Rather, they were suspicious and jealous of Jesus. Their intention was not to help the other people witnessing the confrontation, but to attempt to humiliate Him.

The religious leaders depicted in this story showed a complete disregard for anyone other than themselves and their attempt to trip up the Man that had been outdoing them in aiding those whom they themselves should have been helping for many years. They were not seeking justice, but revenge against Jesus for making them look ineffectual. To them, the woman was just a scapegoat. They just needed something to show their parishioners that Jesus was a quack, and that He was against the Law given to Moses.

Jesus instantly stopped talking, ignored the outburst entirely, stooped down, and wrote in the dusty ground with His finger. He did not get angry, although there were several reasons why He might have done so: (a) These men had shoved their way through the assembly with complete indifference in order to place the unfortunate woman in its center, maybe even bruising some people. (b) Apparently they did not even wait for Jesus to finish His teaching, but interfered with the instruction. (c) Throughout the entire incident, the accusers showed no love for anybody else present at all, rather only condescension.

As Jesus outwardly continued to ignore their presence, the religious leaders nagged Him repeatedly. By remembering how He acted in other situations--only imitating what His Father instructed, He most likely was praying to Him for guidance. He also may have used the time that He was silent in order to guard His natural carnal reactions and words. It is possible that Jesus was letting the Holy Spirit calm Him from reacting with normal human temper towards the crass behavior of those religious rulers not only to the woman, but every other person already in the temple. These men were assumed to set an example of God's love and mercy in their vicinities. However, they were not doing that, thus making it seem as if God were as unforgiving as they were. These men who supposedly were ambassadors of God, were demonstrating to the onlookers present that God was the opposite of Who He truly was.

*"I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear (from My Father) I judge, and My judgment is righteous because I do not seek My Own will, but the will of the Father Who sent Me." (John 5:30)*

When Jesus finally stood and addressed the accusers He merely said one sentence, surprisingly allowing the crowd to judge the woman. However, He added a simple phrase that cut to their hearts. He only condoned anyone who never had sinned to throw the initial rock at her. Then, He stooped down and outwardly ignored the group a second time.

Can you appreciate how Jesus followed the Law to the letter, yet showed God's true nature simultaneously with only a single statement? It was pure ingenuity. Without a first stone thrown there could be no second, nor a third, etc. In absolute accordance with the Law, and without changing or breaking any previous command from God the Father, Jesus did not attempt to deter the crowd. He actually directed them to stone her, but with one condition: only those without sin could do it. He set up a prerequisite instigating every person present to reflect on his own secrets and inadequacies. One by one, starting with

the eldest--those who had had the most time to sin against God--they slinked away.

There are two things that are not specifically referred to in this testimony, but by taking natural human behavior into account: (1) by the time Jesus spoke, many of the rest of the assembly may have been swayed over to the thinking of the initial mob, and (2) that the people present already had picked up a rock, which they had to drop as they left the scene. It is notable to consider that when there was a crowd to back them up people accused the sinner. Yet, when they stood alone in front of God with their own consciences, they folded.

Jesus declared that anyone at all who never had sinned before was justified in throwing the first stone at the woman, right? There indeed was one qualified individual present, Jesus Himself. He was the sole person eligible to do exactly what He had told the others to do. Nevertheless, when everyone else had left the scene and Jesus and the woman were alone in the temple, instead of doing precisely what He indeed was permitted under His Father's Law, Jesus did not judge nor harm her. Even though there was no doubt that she had committed the crime He forgave her just as His Father did. The religious leaders apparently hadn't taken that fact into account, preferring to believe in God's judgment as superseding His love.

Additionally, how would Jesus would have reacted towards the woman if she had not heeded Him, been caught committing the exact same act the very next day, and been brought to Him a second time? Since He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow He would have forgiven her again. In fact, if Jesus and the same woman had to face the identical situation each day for the rest of both of their lives the outcome never would change. Since Jesus is identical to His Father and we all are equal value to God, Jesus likewise always would have been obliged to forgive whenever someone repented and asked Him to. (Wow.)

## **Forgiving Others**

The Bible makes a point of testifying that even after Jesus had been betrayed by two close friends, tried unjustly with false witnesses as to His character and mission, stripped and beaten to such a pulp that He was almost unrecognizable, had his forearms and feet nailed with spikes to a heavy wooden cross, was hung upright in a position that pulled His shoulders out of their sockets, was suffocating because of the way His ribs cut into His lungs, was spat upon and ridiculed by people passing by on the road to get to Jerusalem for the Passover, He still forgave every one who participated in His misery. If we truly want to follow His example then we must be willing to do the same, meaning that we, too, have to forgive anyone for doing anything harmful to us. Not only is this extremely hard, it is completely impossible without the support of God's Holy Spirit.

*"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also walk just as He walked.... He who says he is in the Light but hates his brother is in darkness.... and does not know where he is going because darkness has blinded his eyes." (I John 2:6-11)*

The Bible asserts that forgiveness is a bond that unites us to God. It makes Him able to forgive our own rebellion, as well as allows Him to intercede in our lives. It is as important as the other fruits of the Holy Spirit. Without *complete* forgiveness we are not following Jesus of Nazareth's example and command to love all other people in the same

way that He loved us: before, not after we reciprocated. Jesus was not born as a person to judge; rather, to bring the news that God loved us no matter what we ever said or how we ever acted.

*"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, ... bearing with one another. If anyone has a complaint against another even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do...." (Colossians 3:12-25a)*

Jesus Himself instructed this to His followers immediately following two major teachings: the best design to pray to our Heavenly Father--"The Lord's Prayer" and the primary instruction concerning how God used spoken words to create whatever He wanted to happen.

*"If you forgive men their trespasses your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive men their trespasses neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." (Matthew 6:14-15)*

*"Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone forgive him, that your Father in Heaven may forgive your sins, but if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in Heaven forgive your sins." (Mark 11:25-26)*

God cannot allow even one seed of hatred, or an unrepentant heart, into His Kingdom. For, as mentioned, even one tiny sin allowed within would split and eventually topple Him and It. That was why John the Baptist before Him, and then Jesus Himself tried so hard to dissuade people from disobeying God, even when that included the Jews hating their Roman oppressors. Jesus had to, and we must live a life trusting in Someone beyond what we can experience by our physical senses alone. And, staying in God's presence and will is the only way to be able to accomplish it.

*"Then Peter came to (Jesus) and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?'*

*Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Therefore, the kingdom of earth is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants and when he had begun to settle accounts one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents, but as he was not able to pay his master commanded that he be sold with his wife and children and that all that he had and the payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him saying, 'Master, have patience with me and I will pay you all.'*

*Then, the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt, but that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'*

*So, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will pay you all,' and he would not, but went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt.*

*So when his fellow servants saw what he had done, they were very grieved and came and told their master all that had been done. Then, his master, after he had called him said to him, 'You wicked servant! I for you all that debt*

*because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?' And, his master was angry and delivered him to the torturers until he should repay all that was due to him.*

*So, My Heavenly Father will do to you if each of you from his heart does not forgive his brother his trespasses."* (Matthew 18:21-35)

*"Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you rebuke him, and if he repents forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in a day and seven times in a day returns to you saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."* (Luke 17:3-4)

*"Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment.... Whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire."* (Matthew 5:22)

Throughout His earthly ministry God's Son clearly explained many times the importance of human beings forgiving each other for whatever offenses or crimes we endure, or even merely perceive that wrong us. And, as a human being Jesus had to do the same, right up until His death. If He had not done so, He would have caused a division between Himself and His Father, and as a result the Kingdom of Heaven would fall. In order for God the Father to resurrect His Son from Death, Jesus had to live a completely sinless life, which He said that He had during His final conference with His twelve main followers at their last supper together before He was crucified.

*"The ruler of this world (the devil, Satan) is coming but he has nothing in Me."*  
(John 14:30)

However, even if up until that point Jesus had not sinned, He had at least 24 hours left until He finished His mission. So there were plenty of opportunities for Him to disobey His Father during that time interval, Jesus still had to sustain the *unsevered* link between Them. His first test was during His prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane, where He evidenced His fleshly reluctance to suffering and even begged to be released from the agony that He knew was about to befall Him. If we ever consider that Jesus was not truly human, the proof that negates that notion is found there.

Before Jesus died on the cross He, too, was obligated to forgive everyone who denied, ridiculed, beat, or did anything else bad to Him. If He had not, that sin would have been enough to annul His Father's ability to redeem His Own Son from Satan's domain. Just as God cannot allow any one of us to corrupt His Kingdom, He could not afford to let His Son do so either. It would invalidate God's guarantee of Himself to uphold His Word. In order to fulfill His earthly ministry, Jesus, the Man, had to forgive those people.

*"Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'"* (Luke 23:34a)