



WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL
Volume 18 Number 8
February 22, 2022

Fool's Gold or Real Gold? - Part 1
The "Wisdom of the Wise" Versus the Truth of the Gospel
By Tal Davis

A number of years ago we took our sons panning for gold in Dahlonega, Georgia. That's right... Georgia. There indeed is "gold in them-there hills" of north Georgia. In fact, the first gold rush in America was in the Peach State in 1828. That was twenty years before gold was discovered in California (1849) and nearly seventy years before it was found in Alaska (1897). Unfortunately, there is not enough of it now left in Georgia to make formal mining worthwhile. But, you can still find small nuggets in some places.

In any case, Gold is a universally valued metal. Almost every civilization in the world has regarded it as a highly prized possession. It has been the objective of kings and pirates to hoard as much gold as possible for their treasuries. In Key West, Florida, there is a museum founded more than forty years ago by a late treasure hunter named Mel Fisher. In the 1970s and '80s, his diving company salvaged millions of dollars worth of gold coins and bullion from sunken Spanish galleons and other ships off the coast of Florida.

The precious metal gold (Au) has some unique qualities. Not only does it gleam with a beautiful yellowish color, but it has an extremely dense weight. If you have ever lifted a gold bar you know how heavy it is. A standard small gold bar weighs from 25-30 pounds (a normal sized red brick weighs about 4½ pounds).

All that being said, some rocks do look remarkably like gold. One stone, called Iron Pyrite, is commonly called "Fool's Gold." It has been the bane

of many a prospector who thought he had struck it rich only to be told his claim was essentially worthless. Fool's Gold looks good – but is relatively valueless compared real gold.

While daring prospectors risked their lives searching for gold, many people are looking for another kind of metaphorical gold, that is, the gold of a good life. In our studies of the various worldviews on our website, we have catalogued the many ways humanity seeks to make their lives, meaningful, valuable, and true.

The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthian Christians (1 Corinthians), a church with many internal problems, including personal conflicts, immorality, doctrinal confusion, and claims by some members of being super spiritual. One problem featured disputes over the source of genuine spiritual truth. The Apostle Paul wanted his readers to recognize what was the real and authentic source of life for today and for eternal life. Just as it is today, in Paul's era there were many competing and counterfeit philosophies and religious systems. Unfortunately, the church in Corinth was falling under the influence of some of those false teachers and teachings. We will use the analogy of gold to distinguish what Paul said was genuine truth (Real Gold) from what he regarded as falsehood (Fool's Gold).

Paul was concerned that the Corinthians clearly understood that faith in Jesus Christ was not the result of the Fool's Gold of human canard, but the Real Gold of divine revelation from God. In his letter, Paul specified two kinds of Fool's Gold that may deceive believers, and shared how they (and we) could know how to

Permission to Reprint

If you wish to reprint this article in your own print or electronic newsletter, please include the following text:

*Reprinted from **Worldview Made Practical**; a free e-zine produced by **MarketFaith Ministries** featuring practical teaching and life tools to help Christians become more effective in their faith life. Discover **MarketFaith Ministries** at www.marketfaith.org.*

Speaking Schedule

If you are interested in having Freddy Davis or Tal Davis present one of our **Worldview Seminars** or to share about worldview and its practical implications at your church or organization, please contact **MarketFaith Ministries** to schedule your event. All contact information is at the bottom of this e-zine.

Worldview Resources

It is one of the primary purposes of **MarketFaith Ministries** to provide resources to help Christians understand the practical implications of worldview. You can find many free resources that will help you in your quest at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

discern what is the Real Gold of truth. In this first installment we will examine that first example of Fool's Gold, the "wisdom of the wise." In part two, we will analyze the second example of the "superiority of speech." We will show how in both cases Paul contrasted them with what is Real Gold.

So, first, Paul warned of the Fool's Gold of the "wisdom of the wise."

"18 For the word of the cross is foolishness (moria - folly, absurdity) to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written: "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE WHO HAVE UNDERSTANDING, I WILL CONFOUND." 20 Where is the wise person? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of the world (sophian tou kosmou)? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." (1 Corinthians 1:18-21 NASB)

Paul told the Corinthians that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, that is the unsaved lost. He even quoted from the Old Testament where God told the Prophet Isaiah:

"I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE WHO HAVE UNDERSTANDING, I WILL CONFOUND." (see Isaiah 29:14)

Paul then asked four rhetorical questions, of which the answers should be self-evident (v. 20).

"Where is the wise person? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater

(suzétetés - philosophical disputer) of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of the world?"

The "wise" persons were the supposedly learned men of that historical period. Paul was highly educated and well acquainted with the religions and philosophies of the world of his generation. He even quoted a pagan Greek poet when addressing the Athenian Areopagus (Acts 17:28). Nonetheless, the obvious answer to each of his first three conjectural inquiries is that they were essentially nowhere in getting close to the truth. In fact, he infers in question four, that God had shown the ridiculousness of their ideologies. That last question made it clear that all their human philosophical musings and pagan mythologies had failed at the most important point. It had failed to lead them to a knowledge of the One True God.

"For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God" (v. 21a).

Paul's point is that this kind of human "wisdom" was, and is, all Fool's Gold. The intellectual history of mankind demonstrates that manmade philosophies do not lead a person to God, only to confusion and despair.

When I was in grade school and college, I had a very intelligent friend (a lot more so than I). As a child he went faithfully to the same church I did, but it was as though he never got a real grip on the truth. Part of that may have been because the church he and I attended did not, itself, have a good grip on the truth. In college, he explored all sorts of philosophies and psychological theories. Eventually our friendship waned, and years later I heard he was in some kind of eastern religious cult. His case reminds of Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 3:7 about unrighteous men who were *"...always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth."*

Subscription Information SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE:

A subscription to **Worldview Made Practical** is complementary for anyone interested in receiving it. If you received this email as a forward from a family member or a friend and wish to subscribe for yourself, you may do so at www.marketfaith.org. If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply follow the instructions found at the bottom of each edition.

Contact Information

If you wish to contact us directly, you may do so by the following methods:

321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312

E-mail:

info@marketfaith.org

Phone: 850-383-9756 (Tallahassee, Florida)

Fax: 850-514-4571

You can order our products and examine our services at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

This issue of **Worldview Made Practical** is a production of **MarketFaith Ministries**, © 2023. All rights reserved.

What a contrast to the Real Gold of the message of the gospel. Paul declared *"but to us who are being saved it is the power of God"* (v. 18b). He said it was, to those enmeshed in the world's flawed worldviews and philosophies, "foolishness." But he audaciously stated that *"God was pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe"* (v. 21b).

I have in my library a number of books on philosophy, science, and various religions. But they all cannot compare to the wisdom and truth found in the Bible. As was true in Paul's time, human philosophy still only leads ultimately to hopelessness. The gospel and the Bible lead to Jesus Christ, the very embodiment of truth, confidence, and eternal life.

As Paul later told the Christians in Rome,

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16 NASB).

But Paul did not stop there in his analysis of worldly wisdom and flawed worldviews for his Corinthian readers. In the next installment we will look further at his contrast of worldly wisdom to divine truth, i.e. "Fool's Gold" versus "Real Gold." We will see how the message Paul presented came not through the superiority of speech but through the supernatural power of God.

Would You Consider Supporting Us?

Would you consider financial support for **MarketFaith Ministries**? I feel confident that what we are doing is consistent with your beliefs about spreading the gospel and equipping the saints for ministry. Would you let us be one element of your hands and feet in this process? **MarketFaith Ministries** is a 501 (c) (3) not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible. If you would consider this we would be very grateful. Also, if you would like to know more about the ministry, it would be my pleasure to share with you personally what we are working on and how you can plug in. I can be reached at 850-383-9756 or by e-mail at Freddy@marketfaith.org. As for any donations, they may be sent directly to **MarketFaith Ministries** at 321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312, or you can contribute through our secure website at www.marketfaith.org. Simply click on the "Donate" button at the bottom of the homepage. We are deeply grateful for your support of this ministry.

And, as always, if you have any thoughts, opinions or suggestions about how **MarketFaith Ministries** can help you, please feel free, at any time, to call (850-383-9756) or e-mail (info@marketfaith.org). We are here to serve you.