

"The Kingdom of God Is Within You"

(Kingdom Wisdom and Decision Making - Luke 17:20-21; Colossians 2:3-4; 3:14-17)

Since all of God's revealed Truth to us is to be psychologically and physiologically confirmed, we cannot be careless, lazy, or flippant about our choices. No one chooses wisely apart from a radical fascination with the Repository of "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" - Jesus Christ the Lord (Col 2:3-4). Look away from Christ, to any other source, and we will be shaped by a foolish and fallen world. True wisdom hunters always pursue Christ - our Wisdom from above (I Cor 1:30; Ja 3:17,18).

His wisdom is "pure" - without mixture of motive or intent; it is "peaceable" - the "win" is unity or oneness, not getting my own way; it is "gentle" - without force or intimidation; it is "reasonable" - considers another's point of view; it is "merciful" - approachable and compassionate; it is "fruitful" - seeks to advance life and growth; it is "unwavering" - discerning but decisively for loving truth; "without hypocrisy" - no pretense or scheming. These are the characteristics of Christ our Wisdom, Whose fruit is always "righteousness" (Ja 3:17-18)

Alongside Christ and His wisdom from above we have built in advisors, indicators... question we may ask solely because the kingdom of God is within us. More reliable than our thinkers and feelers, more loving than what is expedient or convenient, more accurate than what is popular or pleasurable, these Christ-centered (not law-centered) questions point us immediately to the "mind of Christ" already within - reminding us the King of the Kingdom Himself is within us! I like to put them in this order:

- 1) What does the Word of Christ say? (Col 3:16; Lk 24:27-45)
 - A Christ-centered, New Covenant "reading" of Scripture is critical, because not everything "Biblical" is "Christian" (i.e., stoning people, tithing, eating ham sandwiches!)
- 2) How would the Peace of Christ rule over this? (Col 3:15)
 - This may be somewhat subjective, but is one of our most accurate indicators of Christ-like decision making. Do I sense the pleasure, the assurance, the blessing of God on this option... or not?
- 3) Can I stamp the Name of Christ all over what I'm about to do? (Col 3:17)
 - He is our standard for all valuation! Is this choice so representative, so congruent with His character that I can do so without any apology or rationalization?
- 4) Is my choice being compelled by the Love of Christ? (Col 3:14; II Cor 5:14)
 - Is what I'm about to do in the best interest of the others it will affect?

Tether yourself to the unshakeable Truth of Christ and His life-ordering Wisdom and when the fallen winds of this world blow hard against you, you will not be blown off course and taken captive by their lies. For, "he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed!" (I Pet 2:6)

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Greetings

Beginning in October you may notice a slight change in our calendar. A while back I sensed from God not to commit to any "out of town" meetings for a season after September. For how long? A season! (3 months, 6 months, 6 years? I don't know yet!) No particular "below the line" reason - just an "above the line" prompt.

"Are you retiring?" NO! I'm as engaged as ever counseling pastors, assisting churches in transition, and proclaiming the truth of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Maybe after 30 plus years, it is time to reset recharge, refine, reconfigure, reorder, revise... but I don't expect to retreat, retire, or resign!

Most likely, I'm just going to either be about something God has known all along, or, I'm going to re-fire for the "home stretch"! I'll keep you posted.

Either way, we are still planning our February Florida Retreat here in Alachua. Dates are February 24-26, 2023. Go ahead and set your calendars to join us in this refreshing weekend of truth, fellowship, worship and celebration. It won't be the same without you.


CALENDAR


SEPTEMBER


- 4,18 *FBCA
- 9-11 Louisville, KY (502-664-5622)
- 13 Alachua Study
- 20 Ocala Study (note date change)
- 24-**OCTOBER 1** Ashton, ID (full)


*First Baptist Church Alachua - For live stream or recorded options, go to fbcalachua.com

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