

The Wisdom of God (2LCF 2.1h)

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[0:00] I want to begin by getting you to think through a question and I'm going to bring up something! that's not in the least bit controversial. But have you ever had it where the results of a national! Resulted in a candidate that you didn't vote for? And when we consider the fact knowing that God preserves all of his creatures and all of their actions, did you wonder, well why did God not consult me on this one? Or did you ask, why didn't he seek my approval first? So then you want to ask the question, was God unwise? We can go back in history and think of perhaps the Emperor Nero.

Was God unwise in Nero being the Emperor? Or King Henry VIII? Or Bloody Mary? Or some prime ministers in our age? Was God unwise in that person being elected? Or perhaps he was wise, but was he just not powerful enough to accomplish his holy will? Well we've already covered divine omnipotence, that God is almighty. And today we will look at God's wisdom or the wisdom of God. And before I do, I just want to read a section of our confession. In chapter 2, paragraph 1, we've been looking at his essence or perfections or attributes of God and seeing what the Bible says about that.

So I'm going to kind of jump in halfway. But speaking of the Lord our God, it says, who is immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will for his own glory. So today we will be looking mostly at the wisdom of God, most wise, as it carries through for his own glory. Or working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will for his own glory according to his wisdom. So I want to begin in Romans chapter 11. We will read 33 to 36.

Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become his counselor? Or who has first given to him? Who has first given to him and it shall be repaid to him?

For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen. Our great God, we thank you for your word that we have supernatural revelation. We thank you that the time we can spend on the Lord's day under the ministry of the word, the means of grace. We thank you for the promise in your word that through the hearing of the word comes faith. And we pray, Lord, that you would be communicating grace to us this evening, that you would increase our faith, whether that be for salvation or increase of faith and sanctification. We pray, Holy Spirit, that you would illuminate your word to us. Pray that you would bless the preaching of the word, the hearing of the word. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

[3:57] Now, when we consider God's wisdom, and in looking at Romans 11, 33 to 36, I want to demonstrate that God produces the best possible results and the best possible means in a way that glorifies him most.

And that is God's wisdom in how he preserves and governs all his creatures and all their actions. So think about anything, any situation, any person, ask yourself, is that God? Well, let's say something in your life, then no, it's not. It's a person or whatever it is. Then if it's not God, it's creation.

And God preserves and governs all of his creatures and all of their actions according to our comfort? No, according to his infinite wisdom. So, according to God's infinite wisdom, in whatever situation it is, God produces the best possible results, what the best possible means, in a way that glorifies him most.

So first of all, we will take a look at the measure of God's wisdom. In verse 33, Oh, the depth. The depth indicates to measure the bottom.

To find the depth of something, you're measuring the bottom to see how deep it is. In other words, what are the boundaries? What are the boundaries of what it is I'm trying to measure? You find the depth, you have found its boundaries.

[5:33] It says, Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. And then it says, How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.

The depth of God's wisdom is unsearchable and past finding out. Now, a fathom, I realize there's a bit of review here, but a fathom is a nautical measurement of about six feet to find the bottom. So the ship would send out a line to find the bottom, measure it in six foot arm lengths, and then however many arm lengths is how many fathoms to the bottom. So to determine if the bottom is coming up, if there is a reef approaching, they would measure how many fathoms to the bottom. But if the bottom cannot be measured, there are no fathoms to measure the bottom. Now, the depth of God's wisdom, or the depth of the riches of God's wisdom, is unsearchable and past finding out. In other words, the depth is unfathomable of the riches of God's wisdom. There is no number of fathoms that can measure the depth.

[6:53] It is unsearchable. It is unfathomable. And the reason why the depth is unfathomable isn't because we don't have a rope that's long enough to find the bottom.

It's that there is no bottom to the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God. There is no bottom.

There is no boundary of God's wisdom, and there's no boundary to the riches of God's wisdom.

And in Job 11, 8-9, it says, But oh, that God would speak, that he would show you the secrets of wisdom. And then it goes on to say, Can you search out the deep things of God?

Can you find out the limits of the Almighty? They are higher than the heaven, deeper than Sheol.

Their measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. So the measure of God's wisdom we see is unfathomable, unsearchable depth.

[7:54] And the next we see the wealth of God's wisdom. Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

This is not of poverty. God's wisdom is not of poverty. It's not of deficit. It's not of a misery, but of abundance and fullness. Now, if I was to buy you lunch according to my riches, sorry to say it, we wouldn't be going to the keg.

