

~PHILOSOPHY (285)

[Greek, *phi-lo-so-phi'a*]

- The **Greek** word *phi-lo-so-phi'a* means, literally, love of wisdom. In modern usage the term relates to **human endeavors to understand and interpret through reason and speculation the whole of human experience, including the underlying causes and principles of reality.**
- The **Greek** words for philosophy and philosopher each occur only once in the **Christian Greek Scriptures.**
- Look out! Perhaps there may be someone who will carry you off as his prey through the **philosophy** and **empty deception** according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ. (**Colossians 2:8**)
- But certain ones of both the Epicurean and the Stoic **philosophers** took to conversing with him controversially, and some would say; What is it this chatterer would like to tell? Others; He seems to be a publisher of foreign deities. This was because he was declaring the Good News of Jesus and the resurrection. (**Acts of Apostles 17:18**)
- Evidently when Paul wrote to the congregation at Colossae in Asia Minor, some there were in danger of being affected by the **philosophy and empty deception** according to the tradition of men. Greek philosophies were then quite prominent.
- But the context of;
- Look out! Perhaps there may be someone who will carry you off as his prey through the **philosophy** and empty deception according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ. (**Colossians 2:8**)
- Shows that of special concern to Paul were Judaizers who were trying to bring Christians back to observing the Mosaic Law with its required circumcision, festival days, and abstinence from eating certain foods.
- By relationship with him you were also circumcised with a circumcision performed without hands by the stripping off the

body of the flesh, by the circumcision that belongs to the Christ.
(Colossians 2:11)

- Therefore let no man judge you in eating and drinking or in respect of a festival or of an observance of the new moon or of a Sabbath. (Colossians 2:16)
- For those things are a shadow of the things to come, but the reality belongs to the Christ. (Colossians 2:17)
- Paul was not opposed to knowledge, for he prayed that Christians be filled with it. But, as he showed, one must appreciate the role of Jesus Christ in the outworking of God's purpose in order to obtain true wisdom and accurate knowledge.
- That is also why we, from the day we heard of it, have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension. (Colossians 1:9)
- In order to walk worthily of Yehowah to the end of fully pleasing him as you go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:10)
- That their hearts may be comforted, that they may be harmoniously joined together in love and with a view to all the riches of the full assurance of their understanding, with a view to an accurate knowledge of the sacred secret of God, namely, Christ. (Colossians 2:2)
- Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. (Colossians 2:3)
- The Colossians were to look out lest perhaps someone with persuasive arguments carry them off as prey through a human way of thinking or outlook. Such a **philosophy** would be part of the **elementary things**, *stoi-khei'a*, of the world, that is, the principles or basic components and motivating factors of the world, and not according to Christ.
- This I am saying that no man may delude you with persuasive arguments. (Colossians 2:4)
- Look out! Perhaps there may be someone who will carry you off

as his prey through the **philosophy** and empty deception according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ. (**Colossians 2:8**)

- When in Athens Paul had an encounter with the Epicurean and the Stoic **philosophers**.
- But certain ones of both the Epicurean and the Stoic philosophers took to conversing with him controversially, and some would say; What is it this chatterer would like to tell? Others; He seems to be a publisher of foreign deities. This was because he was declaring the Good News of Jesus and the resurrection. (**Acts of Apostles 17:18**)
- They termed the apostle a **chatterer**, using the **Greek** word *spermo-lo'gos*, which literally applies to a **bird that picks up seeds**. The word also carries the thought of **one who picks up scraps of knowledge and repeats such without order or method**.
- Those **philosophers** disdained Paul and his message. Basically the Epicurean **philosophy** was that the obtaining of pleasure, particularly mental pleasure, was the chief good in life.
- If, like men, I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, of what good is it to me? If the dead are not to be raised up, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die. (**1 Corinthians 15:32**)
- Though it acknowledged gods, it explained these as being beyond human experience and concern. The **philosophy** of the Stoics **stressed fate or natural destiny, one should be of high virtue but strive for indifference to pain or pleasure**.
- Neither Epicureans nor Stoics believed in the resurrection. In his speech before such men, Paul highlighted the relationship and accountability of the individual to the Creator and connected therewith Christ's resurrection and the guarantee this provided men. To Greeks asking for wisdom the message about Christ was foolishness.
- For both the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks look for wisdom. (**1 Corinthians 1:22**)
- But we preach Christ impaled, to the Jews a cause for stumbling but to the nations foolishness. (**1 Corinthians 1:23**)

- **And when Paul mentioned the resurrection, many of his hearers began to mock, although some became believers.**
- **Paul now stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said; Men of Athens, I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are. (Acts of Apostles 17:22)**
- **For instance, while passing along and carefully observing your objects of veneration I also found an altar on which had been inscribed, to An Unknown God. Therefore what you are unknowingly giving godly devotion to, this I am publishing to you. (Acts of Apostles 17:23)**
- **The God that made the world and all the things in it, being, as this One is, Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade temples. (Acts of Apostles 17:24)**
- **Neither is he attended to by human hands as if he needed anything, because he himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things. (Acts of Apostles 17:25)**
- **And he made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth, and he decreed the appointed times and the set limits of the dwelling of men. (Acts of Apostles 17:26)**
- **For them to seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. (Acts of Apostles 17:27)**
- **For by him we have life and move and exist, even as certain ones of the poets among you have said; For we are also his progeny. (Acts of Apostles 17:28)**
- **Seeing, therefore, that we are the progeny of God, we ought not to imagine that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man. (Acts of Apostles 17:29)**
- **True, God has overlooked the times of such ignorance, yet now he is telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent. (Acts of Apostles 17:30)**
- **Because he has set a day in which he purposes to judge the**

- inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead. ([Acts of Apostles 17:31](#))
- Well, when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some began to mock, while others said; We will hear you about this even another time. ([Acts of Apostles 17:32](#))
 - Thus Paul went out from their midst. ([Acts of Apostles 17:33](#))
 - In his inspired letters Paul emphasized a number of times that **the wisdom and falsely called knowledge of the world is foolishness** with God and is to be avoided by Christians.
 - For the speech about the torture stake is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is God's power. ([1 Corinthians 1:18](#))
 - For it is written: I will make the wisdom of the wise men perish, and the intelligence of the intellectual men I will shove aside. ([1 Corinthians 1:19](#))
 - Where is the wise man? Where the scribe? Where the debater of this system of things? Did not God make the wisdom of the world foolish? ([1 Corinthians 1:20](#))
 - For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not get to know God, God saw good through the foolishness of what is preached to save those believing. ([1 Corinthians 1:21](#))
 - For both the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks look for wisdom. ([1 Corinthians 1:22](#))
 - But we preach Christ impaled, to the Jews a cause for stumbling but to the nations foolishness. ([1 Corinthians 1:23](#))
 - However, to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ([1 Corinthians 1:24](#))
 - Because a foolish thing of God is wiser than men, and a weak thing of God is stronger than men. ([1 Corinthians 1:25](#))
 - For you behold his calling of you, brothers, that not many wise in

a fleshly way were called, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. (**1 Corinthians 1:26**)

- But God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put the wise men to shame, and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put the strong things to shame. (**1 Corinthians 1:27**)
- And God chose the ignoble things of the world and the things looked down upon, the things that are not, that he might bring to nothing the things that are. (**1 Corinthians 1:28**)
- In order, that no flesh might boast in the sight of God. (**1 Corinthians 1:29**)
- But it is due to him that you are in union with Christ Jesus, who has become to us wisdom from God, also righteousness and sanctification and release by ransom. (**1 Corinthians 1:30**)
- That it may be just as it is written: He that boasts, let him boast in Yehowah. (**1 Corinthians 1:31**)
- Now we speak wisdom among those who are mature, but not the wisdom of this system of things nor that of the rulers of this system of things, who are to come to nothing. (**1 Corinthians 2:6**)
- But we speak God's wisdom in a sacred secret, the hidden wisdom, which God foreordained before the systems of things for our glory. (**1 Corinthians 2:7**)
- This wisdom not one of the rulers of this system of things came to know, for if they had known it they would not have impaled the glorious Lord. (**1 Corinthians 2:8**)
- These things we also speak, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, as we combine spiritual matters with spiritual words. (**1 Corinthians 2:13**)
- Let no one be seducing himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this system of things, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. (**1 Corinthians 3:18**)
- For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, for it is written: He catches the wise in their own cunning. (**1**

Corinthians 3:19)

- **And again: Yehowah knows that the reasonings of the wise men are futile. (1 Corinthians 3:20)**
- **O Timothy, guard what is laid up in trust with you, turning away from the empty speeches that violate what is holy and from the contradictions of the falsely called, knowledge. (1 Timothy 6:20)**