

'God's Wisdom Revealed'

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[0:00] Good morning, everyone. My name is James. I'm also one of the pastors here at HCD. I'm also the newest pastor here at HCD. Father, we thank you for your word that it reveals! Father, we thank you for your word that it reveals to us who you are and what you've done in Christ Jesus our Lord. We pray now that you would help us see you clearly and honour Christ with all that we do. In his name we pray. Amen. Our oldest child, Levi, he's in prep. He started prep this year and I was chatting to someone at 10.30 last week and she said that her youngest was finishing year 12 this year. It just seems like an eternity away that that would ever happen to us. But then for many who go through high school, some end up at uni. I know some of you are going to open days today as well and what I've realised is that our whole life is just full of learning.

There's learning in the primary school time. There's learning you learn to read and to write. In secondary school you do a bit more advanced stuff. You get the Bunsen burners out. You learn how to burn things. You understand the history of some things. And in university you can study broad things. You can study narrow fields. But even as you begin professional work, whether you've been to uni or not, or you do a trade, there are short courses that you can do. See, no matter what field of work you're in, no matter what you do in life, there's someone creating some content or some courses for you to follow for further education. It could just be my social media algorithms, but so many of my people I follow are now creating courses. You know, whether you want to learn about investing, how to master the use of AI, how to communicate, how to tell stories, how to free yourself from lower back pain. I don't know, that keeps coming up for me.

I have been tempted to pay for that one. They're all selling knowledge. They're all selling wisdom. Bookstores and YouTube are filled with people's promises of knowledge. The secret of flexibility, even in your old age. The secret of strength and happiness, success and wealth. I even saw a book on the promise of love. I didn't read it. But we all want knowledge, don't we? We all want wisdom. It could be rooted in the wrong places. You know, we want to be smarter than other people. We want to boast about our smarts. Or we could use that wisdom to apply it to different areas of our lives, can't we? We want to be wise with our finances so we can make decisions about money and steward it well.

And we don't want to stress about money. And so, you know, maybe I want to retire early and comfortably. Seeking wisdom so I know how to parent, how I can raise children or to be confident, to be obedient, and most importantly, quiet. Let me know if you have that resource. I will buy that off you.

[3:01] But what is true of wisdom and knowledge for us now was the same truth that the Corinthians had as well in the first century. The search for wisdom. Well, more rightly, the Corinthians already thought that they were wise, but they showed that they weren't. And it showed in the life of the church.

The Corinthian church thought that they were wise, but they were not. And the reason Paul gives to prove or to show that the church that they were not wise was that the church had a problem, that the church was divided. There was divisions amongst the church and conflicts within the church around the apostles. And the root problem that Paul brings up was that you, the Corinthian church, had a worldly view of wisdom. They were looking for who's the smartest person, who's the wisest person, who's the one that speaks the best and will follow them. Comparing them with one another, one-upping one another, saying, I follow this person, I follow that person.

But they used the world's wisdom and the world's way of understanding to try to understand God and the church. They used the world's wisdom to apply to the leaders and the church. All the while, Jesus, the cross, and God were being neglected, rejected, and ignored. See, God's wisdom was not being understood in Corinth. God's wisdom can only be understood by the Spirit. God's wisdom

is not just an understanding, but it's actually a relationship with God through Christ. If you're following along in your outlines, let me turn this clicker on. I'm still learning how to use everything. This is our first point. Oh, that's missing one. It's our first point, verse 6. God's wisdom is not the world's wisdom. Verse 6, read with me.

Paul wants the people to understand it's a message spoken among the mature. The mature being those who know Jesus, Christians, those who understand and know Christ crucified. See, God's wisdom is not a wisdom of this age. It's not one that the rulers and the powers of this age can comprehend.

[5:17] The same rulers and powers who are coming to nothing. When we pause and think about that, it makes sense, right? Christianity has stood the test of time. I remember not that long ago, there was the new atheist movement with the four horsemen. Do you guys remember this? It was a coordinated attack or bombardment against religion, mainly Christianity, by some of the world's brightest minds.

Evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, philosopher and neuroscientist Sam Harris, cognitive scientist, I don't know what cognitive scientist is or are, but Daniel Dennett, and journalist Christopher Hitchens. These four were prolific in the books that they wrote and what they said. Books like *The God Delusion*, that was written by Dawkins, sat on top of the New York Times bestseller list for almost a whole year. Christopher Hitchens wrote, *God is not great*, with a thread that went through his book that religion poisons everything.

Sam Harris argued that modern society must prioritise secular reasoning over dogmatic scripture. Dennett argued and said, religion is a natural and evolutionary phenomenon and it will pass. God is not great. Their ideas seem powerful. Their presence was powerful and it seemed permanent for one stage, right? I remember City Bible Forum, a ministry here in Australia, they ran lots of debates with apologists versus new atheists or those who claim to be new atheists. I wonder whether you were there or remember those debates. John Lennox versus Peter Singer, William Lane Craig versus Lawrence Krauss.

I remember I was a youth leader back at that stage and I thought, oh, I don't have to organise Bible study, I'll just bring everyone to a debate at Melbourne Town Hall. But what I remember of those nights is that I remember people jeering, mocking and laughing. They were laughing at John Lennox. People were booing William Lane Craig every time he spoke. And John Lennox and William Lane Craig, both Christian, both Christian apologists, were so gracious and kind despite the way that they were treated.

[7:30] Despite even the person debating them was mocking them and the crowd was booing them. You see, these four horsemen, these were wise men by the world standards. They influenced a whole generation. But if I didn't bring it up today, you wouldn't have thought of them today.

It hasn't even been that long, but we don't think of them anymore, do we? A couple of years ago, this is Ayaan Hirsi Ali. She was what was considered the fifth horseman or horsewoman. She was raised a Muslim and turned to new atheism. And in 2023, she became a Christian.

Look at that quote on the screen. I've also turned to Christianity because I ultimately found life without any spiritual solace unendurable, indeed very nearly self-destructive. Atheism failed to answer a simple question.

What is the meaning and purpose of life? The wisdom of this age is folly and it is plain to see. See, the new atheism fad has come in God.

Though it may seem that a time that they won the argument, but look at what Paul says about God's wisdom in verse 7. See, God's wisdom was and still is true and it will be true for all time.

[9:01] It was hidden from them, the four horsemen and the new atheists. God's wisdom was hidden and remained a mystery for them. God's wisdom predates all of these men and women.

God's wisdom predates all of the ideas. God's wisdom is truth and the world's wisdom is folly. God's wisdom was set before all of time and is permanent and is destined for the glory of God and for his people.

It's interesting, you can't philosophize your way into the kingdom of God. You can't debate yourself to meet Christ in salvation. The wisdom of this world, the wisdom of this age is ever only just that, of this world and of this age.

But God's wisdom is destined for the glory of God's people before time began. I like to think of it, the wisdom of this world is like a fashion cycle. I don't update my wardrobe often, like at all.

I only bought these clothes because I preached up front, so this is the same thing I wore last time I preached up front. You'll notice that trend every time I preach up front.

[10:12] But I say to Melody, if I ride out this fashion cycle, my clothes will come back into fashion. The arguments will get recycled over and over again.

You see, the wisdom of this world, the people of this world and the world itself is opposed to God. If the rulers of this age knew of this wisdom, it says in verse 8, if they knew the wisdom of God, if they knew the love of God, the salvation that's found in God, in Christ, then they wouldn't have crucified Jesus.

See, their wisdom didn't understand God's wisdom. You know, your thoughts lead to your actions. If I think something, I end up doing something. The wisdom of this world led to their actions.

They showed that they do not know God. They showed that they do not worship God. See, Herod of Antipas, Pilate, the religious leaders of the day, the scribes and the Pharisees, none of them saw Jesus as their promised king.

None of them saw Jesus as the son of God. But ironically, they all knew that Jesus was innocent. Ironically, they all knew that Barabbas was guilty.

[11:21] But they chose a guilty murderer, Barabbas, over Jesus. And in their wisdom, they crucified him. It was God's plan, God's predestined plan, from before time began, that he would send his one and only son, Jesus, to die the death of sinners, at the hands of sinners.

Those who live in the world's wisdom oppose God. They live their own way. They reject God. They reject God's offer to save them. They reject God's offer to restore them and to renew them.

So using their wisdom, the wisdom of this world, they act out their intentions, and they crucified Jesus and fulfilled God's plan of salvation. I've been reading through Genesis, and it's been the case through all time, even since Genesis, that God, in his wisdom, sovereignly uses the wisdom of this world for his plans and purposes.

Look at Genesis 50, verse 20. You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. This is the story of Joseph being sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, his brothers who wanted to kill him.

But he climbs the ranks in Egypt and saves the whole world from famine, including the brothers who originally tried to kill him. See, God uses the sinfulness, the foolishness of man to fulfill his salvation plan.

[12:45] We've been hearing the last couple of weeks from the previous passages in 1 Corinthians, that the gospel message in the eyes of the world is pure foolishness. You realize no Hollywood script writer would ever think of it, that God would enthrone his son with the crown of thorns, that Jesus' path to glory was through death, that the son of God and his exaltation would be through nails in his hands, that God's love and mercy shown to all of mankind is through the death of his one and only son, uttering the words, it is finished as he breathed his last.

The world's wisdom is that he dies at their hands. Dying at the hands of Romans, encouraged and urged by the, and commanded by the very people of God.

The very people of God that God rescued time and time again, they were the ones that shouted, crucify him. See, God's wisdom cannot be attained.

It cannot be fathomed by the world and its wisdom. It cannot be fathomed by any of us. Look with me at the next verse, verse 9. However, as it is written, what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind can conceive, the things of God has prepared for those who love him.

See, Paul quotes the Old Testament. He shows the Corinthians and he shows to us the difference between God and us. How can we see? How can we hear? How can our hearts comprehend the mind of God?

[14:27] You know, many things can be perceived through the five senses, but certain things cannot be comprehensively conceived because they are the things of God. You know, he is the creator.

God is the one who made all things, designed the universe. He made the big things like the sun, the moon, and the stars, and all the way to the small things. The mitochondria in your cells, or the double helix of the DNA.

See, the vastness of this universe, we don't have... What's the things that look up at the stars? I'm getting tired. Telescopes. We don't have telescopes to see those things.

And we don't have microscopes to even see the smallest things in our hearts. We can observe creation and we can get clues about our creator, but we cannot know our creator through them. How can a creature know the creator?

How can a creature know the mind and the purposes of our creator? We see Paul answer that question in the following verses. It's my second point, that God's wisdom is revealed by his spirit. God's wisdom revealed by his spirit.

[15 : 32] Look with me at verses 10 to 11. These are the things God has revealed to us by his spirit. The spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

For who knows a person's thought except their own spirit within them? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the spirit of God. The Corinthians couldn't and we can't understand God unless God tells us.

It is the Holy Spirit who reveals it to us, the spirit of God who knows the deep things of God and knows the very thoughts of God. It is the Holy Spirit who is the one who shows us and reveals to us the mysteries and God's wisdom and his purposes.

Makes sense, right? Unless we are told, how can we know? Unless there is a relationship, unless there is revelation, you cannot claim to know someone.

You can look at me today and go, wow, James is well-dressed. Or you might not think that and that's okay, but you keep that to yourself. You could look at the tags on my clothes and you can figure out what size I am.

[16 : 40] You can look at the bottom of my feet and there'll be two numbers there and you can figure out my shoe size. But that's all kind of just surface level, right? How do you really know someone? You can spend more time with me.

You can figure out what makes me tick, what makes me laugh, what foods I like, the fact that I can't handle spice. But unless I speak and reveal those things to you, you don't really know me, right?

And this is a fun example. How many of you know what was the first CD I ever bought? You know, if it's a CD, it's probably within the 1990s and the 2010s.

You could maybe guess the genre of music I like. You could rummage through my house and look for that CD or find the receipt or maybe... I don't know how you would find that out unless I told you. See, science won't help you understand what CD I bought. Rational thinking and deducing it down might help you get close, but you'll never really truly know. See, no one can hear you can tell me that the CD I bought was Blue by Eiffel 65.

[17 : 44] None of you could tell me that. And I can't even tell you what made me buy that CD. It's a terrible song.

I don't know why I bought it. I listened to it this week and I was like, I don't know what I was thinking. If you can't even guess the CD I bought, which is so trivial, how much more is it impossible for us to know God, his power and his wisdom, unless he tells us by his spirit?

You can't even guess the CD, which has no eternal consequences. We can't know God unless he shows us. We cannot know God unless he reveals himself to us.

Unless there is revelation from God, there is no knowledge and the wisdom of God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the spirit of God who illuminates, reveals to us and shows us the wisdom of God.

And it shows to us Christ crucified. See, we have a personal God. We have a God who made a plan for his people that existed before all time and stretches for all of eternity.

[18 : 52] Look at verse 12. See, the spirit of the world teaches the world's wisdom to the world's people.

But the spirit of God teaches God's wisdom to God's people. It is by God's spirit that we come to know God and his plans. It is by the spirit that we may understand the gospel message of Christ crucified.

It is by the spirit that we are transformed as we trust in Christ Jesus. It is amazing that we have a God who would reveal himself to us by his spirit he doesn't have to we don't deserve it but he gives us his spirit an understanding of the gospel all done by his grace and his love how do we accept this spirit how do we receive this spirit how do you know that you have the spirit of God well if you you know you have the spirit of God if you believe what Jesus Christ did on the cross was for you then God's spirit's been revealed to you you have the spirit of God as you hear the message of Christ crucified by accepting the gospel the death and resurrection of Jesus you have received the Holy