We'd probably be going to Dairy Queen for their value meal. It's according to my riches. And we think about God's gifts or God's wisdom according to his riches.

There is no limit to God's riches. God's abundance knows no limitations. It is immeasurable, inconceivable, an abundance of his wisdom.

So we see the measure of God's wisdom, the wealth of God's wisdom, and then we have an expression of God's wisdom. Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God.

[9:03] So how can we understand exactly God's wisdom? And there's a distinction here made in the text between wisdom and knowledge. So we will separate those two things. But what exactly is this wisdom of God?

Edward Lee described it this way. He says, God's knowledge differs from his wisdom in our apprehension thus. His knowledge is conceived as the mere apprehension of every object. But his wisdom is conceived as that whereby he doth order and dispose all things. His knowledge is conceived as an act.

His wisdom as a habit or inward principle. Not that it is so, but only we apprehend it in this matter.

And so to further distinguish between knowledge and wisdom, knowledge is a theoretical habit, whereas wisdom is a practical habit.

And wisdom is the power of divine intellect and the power of divine knowledge. It's the capacity.

God's wisdom, God's divine wisdom is the capacity to order and utilize the knowledge contained in the intellect.

[10:13] And we know that God has all knowledge. He is omniscient. And God is almighty. He is omnipotent. So his wisdom is the power or the capacity to order and utilize his knowledge contained in the intellect.

Next, we see also the magnitude of God's wisdom. It says, For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become his counselor?

And in taking into consideration God's wisdom in his decree, God's decree is pre-temporal.

It is not in time as we are, but it is outside of the bounds of time, God being eternal. So we can, as creatures who are bound in time, we can say, Before the foundation of the world.

It's not like with God, he was in a timeline before our timeline, and then accomplished something, and then waited, and then created. God is eternal, but as we consider time, before the foundation of the world, God decreed all things.

[11:20] And God's wisdom in his decreeing of all things, and the execution of his decree. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his own will, whereby for his own glory he foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

So everything that comes to pass throughout time, throughout history, is for his glory, according to his counsel, according to his infinite divine wisdom.

This is in his decree. This is, as we can comprehend it, before the foundation of the world. In other words, it's not that God created, and then learned things from his creation, and then decreed what was to occur.

But God's wisdom is in his decree. And in God's decreeing all things, did God need to seek out counsel? Did God need to ask you, your input, or your permission, in his eternal decreeing of all that comes to pass?

In Romans 11, here it says, who has known the mind of the Lord? It asks the question, who? Or who has become his counselor?

[12:42] In other words, who was even present with God? In his decree of all things, who was even present with God when he determined his holy counsels?

In other words, to put it another way, who was with God? We can ask the question, where were you? Were you there in eternity when God decreed all that would come to pass?

In Job 38.3, it says, God, in response to Job, for essentially calling God to account, to give account for his governing of Job's life, God's answer was, now prepare yourself like a man.

I will question you, and you shall answer me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements?

Surely you know. Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

[13:49] God's eternal decree was not dependent upon our input, or our insights, but upon his infinite wisdom. So we see God's wisdom in creation.

God executes his decrees in the works of creation and providence. God's creation is, of course, his creating all things, and God created all things according to his infinite wisdom.

And we see the wisdom of God in creation. But first, in Romans 11, 34, sorry, 36, it says, for of him are all things.

All things are of God. God's wisdom in creation, all things are of God. Now, Proverbs 3, 19 says, the Lord by wisdom founded the earth.

Jeremiah 10, 12 says, he has made the earth by his power, he has established the world by his wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens at his discretion.

[14:49] God's wisdom is so much in his, in creation, in his works of creation, that it is evident to all who observe. Romans 1, 20, for since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the, by the things that were, that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

Creation itself, how, how God's creation exists and functions displays the wisdom of God. And, to even try to break it down into, into small bite-sized sections, even just a strand of DNA, a single strand of DNA, the wisdom that would go into the existence of a strand of DNA, or if you were to look through a microscope at a strand of DNA, that that image is then projected into your eye and how an eye works, or how the brain works to take that image and to be able to process it, to be able to reason about it, to be able to draw conclusions, and then from those conclusions to be able to, to come up with a response to those conclusions, the reasoning of the mind, of the brain.

Excuse me. So, drawing conclusions to even the multiplicity of the living organisms around in the radius of your eyesight. Everything within your eyesight, not just a single strand of DNA, but every living thing and how it functions and God's wisdom for it to function the way that it does.

