

Untitled (53)

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[0:00] There's not much power in it. So, you're probably wondering what's in the briefcase. And you're probably wondering from the passages what I'm going to talk about today.

! Well, lately we've had some messages on suffering. You know, I've delivered a message on suffering. Father Caleb has delivered a couple. Father Mark, you delivered a message on suffering. We've talked about it, but when we talked about suffering, we forgot to mention one of the benefits of suffering. And that's insight. One of the things that we gain from suffering is insight, which, as we know, can be very, very useful for a lot of things.

So, we'll call suffering plan A for acquiring insight, for sake of discussion. But there's also another way to gain insight. There's another way to gain understanding into the things of the Lord, into His character, and what He wants to do.

We can ask. We can ask. So, I'm just going to do a little thing here. Mark, I need a volunteer.

[1:19] I volunteer. I volunteer. So, there's an undetermined amount of money in that briefcase. So, if I told you there was \$100 in that briefcase, would you leave the service and go downstairs and get it?

For \$100, probably not. I'd probably wait for you to be finished before I... Okay. What if I said there's \$1,000 in that briefcase, would you go downstairs?

I might not, but I might make hand signals to Xavier back there. All right. All right. What if I told you there was \$10,000 in that briefcase?

I'd probably see you in a few minutes. Yeah. Okay. All right. One more thing. What do you think is more valuable, the money in that briefcase or insight?

Probably insights. All right. Thank you. Okay. Good. All right. Kind of illustrates a point, though, doesn't it?

[2:23] Yeah. Now, let me ask you one more question. Okay. Would you just kind of go down like this? Oh, yeah, I think I'm going after the briefcase. Or would you run down and get it? I would run down and get it. Okay.

We're good. All right. So, you see that there's something valuable, and you'd go after it with a sense of urgency. You'd have some passion, wouldn't you?

You'd find a way to move quickly. Well, let's go back to that passage in Proverbs that was read earlier today. Starting in chapter 2, we read verses 1 through 8.

And I'll just kind of mention a few words in here that come to mind. My son, if you receive my words and treasure up, treasure up my commandments.

Make ear attentive to wisdom. Incline the heart to understanding. Raise your voice for understanding. If you seek it like silver or search for it as a hidden treasure.

[3:24] Well, if someone told you there's a treasure buried in the field out there, how would you look for it? Quickly and with urgency, right? Right?

Just like you go downstairs and get the briefcase. For the Lord gives wisdom. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom from the upright and is a shield to those who walk in integrity.

So, in this passage, you know, there's a father instructing his son about wisdom. And I don't really want to talk about that, but what I want to do is borrow from this passage a sense of urgency.

The idea is that we perceive that insight and understanding is really, really worth something. And we all know about gold. We all know about precious stones.

We all know about money. We don't need anyone to teach us that these things are valuable. But, how often do we think these things are more valuable than insight and wisdom and understanding?

[4:32] In fact, if we look at our lives, we probably spend a lot more energy chasing after these things than we do insight and wisdom and understanding from God's Word. So, the question is, what is insight?

If we were going to kind of describe it and kind of just put a term to it, what is insight? And we'll say it's the wisdom to see into the true nature of God and His Word, to understand and perceive God so that you may know Him better.

So, the kind of insight that we're talking about today is the insight that gives you understanding and wisdom into looking into the Word of God. And the idea is, you won't just do this going through the motions.

The idea is, you're going to be like Mark running downstairs after that briefcase. You're going to do it with some urgency and with some passion, and you're going to go for it. That's the takeaway. Passion.

You have to really, really want it. So, enough of that passage. I'm going to take the passages out of order. Now, I'm going to talk about the passage in the Gospel of John.

[5:43] Now, just a quick show of hands. How many people think that passage was really hard to understand? Okay. I see a few hands going up.

When I was a new Christian, and I was looking at the Bible, and I was reading, and I came across that passage in the Gospel of John, I was like, you've got to be kidding me.