Spirit it is by hearing the word of God receiving the word of God that we can hear what God has to say by his spirit and receive the spirit see for it is the spirit of God who inspired the word of God it is the word of God which is the sword of the spirit they're so tied together that when we preach the word of God when we preach Christ crucified it is the spirit who teaches us those words it is the spirit who impresses it on our hearts it is the spirit that gives us ears to hear eyes to see and hearts that can comprehend the wisdom of God that is Christ crucified that on that cross Christ died for our sin and our rebellion against him all the people of this world will call that message foolish for those who are saved for those who have received the spirit this is the best message that there ever has been and will be for Christians it is the wisdom and the power of God and that wisdom changes us this is my third point God's wisdom received it is only the person who has the spirit of God that can discern and evaluate things for themselves the person without the spirit cannot accept God's wisdom because they are foolish to them look with me in verses 14 and 15 the person without the spirit does not accept the things that come from the spirit of God but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they are discerned only but through the spirit the person with the spirit makes judgment about all things but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments this stumped our bible study group why is a spiritual person not subject to the world's wisdom to those of the world well verse 16 it answers it for us straight away for who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him but we have the mind of Christ we have the mind of Christ the spirit has given us God's wisdom to know and understand and comprehend God's plans and purposes for this world see our worldview changes right as we come to understand and have a relationship with God it changes our worldview our world flips upside down our worldly wisdom is replaced with God's wisdom for those who follow Jesus I'm sure you can recall the day and the moment you began to trust in the gospel message of Christ crucified or as you remember the testimonies being shared at church during baptisms and confirmations it's often as they accept Christ I see the world differently now our plans and purposes for our lives are now replaced with God's plans and God's purposes for his glory the things of this world that used to attract us now repulses us the things of this world that people seek for or dream for work hard for no longer entices us because we now see the world we now see God and we now see Christ clearly you see the cross of Jesus Jesus Christ crucified is now a lens in which we see the whole world a lens to see all creation was made for God and for his glory a lens to see the world in its beauty but also its brokenness a lens to see human sin and the fallenness of humanity to see a God who is patient and loving with his people a God who saves a God who restores a God who rescues it's the lens to see a God who sends his one and only son to save prodigals like us it's a lens to see that this world is not all that there is that there will be a new heavens and a new earth and it's a lens to see that though there are good and beautiful things of this world they don't compare to the glory that is to come a lens to see that death is not the end that God in his goodness is preparing us for that final day of restoration where there is no more death no more sickness no more sin and no more shame for followers of Jesus for those who believe in Christ crucified for those who have received and received the spirit and been given the spirit of God there is a future glory a day where we share in God's glory for all of eternity that's the lens in which we see the world that's the lens in which we see God and see ourselves that our lives are lived differently because of the cross of Christ because of Christ crucified see there is no reason for any one of us to boast that we follow Jesus because it's all been a gift to us because God has revealed to us by his spirit we ought to be humble rather than proud we ought to praise and thank God for giving us eyes to see ears to hear and a heart that responds rightly to him knowing that the spirit of God reveals God's wisdom to us should encourage us and comfort us as we trust God through the trials of this life to live for our Lord Jesus see knowing that the spirit of God reveals God's wisdom should encourage us to share the good news of God because God is in the business of saving people knowing that it is the spirit of God who reveals God's wisdom let's keep praying for our friends our family our co-workers our neighbors that God would give them eyes to see that God would give them ears to hear and a heart that would respond to the message of the gospel so this passage ought to give us confidence in God's plans and his purposes confidence in that God's wisdom and not the wisdom of this world you see God has planned the way that we ought to live in light of who he is and what he has done since the beginning of time for all time we know as we follow Jesus we know that as we live for him in this world it will look foolish to the world it will look foolish to our family to our friends to our co-workers what we do as Christians and the priorities that we have as Christians we will face persecution we will face ridicule and mockery but brothers and

sisters living in the wisdom of God is the best way to live and there is glory that is yet to come so let's live with the mind of Christ because God has given us his spirit to accept his word continue to seek his wisdom through his word to see clearly how we might see our work our family our money and our relationships for his glory

I know for some of you who are new or visiting or exploring the faith you have not yet placed your trust in Jesus I want to encourage you and invite you to pray that God would give you wisdom that only comes from him that he would reveal to you his goodness and give to you his spirit invite you to come to chat to me or Fiona or Ricky or anyone that you've seen up front because the world is full of knowledge and wisdom we learn about it from a young age and we keep learning about the world's wisdom and its knowledge but there is one wisdom that truly matters and it's the one that concerns Christ crucified that is God's wisdom revealed to us by his spirit let us trust in God's wisdom let us pray father we thank you for your plan that you had before the world began we thank you that through the death of Christ Jesus we can call you our father we pray that you would continue to help us to trust in your word daily help us by your spirit to live in light of Christ with the mind of Christ till the day of glory Lord in your goodness and mercy and grace help those of us who have not yet trusted in Jesus to do just that to trust in him for the glory of Christ's name I pray amen