To all the plants within your eyesight, to all the animals, to all the people, to mountains and to seas, to the whole earth, to the whole universe, from insects to angels, galaxies, the cosmos, the sun and the moon, and man made after God's image.

Psalm 119.1 says, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handiwork. God's wisdom is an all of creation.

[16 : 54] So much of God's wisdom is an all of creation that it declares to us that we cannot look at creation, all of creation, everything that's not God, we can't look at it and not see the wisdom of God that we are left without excuse if we reject that.

So this wisdom, this wisdom, all is made according to God's right order and all made for a purpose to the glory of God.

Every single strand of DNA that you could look at is made according to God's order and for a purpose to the glory of God. In all of it, all of creation, every strand of DNA, every insect, every angel, every plant, every man made after the image of God, every mountain, every animal, every beast, all of it is declaring and singing and rejoicing the glory of God and his wisdom is evidence in creating and ordering all creation.

Not just that it was brought into being and exists, but the ordering of all creation, the preserving, the sustaining, the governing, and the limiting of all creation. So, we also then see God's wisdom and providence.

For of him are all things and through him are all things. In Genesis 50, 20, if you recall, Joseph, Joseph, by his own brothers, he was taken, thrown in a pit, taken out of the pit, sold to slavery, lived the life of slavery.

[18 : 34] All this injustice happened to Joseph. He was falsely accused by his master's wife. He was thrown in dungeon. And all this injustice throughout this life of Joseph to then being brought up out of the pit to the right hand of power for the purpose of saving his people.

And when his family runs out of food and his brothers come, we find them before him and they discover it's him and they're afraid because of what they have done and the result that it had on Joseph.

But this is Joseph's response. In Genesis 50, 20, he says, Do not be afraid for I am, am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.

in order to bring it about as it is this day to save many people alive. Even the evil, the intended evil of mankind, God intended for good which included saving many lives.

Think of the wisdom, the wisdom of God in ordering all of these things and governing all these things and limiting all these things for this result, for this purpose.

[20 : 02] God's wisdom is also evident in his governing, controlling, limiting all things in all his creatures and all their actions which includes predestination, election, reprobation, the rejection of Jews and the engrafting of the Gentiles which is the context leading up to Romans 11, 33 to 36 here.

Did God ask you for your permission first? Who has been his counselor?

It's according to his own infinite wisdom. And Romans 9, 20 says, But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God?

Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why have you made me like this? Now when we have, when we look at all the essence of God and the perfections of God, his independence, his self-existence, his eternality, we can see how it's not like they are things that occur in a succession of time that he was holy, oh, but then he became loving, and then he became merciful.

He is always, at all times, the perfection of all these things. And we see how it comes together in our understanding of God that God independently, according to his infinite wisdom of being holy and eternal, decreed all that comes to pass and according to his providence, preserves, governs all of his creatures and all of their actions.

[21 : 37] and we see God's providence in the story of Joseph. We can read that story. We don't feel what Joseph must have felt when his brothers betrayed him, when they took him and threw him in a pit.

We don't know what he felt. We don't feel the same things he felt when he was sold as a slave. We don't know how he felt day after day living as a slave. We don't know how he felt when he was falsely accused of trying to take advantage of his master's wife.

We don't know how he felt when he was thrown into the dungeon of the pit and how all these things happened. And we don't know how he felt when he was forgotten. And he didn't know what was to come of it.

But we know how we feel when these things happen to us, but we don't know what's going to come of it. But we can look back at Joseph and see how what man intended for evil, God intended for good.

And his intending things for good is not according to foolishness. It's not according to ignorance. It's according to his infinite wisdom. And I'm going to remind you of what wisdom is.

[22:40] It's God's, God produces the best possible results with the best possible means in a way that glorifies him the most. And we see Joseph, how that meant Joseph being brought out of the pit to the right hand of power to save the people, to save his people.

You might be thinking that sounds like somebody else in the Bible in the New Testament.

Somebody else that was raised up out of the pit to the right hand of power who saves his people.

And that is about Christ. So, we also see God's wisdom in redemption.

In verse 36, it says, For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen. Now, in Ephesians 3.10, it says, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ to the intent that now, here it is, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The wisdom of God which according to his eternal purpose was accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

The wisdom of God in redemption in the place of the church to make the manifold wisdom of God in Jesus Christ our Lord what was accomplished by Christ our Lord to what is even beyond our eyesight but to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

[24:33] There's a man especially a sinful man but man does not have the wisdom to think of a plan of redemption such as what we see in God's plan of redemption.