How in the world could I understand this? Because I was sitting there thinking, okay, there's how many millions of Christians, so you'd have to subdivide His body into how many parts, so how many millions of people could each have a part?

That's how I was trying to understand the passage when I was new in the Lord, and I'm like, this just does not make any sense. So, I was thinking to myself, how can this be true?

How can I possibly understand this? Well, the Lord Himself gives us a hint just a few verses later. And skipping ahead, I'll just read a few verses here.

[6:48] It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. So, there's this notion here that words in the Bible can be spirit and can be life.

So, we can say, oh, okay, it's an allegory, it's a metaphor. So, in this instance, the Lord was using a very pound-you-over-the-head illustration to teach a spiritual point.

Well, that didn't come to me right away when I was a new Christian. In fact, it was a few years of having to go to church, having to listen to sermons, and having to pray, and having to study before I actually understood what that passage meant.

But the thing was, it just didn't come to me. I had to pray. So, that brings me to the passage that we talked about in Ephesians today. And just going back to it, Paul says, for this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.

So, we see here the Apostle Paul is praying for these folks, and he's praying for us too, truth be knowing. And he goes on to say that, may the Father of glory give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

[8:30] So, you've got to ask yourself, what in the world is he talking about when he says, eyes to the heart? Because, I mean, I went to school my whole life, I hear the teacher teach, I use my eyes to see what's on the chalkboard, I use my ears to hear, and I use my brain to think, and I learn, right?

Not really. I mean, this is eyes to the heart. So, in the ancient world, what was the heart considered to be? It was considered to be the seat of emotions, your hopes, your fears, your dreams, your innermost person, where you live every day.

Your soul, your thoughts. So, what Paul is praying for here is that your inner being with the eyes to your heart that you're going to come to understand this hope.

And in this prayer, Paul is teaching us something. For years, I struggled with the Bible. I really didn't understand it. So, what I did, and I'll just share this with you, I took this prayer, and I took the other prayer in Ephesians, and I took the other prayers, like in Colossians, and Philippians, and Corinthians, and I took the congregation's name out, and I stuck my name in there.

So, I used to take this and say, you know, Lord, I give thanks. And I would say, Lord, give me a spirit of wisdom. Give me revelation and the knowledge of you.

[10:04] So, I took these prayers, and I personalized them. And my logic was this. I figured, well, was the Apostle Paul close to God? Yeah. Do you think he knew about the love of Christ and the power of Christ in his life?

Yeah. So, do you think these prayers, he was praying for the right things for these folks? Yeah. And so, what happened was, when I took these prayers, and I put them into my life, I started to see, and I started to understand his word.

But, the idea was, I had to do it with that sense of urgency that we were talking about back in Proverbs chapter 2. We have innumerable spiritual blessings in Christ.

Ephesians chapter 1 talks about that, those who've been to my Sunday school now, so we won't go through them all again. But the idea is, every spiritual blessing that we ever need, we have in Christ.

We are seated with Christ at the right hand of the Father. We are in the heavenly realms. So, the question then becomes, why are we not experiencing the power of these blessings in our daily lives?

[11 : 19] Why aren't they touching us here? Or, another question might be, why do we look into the word and we don't understand? So, what I wanted to do today is just give you a very simple challenge.

I want all of you to take these, got these passages from the epistles and integrate them into your prayer lives. Stick your name in there and pray and ask for insight, ask for wisdom, ask for understanding the way that fellow back in Proverbs chapter 2 is looking for treasure.

Do it with some passion and do it with some urgency. And, when I did this years ago, I was amazed at what the, you know, I learned. And, I think all of you will be amazed the same way.

Because, the most important thing you can have is insight into the mystery of Christ. Because, if you have insight into the mystery of Christ, you can experience Christ and all his richness with all his blessings.

so that allows us to love each other with the same love that God loves us. And then, it allows us to be a witness to the world. Which is, which is why we're here.

[12 : 34] So, that's all I have for today. It's just a challenge. Go home, take these passages and work them into your prayer life. So, it's the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.