

# REVELATION

Ed Dye

## I. INTRODUCCION

1. Pertaining to the will of God and knowing the will of God, the Apostle Paul draws a sharp contrast between human wisdom and divine revelation in 1Cor.1:18-23; 2:1-16.
2. Since early times men have placed human wisdom above divine wisdom in seeking to learn the will and ways of God. See Isa.55:6-11; Jno.5:39,40.
3. Through the years, even down to our time, with man, anything that could not and cannot be logically reasoned out by their standard mental human procedures could not be and is not accepted.
4. The apostle is not saying that human wisdom has no place at all in God's scheme of things.
5. However, he is saying that it is not the function of human wisdom, human ways and reasonings, regardless of how advanced they might be, to arrive at the will of God. See Prov.14:12; Jer.10:23; See also Psa.17:5; Prov.16:9.
6. God's will can be known only by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, or as the Spirit of God reveals it to man; so the N.T. teaches.
7. Paul frequently warns against the replacement of divine revelation by human wisdom. See especially 1Cor.1 and 2.
8. Herein he plainly declares that the will of God cannot be learned or determined by human wisdom; it must come by divine revelation.

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. FIRST, WHAT IS REVELATION?

1. Paul in Col.1:25-28 answers.
  - a. The revelation is the "mystery" made known by God.
  - b. The word "mystery," as it is used here and elsewhere by Paul, when it refers to the revelation of God, W.E. Vine says: "In the N.T. it denotes, not the mysterious (as with the Eng. Word), but that which, being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, can be made known only by Divine revelation, and is made known in a manner and at a time appointed by God, and to those

only who are illumined by His Spirit. In the ordinary sense a mystery implies knowledge withheld; while its Scriptural significance is truth revealed. Hence the terms especially associated with the subject are ‘made known,’ ‘manifested,’ ‘revealed,’ ‘preached,’ ‘understand,’ ‘dispensation.’”

- c. Therefore, revelation is the mystery (that which is in the mind of God and unknown to man) revealed – it is God manifesting His will to man in terms man can understand.
2. In Scriptural terminology we can, using “Bible names for Bible things,” speak of “the mystery revealed” but, strictly speaking, once revealed it is no longer a mystery; it is a revelation.

## **B. WHY IS REVELATION NECESSARY, OR WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF REVELATION?**

1. Once again the apostle Paul in Eph.3:1-11 answers, according to which:
  - a. He had been given “the dispensation of the grace of God;” that is, the commission from God as an apostle of Jesus Christ to reveal and preach the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles.
  - b. He had received the gospel from God by revelation (which was a mystery before and until it was revealed).
  - c. He wrote the revelation he received in words so the Ephesians then and us now might understand both what he wrote and that what he wrote was the mystery of Christ being revealed; that is, the gospel.
  - d. He received it by revelation and wrote it down so that when the Ephesians (and all others) read it they might come to know and understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ which he revealed.
  - e. He says, this mystery “in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;” that is, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.
2. According to V.6 the mystery revealed what the Gentiles should share with the Jews.
3. Vv.7-11 reveal to us additional information pertaining to Paul’s special relationship to this revealed gospel of Christ. Study and

become aware of that which each verse noted separately emphasizes.

- a. V.7.
- b. V.8.
- c. V.9.
- d. V.10.
- e. V.11

**C. OF VITAL INTEREST TO US IS THE METHOD OF THIS REVELATION.**

1. How did God made his will known to man?
  - a. Did he do so by man's own wisdom and power or reason?
  - b. Did he permit man to draw conclusions from His (i.e., God's) acts in history?
  - c. Did he just stamp His approval upon the conclusions developed by man?
  - d. Or did he reveal his will to man in some direct way?
  - e. In short, did revelation come as a result of man's own wisdom and learning or by a miraculous intervention of God?
2. The simple answer is revealed:
  - a. In Eph.3:1-3.
  - b. In 1Cor.2:1-13, which, among other things, shows that only the Spirit of God knows the mind of God and reveals it to man.
  - c. In Heb.1:1. See Deut.18:18,19; Ac.3:19-24.
  - d. In 2Pet.1:20,21:
    - (1) The prophets were thus borne (carried) along by the Holy Spirit.
    - (2) That is, they were passive, in a sense, contributing nothing of their own will and way to the revelation.
    - (3) Of course, they were active in the sense of reception and proclamation (or writing) of the message given them; but as far as its contents were concerned they were absolutely passive.
    - (4) The revelation itself came from God, and no true prophet of God ever claimed any part of it originated with him.

- (5) It was the Holy Spirit's function to reveal to man through the prophet that which had its origin in the mind of God.
3. See also Rom.11:34.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

1. To state the conclusion briefly, the function of the Holy Spirit was to take the contents of God's mind and by some means convey to the human mind what God wanted man to know, and/or what is essential for man to know as do to be saved from past sins, live righteously, and have hope of the future salvation in heaven.
2. This the Spirit did through revelation by putting the will of God (the contents of the divine mind) into words; and by these words, which were understandable by man, he was able to convey to the human mind the thoughts of God.
3. Thus, the Word of God is the revelation of the will of God.
4. Revelation is therefore the method used by the Holy Spirit through the apostles to bring to man the saving truth of God. (This point to be discussed more fully later.)
5. While other truths in other fields of knowledge may be learned by human wisdom, saving truth can be known only by divine revelation delivered by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. See Eph.3:1-11; Gal.1:6-12.

*(Credit to Howard Winters – from his book: “The Word of the Holy Spirit,” pp.5-8)*