

Sharing Secrets
God Tells His People Inside Information
CWG Series: part 6
Ephesians 1:8b-10
Feb 15-16

Introduction

- **The Biggest Questions** - Our Universe is Vast, our World Complex, our Questions Infinite. What does it all mean?
- **General Revelation** - what does it say?
 - That Reality is Orderly
 - That there was a Creator outside our system
 - That there is Right and Wrong, Good and Bad
 - That we are stunningly fragile and physical death faces us all.
- **Special Revelation** - what does it say? - the Power of God's Word and His messages through people throughout history:
 - That the Creator God is known as Yahweh, an at least, Triune Being.
 - That He communicated directly at times with His people.
 - That we have a purpose here
 - That there is a more meaningful existence after this one
 - That God loves us personally
 - That God visited His creation personally in Jesus Christ.
 - That Jesus Christ died for the sins of mankind that some would be saved by Him and given eternal life.

Connection Brings REVELATION

- **The Greatest Collection of God's Revelation to man is the Bible** - we get to read that today!

Lesson

- **Context Passage** - I'm going to read the bigger passage, verses 7-10 but we are only going to study verse 7 today.
- **Eph 1:7-10** - *"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."*
- **Let Me Highlight our Focus Again** - Ephesians 1:8b-10 - *"...[grace... which he lavished upon us], in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."*
- **A bit Confusing? - We'll handle it in 3 easy pieces:**
 1. The Amazing brilliance of God's wisdom and Insight - that He shares with us.
 2. The Beautiful Plan of God
 3. The Impact of God's Plan
- **Ultimate Brilliance**
 - **The Wisdom of God**
 - **Ephesians 1:8b** - *"...which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight..."*
 - **One of the "Graces" God gave us is Reason: Wisdom and Insight**
 - **We didn't have to know** - We could have been left in the dark as a creation. We don't deserve to know anything about ourselves, about our universe or about God. But He saw fit in His kindness and love to design us in such a way as to understand things.
 - **God speaking through His Word vs. Speaking to His People Directly** - The most safe and sure way to know the heart of God is to study His Word. Why? It can be

examined and verified by many people and it takes it from less of a subjective place and makes it more objective to be studied. But God didn't stop talking to His people just because the Bible was canonized (locked down in its current form). God still reveals his wisdom and insight. One of the ways that He does that is speaking to and through His people directly. He still downloads wisdom and insight. He tends to do that through 3 main methods:

- **A.) Wisdom and Insight as Maturity**

Pieces - (To be grown and matured) this is general wisdom and general insight. This is the normal way that people grow up and put pieces of life together in order to live more wisely. This is an area of life that all believers are supposed to grow up and mature in. Learning from books like Proverbs is a great way to get godly wisdom into your heart. But really anywhere you can gain godly wisdom is wonderful (mentors, disciplers, parents, teachers, preachers, etc.).

- **B.) Wisdom and Insight as Spiritual Gifts** -

(To be honed and utilized for the benefit of the Body of Christ) The Holy Spirit knows that the churches of every age (past, present and future) need revelation, wisdom and insight to know the heart of God. Therefore, He selects out point men and point women who He endows with spiritual gifts in the areas of wisdom and knowledge. I believe there are **2 forms of this type of spiritual gift** (accumulation of wisdom; supernaturally given wisdom).

Sometimes that wisdom is the ability to accumulate more (faster and easier than the others = gift), and sometimes it's supernaturally driven where you know stuff you didn't accumulate.

- **C.) Wisdom and Insight as Supernatural Anointings** - Extra Blessings for specific

times and situations. Sometimes the Holy Spirit needs to get something done and there are no point men/women to use with the permanent gifting. He is not stopped by the lack of people, He can anoint any believer, at any time to do this. **Two particular ways** that He downloads to Christians are: Words of Wisdom and Words of Knowledge.

- **Words of Wisdom** - supernaturally given connect of the dots. It's like knowing advice to give. It's like you know the answer to a question before the question is completed. It's knowing what to do next or how to handle a situation.
 - **For Example:** It's when you are sharing advice with someone and you are learning along the way as well. You are thinking, 'wow, that is really good. How did I know that? Why did I say that?'
 - **Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel described it this way** - *"You didn't know the answer before this moment, but even as you speak your heart testifies of its truth and it makes sense. The Spirit of God gives you the answer. It is something that you had not learned or studied or thought about, but it is so right, so on target, that you recognize it as a word of wisdom."* (Living Water book)
- **Words of Knowledge** - supernaturally given facts about someone else that you couldn't have known. You just know facts about someone, and you don't know why. A thought flashes into your mind about them and it clicks.
 - **For Example:** You are praying over someone and suddenly the thought pops up that they were left alone a lot as a child and today struggle with fear of abandonment. You start to pray for peace and soothing over them. OR, it

could be that you are praying over someone and keep seeing the same image over and over in your mind - like a diamond, or a treehouse, or a horse, or the word, 'FREEDOM', etc.

- **Church Smith of Calvary Chapel**

described it this way - *"It is information given to us supernaturally, knowledge of things that we could not know through natural acquisition or study. ...It's a divine impartation of knowledge concerning a person or situation that could not come through natural thought processes. It's something that flashes into your mind which God prompts you to say."*

- **2 Ways to Use Gifts like Words of Knowledge and Wisdom:**

- **1.) Personal Insights** - either for you or for you to pray for others. Sometimes you will sense something about another person but it's not appropriate or helpful to share. That means that the Lord is likely clueing you in, so that you can pray healing and protection over that person. But you don't mention it. Also, sometimes the Lord just drops insights to you, just to connect and talk with YOU.

- **2.) Insights to Share** - Sometimes the whole point is that God gives you insights for you to share with others for the purpose of demonstrating how personal God is and that He's watching and paying attention in love. The goal is that they feel more connected to their God afterward.

- **God's Not done talking**

- **MC Discussion (God Talking Today)** - In our MC Groups we are going to talk about God communicating to us today. Do you feel a personal communication

with God? What has God been saying to you lately?

- **The Mighty Plans of God**

- **How Christ was the Fulfillment of a Plan Before Time**

- **Ephesians 1:9-10a** - "...making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁹as a plan for the fullness of time,..."

- **Revealing His Mystery (Relationship)** - Paul goes on to say that The Great mystery of the universe: That God desires a relationship with His creation.

- **The meaning of life discussion** - 1.) Relationship with God; 2.) Bring glory to His name.

- **The Big Plan = God Reconnects with Man** and does what we can never do for ourselves.

- **It was always going to be this way, debate** - in a lot of Christian theological circles there's debates about details and why God does what He does. I think many of them are good and healthy conversations, but most of them must be put in the right perspective of 'nice to know' but not 'critical to know'. One of those debates is whether or not God knew and planned that mankind would sin and ruin everything, only for Him to clean up the mess with the Redemption process. Think about how God's redemption and the act of Christ dying on the cross was the single GREATEST demonstration of love the world has ever seen (Jn 15:13). How could we know that kind of love if we never sinned? So, doesn't the whole falling into sin and getting rescued thing bring God more glory? Isn't that His plan? The problem with that side of the debate is arguing that if God did know it and plan it, then He's responsible for it and we know that God isn't responsible for sin (Jas

1:13). Sin is rebellion against the nature of God. God cannot be Anti-God at the same time. Who's responsible for sin? We've been paying for it for all of history. We are blamed. We are held accountable. But if we never had another possibility and it was the plan the whole time, then why blame us? The other side of the debate is that people say that God designed a being that could sin, in order to foster a truly loving reality, but that mankind opted to utilize their free will to serve themselves and sin was created (rebellion). The support for that side of the argument is that we are indeed held accountable (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Jn 3:5; 1 Peter 2:22). Although God knew it was the most likely outcome in His design, He didn't force it, but let 'nature' take it's course and entered into the situation. Some see that as being 'tricky' or 'deceitful', but remember, there was a time when we weren't in existence and God is able to write a story that we play into. It's not personal, per se (the outline of the story), although it becomes very personal as it is unveiled (eternal destiny). The answer is, we don't know. What we do know is that God set it up for perfection and blessing, mankind blew it, and God rescued. Those parts are a fact.

- **No Sin in God** - Jas 1:13 - *"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one."*
- **Not then, Not Now** - Jas 1:16-17 - *"Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."*
- **The Greatest Demonstration of Love** - Jn 15:13 - *"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."* (cf. Rom 5:8; Eph 2:4)

- **The Perfect Timing of Christ's Coming** - why did Jesus come 2000 years ago? Why then? There's plenty of other times to enter into the world and complete the plan of Redemption. Why BC 3-AD30 (or AD 1-33)? Why was that the FULLNESS of God's timing? I'm going to give you a TINY SAMPLE of why the timing was beautiful:

- **1.) The Need for Rescue was Sufficiently Expressed** - After thousands of years of the Jewish people interacting with the Perfect Law of God they understood fully the inability of mankind to ever do the right thing perfectly. The OT Sacrificial system had been in play for thousands of years and the desperation was clear. The atoning process left so much undone. It was extraordinarily clear that mankind's righteousness would never be enough to appease a Holy and Righteous God.
- **2.) The Jews were ready** - after being dominated again and again, and even then, under the tight Roman rule, they desperately wanted a Deliverer. They were always on the edge of getting crushed or wiped out. They had been held down for so long that they wanted to be free and the Promised Messiah seemed like the only One to do it.
- **3.) The World Situation was Ripe (Communication)** - After one dominate war-crazed empire after another (Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman) for world domination, finally things were relatively mellow. Although Rome was still technically dominant, Greek philosophy of learning had permeated through the known world and there was an ease of communication through common languages that flowed freely through the Roman roads and travel routes. Whatever happened would be communicated widely and quickly. Sure enough, once the Crucifixion and Resurrection message was locked in, AD 70 happened (Rome devastated

Jerusalem) and scattered all the Jews/Christians all over the world, carrying with them the News of Jesus Christ.

- **4.) Daniel's Radical Prophecy (70 Weeks - 500 years earlier)** - In Daniel 9:24-27 he shares a vision from the Lord (through Gabriel the angel) that God was going to give the Jews a limited amount of time to come to Him and then He was going to send an anointed one (70 7's = 70 weeks). The period would be 70 'weeks'. Each "week" was equivalent to 7 years. The clock would start with the rebuilding of Jerusalem. That happened during Nehemiah's time (Neh 2:5), specifically 445BC (King Artaxerxes of Persia command to rebuild - March 14th, first day of Jewish month Nisan). 483 years later (69 weeks later - 69×7), Jesus rode into Jerusalem as the King of the Jews (Triumphal Entry - likely April 6th, 32AD).
- **69 weeks + 1 Calculation** - The way it's laid out is that the 69 weeks in calculation already happened and then there is an additional 'indeterminate time' of the last 'week of 7 years', reserved for the 'end times' (Tribulation period). We are on a pause of the prophetic clock. Everything that Daniel says about the final week is what we call the Tribulation, and we are told that it lasts 7 years.
- **Traditional 69 Weeks Calculation says** - 69 weeks of years = 173,880 days) - March fourteenth 445 BCE to March fourteenth 32 CE is 476 years.
(1 BC to 1 CE is one year. There is no year zero
 $476 \text{ years} \times 365 \text{ days per year} = 173,740 \text{ days}$
Add for leap years = 116 days
March fourteenth to April sixth = 24 days
Total 173,880 days!
- **Another simpler way to look at it** - 49 years to rebuild Jerusalem (7×7), then 434

years to wait for Messiah's arrival to
Jerusalem (62x7) = 69

- **It was all according to plan** - if God can orchestrate world events so minutely, how much will He closely be involved in our personal lives.

- **Coming Home**

- **The Implications of the Plan of God**

- **Ephesians 10b** - "...to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

- **The Impact of the plan** - one whole family of God, connected, together.

- **MC Discussion (Impact on us Today)** - In our MC Groups we are going to talk about what it means to unite with Christ personally. Having the real discussion about whether we are all in the family of God and if so, what needs to be different in our lives if that's a reality?

- **How Christ's Death and Resurrection altered all things** - Let me give you five examples of massive things Christ did:

1. **Clearing Sin of the PAST (Vacuum)** - All the way up until Christ's death on the cross, sin was simply swept under the rug (covered over, atoned for). People were 'forgiven' based on an 'IOU' system. God looked forward to the Redemptive work of Christ as He looked at the sins of His people prior (it's always been by faith, not by righteousness. God looked at the heart of the people as they offered their sacrifices and responded accordingly, not according to the actual sacrifice, because God didn't want the blood of bulls and goats). So, ultimately Jesus vacuumed the sin out from under the rug, that had been compiled by all the 'saints' (God's people) of the past.
2. **Inaugurating the Kingdom of God in the PRESENT** - Jesus kicked off Kingdom living when He arrived. He was the perfect humanity connected to the perfection of God. His

miracles and connections with the Father is how the Kingdom flowed so easily and powerfully for Him. He gave us a tangible example of what we ought to live.

3. **Securing a Glory in the FUTURE** - Jesus died and rose again, but then Ascended into heaven to the right hand of the Father and is welcoming His children into their glory as they pass from this life to that one.
 4. **Altering the Grave/Underworld** - When Jesus died on Friday and Rose on Sunday morning (3 days), what was He "doing" on Saturday? He was proclaiming His victory in the grave (Sheol/Hades/grave/underworld) to all the dead. This proclaimed the victory to the saints and judgment to the enemies of God. Jesus led His saints up to heaven and that portion of Hades/Sheol/grave is now no longer utilized (we go directly to heaven when we die, there is no temporary holding place). Although Hell is still a temporary holding cell (they were left there), it will be emptied into the Lake of Fire in the End.
 5. **Securing the Judgment of God's Enemies (seen and unseen)** - Jesus' death and resurrection locked in both humanity's eternal destinies (making possible for some to be saved and some to be damned) as well as confirming that the fallen angels would be judged by the saints, thus locking down the eternal locations of demons.
- **Bottom Line** - What Jesus did on the cross and through His resurrection was a HUGE deal and changed everything.

Conclusion

- **God reveals all of this stuff to us** - it's the only reason why we know any of this.
- **God's not done speaking** - What is God Revealing to you today?