That fallen sinful perishing mankind is in bondage and lost in slavery to sin and condemned because God is holy and righteous and just and fallen sinful perishing miserable mankind cannot save himself is in debt a debt that needs to be paid that fallen mankind any descendant of Adam cannot pay and a merit needs to be accomplished that cannot be accomplished by mankind but yet the debt needs to be paid by mankind so God the son divine essence assumed our nature took to himself a body divine essence united to human nature and the one person of Jesus Christ and he lived the righteousness that was required he suffered and died to pay the debt that needed to be paid and he rose victorious from the grave and he ascended on high and he lives to intercede as mediator for his people he reigns and he will return to judge the living and the dead so we see God's wisdom in all of it the incarnation

Christ's life of obedience to satisfy the requirements of perfect righteousness his suffering his death as a substitute to pay the ransom price for fallen and perishing mankind his resurrection ascension and his session reigning over all things the manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord not only made known to the church but made known by the church through the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places so I want to draw your attention to some concluding uses of these things first I'll go over again and what we can say about God's wisdom that God produces the best possible results with the best possible means in a way that glorifies him most so God's wisdom in creation God's wisdom is made known through all of creation so behold and acknowledge the wisdom of God in creation and glorify him as the first cause and chief end those who aren't

Christians can look at mountains and be in awe and be filled with wonder and worship but they can't glorify God as the highest good of all of creation or the chief end of all creation so their wonder their awe their worship falls short and falls on creation itself and that is idolatry but believers can glorify God can worship God and enjoy God through creation which he has given for man to glorify God so God's wisdom creation next God's wisdom in providence God's works of providence are his most holy wise and powerful preserving and governing all of his creatures and all of their actions so what does this include maybe it would be easier to say what doesn't it include there's nothing it doesn't include so this includes calamities this includes

Assyrian invasions of Israel this includes enemies of the cross this also includes every single number of our days and it also includes all the details that fill every single one of our days though it

may not be according to our counsel and it may not be according to our comfort it is according to infinite divine wisdom of God who works all things according to the counsel of his will and for good to those who love God to those who are the called according to his purpose so if that is you if you are a believer if you love God if God in other words if God has granted you faith and God has granted you if God has granted you faith and repentance then consider what confidence we can have in the trustworthiness of a most wise God who is also almighty to accomplish all his holy will his holy will that he does accomplish according to his almighty power in your life is according to infinite wisdom and God's wisdom in redemption the suffering and subsequent glory of the [29 : 29] Messiah is enough to marvel at the wisdom of God but what is even more wonderful than marveling at God's wisdom in the work of redemption is that God saved me or that God saved you and it's not because he owed us God did not owe you anything he did not owe me anything it's not because we earned it or that we deserved it so why as marvelous and wonderful as it is as the wisdom of God in Christ's accomplishing of wisdom the fact that he saved me or the fact that he saved you we might say why it's it's not his purpose of redemption his eternal decree wasn't looking ahead to see if you would be good enough for his salvation it's not that at all so why then did God save me you can ask you can ask that question if you are a believer why did God save me it's because according to his infinite wisdom just think of the depth of God's wisdom in this according to his infinite wisdom through redemption purposed by the father accomplished by the son and applied by the spirit fallen miserable perishing mankind will more abundantly behold the glory of God and knowing the immeasurable depths of his love of his benevolence of his goodness of his mercy and of his grace which would not otherwise been known and that's because of

God's infinite wisdom for the best possible results with the best possible means for a way in which glorifies him the most Romans 11 36 again for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever so when we consider the wisdom the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God in creating all things for of him in his providence of his governing and preserving all things through him and of his work of redemption to him for his plan of redemption and for his glory the results this doxology and even when you read Romans 11 of when Paul works through how God is redeeming his people he just erupts with this doxology so I'll say it again actually oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out for who has known the mind of the

Lord or who has become his counselor or who has first given to him and it shall be repaid to him for of him and through him and to him are all things and then how does he finish his doxology what happens to Paul when he thinks about this what is his response to his his contemplating the depths of the riches of the wisdom of God he says to whom be glory doxology the proper response is to glorify God to just give God glory in awe of who he is according to his wisdom and that is the chief end of man and that is your chief end and even more so as a believer that your chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever