



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

1 Corinthians 2:6-10

“God's Secret Wisdom”

1 Corinthians

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you, Mark. We are in the early lessons of our series in 1 Corinthians. We're in chapter 2 this morning and we're going to look at verses 6 through 10, but I'm going to read the text we looked at last week and then read on through verse 10. The two go very closely together, so beginning with verse 1 of chapter 2:

"And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written, 'Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.' For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." May the Lord bless this reading of His Word. Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, it is a great privilege for us to be here. It's a blessing to spend time with the saints and we can't spend time with the saints better than the way we spend it here, around your Word. Reading the Scriptures and thinking about the meaning of the text that we have read, and we're reminded of your grace from this text. We're reminded of the great blessings that we have in Jesus Christ, and by implication certainly we're reminded of the allurements of the world, the persuasiveness of the world's ideas and philosophies and wisdom and how that can draw us away from what's really important and what is truly wise.

Help us to learn the lesson that Paul was teaching these Corinthians, that we have real wisdom in Jesus Christ, and it is life-transforming. We are to look to it, we are to look to the Scriptures, we are to appropriate them to our lives so that we would grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and we would become like Him. What a blessing it is. We take it for granted, Father. I confess that. And so often we're lazy. We don't take the time to do what we ought to do. We are diverted, we're distracted. This world in which we live, far more today than even in Paul's day, is full of distractions. Help us to not be distracted and to give our attention to the things that really matter and help us to become like Christ. Build us up in the faith.

And so we pray that you teach us the things we need to learn this morning and prepare us for a week to come in which we have opportunity to spend time in your Word and to live it in the midst of the world. Make us good, faithful witnesses for you. That's the spiritual things of life that we need to focus on and appropriate but, Lord, we have material needs as well. We remember them as well. We remember those who are out of work, members of our body who have lost jobs. We pray that you would open doors of opportunity for them. There are people here who are sick and some desperately sick. We look to you for healing mercy. And there are those who are just discouraged. Their names aren't on our prayer list but you know them.

You know their hearts, you know their condition, you know their needs.

You know their needs better than they do and you know what you're doing in their lives. You know what you're doing with all of us far better than we do. Many of us don't have issues that we need to put on a prayer list. We feel like our lives are fine and in many ways, they are. We're blessed with health and employment and friends and we have good marriages and all of that, but Lord, all of that comes from you. It's a gift from you that we so often take for granted. Remind us of the fact that everything we have comes from you and we're blessed with health or we're blessed with these other things simply because you're giving us that, but you can take it away, and yet if you do that, you do it for a purpose. It's hard for us to comprehend that and realize that but it's true. You do it for a purpose and it's to draw us close to yourself so that we might know you better.

So Lord, I pray that that will be the consequence of these things in people's lives and that you would remind them of who you are and your promises and they would draw close to you and you would allow them to see your hand in their lives. Well, may we see your hand in our lives in this hour. May you give us a clear understanding of the verses that we read and how they apply to us, and may we be drawn close to you through that, built up in the faith and as a result of that, live a very fruitful life this week in the midst of the world. May we be good witnesses and representatives of Jesus Christ out in the world. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

[Message] It's interesting to read about wealth, how it is found and what it does to those who find it. Texas is full of stories about that. Out in west Texas, there were a few ranches where people were trying to eke out a living, struggling in drought, raising cows and going broke while hidden beneath them were vast reservoirs of wealth, pools of oil and gas. They were rich and they didn't know it until some wildcatters and geologists came out in the 1920s and started

punching holes in the ground. Some of them found wealth beyond anything they had ever imagined. Some of them had grown up poor and became known as the big rich. That happened all over the state. Now, imagine someone having that, living on a small ranch where oil was found and ignoring it because he preferred starving cows to oil derricks.

That's hard to imagine, but it was happening in Corinth in Paul's day. Not, of course, with petroleum but with something far greater, something infinitely greater, and that is wisdom, divine wisdom. Wisdom or what the world called wisdom was valued by the Corinthians as a kind of commodity that would bring them to something very nice and prosperous in life. It was considered kind of a path to prosperity in life and position in life. And many of these philosophers would come and visit and have their intriguing philosophies and they would speak them in clever speech and were very persuasive and entertaining. Well, Paul has been speaking of that in chapter 2, and he has dismissed it as valueless. It's not real wisdom.

He said when he came to Corinth he didn't come with persuasive words of wisdom. That's what the people wanted. They liked people who were eloquent, who could give learned theoretical discourses and dazzle crowds with words. They were the rock stars of that day. But Paul said for all of that and the great impressions these people made, what they did was full of sound and fury signifying nothing. People who were enamored of that, specifically Christians who were infatuated with this world and its ways and its heroes, were like some guy who would trade oil for cows and cactus. That's what Paul is showing the Corinthians in this second chapter. He didn't want their Christian lives to be built on false things like the wisdom of men. That's what he told them in verse 5.

But he didn't want them to think that he was against wisdom. He's dismissed the world's wisdom in chapter 1 down through chapter

2 as not being real wisdom, as being completely insufficient, but he is for real wisdom. That in fact is what he brought to Corinth. That's what he says in verse 6, "Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature." Now, who are the mature? Well, they are the Christians. They are those who believe the message of the cross. Those who don't believe it who consider it foolishness are not the mature. The Corinthians are mature or literally perfect. That's the word that's used and what that means is they were complete. They were like a child that's born with all of its parts – two eyes, two hands, two feet, ten toes – he's got everything. He's born of the world in that sense perfect, with everything, complete.

And the Corinthians had all that they needed spiritually to grow. They were new creatures in Christ, they had faith, they had new minds, they had the Holy Spirit to teach them. That's how we come into the world. We come into the spiritual world, I should say, we come into it like a newborn babe comes into the material world, with everything, and we're fully equipped. We don't have parts of what we need and lack parts of what we need. It's not as though we come into this world and at the age of two we may gain a second eye or later on a thumb or something like that. We are whole when we come into this Christian life. We have everything we need. We just need to grow, and that was true of the Corinthians. Now, they weren't growing as they should have and because of that, Paul will call them infants in chapter 2.

So there are mature and immature believers but that's not his point here. Here the mature is all believers. That fits the context with its contrast between those who receive the message of the gospel as wise and those who reject it as foolish. That's what divides the human race in two, the cross of Christ. That's what Paul had come to Corinth bringing, this message of the cross, which divides men. Men are either believers or unbelievers, regenerate or unregenerate, called and converted or not. Paul came to Corinth with that message, which is

real wisdom, the kind of wisdom that the mature accept as true. And he defines it in the rest of the text. He does it first negatively and then positively.

First, the wisdom he taught is not of this age nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. In other words, it doesn't belong to this world's system. It doesn't fit the fashion of this world and it is not advocated by the men who shape the fashion of this age, the rulers of this age. These are the ones that Paul referred to in verse 8 or refers to in verse 8 who crucified Christ. They thoroughly reject the Savior and they reject the gospel. Paul is referring to more than just those who were specifically involved in the crucifixion, Pilate and Caiaphas and the rest. His reference here is to all of those who rule the outlook and the values of this age. They are the ones who set the agenda, so to speak. They're the ones who set forth what is considered as wise in the world. They are those that Paul spoke of in chapter 1, the scribe, the scholar, wise men, philosophers, men of noble birth, the influential people in every age. They're the very people who impressed these Corinthians.

And Paul's implication here, what he is warning about, what he is admonishing the Christians about, is don't be impressed with these people. Look how he describes them. He says they are passing away. They don't last. In fact, the whole world is passing away. It's still before us and it won't be gone until the end of the age and then, as the author of Hebrews tells us, God will fold it up like an old garment. But even now, John tells us in his first epistle that the world is passing away. Its rulers are passing away, it's passing away, it doesn't last. Its fashions and ideas come and go. Its great men come and go. It is not stable and it won't endure. And the Corinthians needed to realize that. They needed to remember that they were not a part of this world and shouldn't be following its rulers.

Now, they were part of the world in the natural sense. So are we. We're a part of this world. We have a function in it. We have

responsibilities in it. But we're not a part of this system and we're not a part of the spirit of it and so we, too, like them, should not be following the rulers of this age, the fads of this age. What it calls wisdom and the world follows after is something profound, whether it is evolution or materialism, some political ideology or new brand of spirituality, it is of no eternal value. It belongs to a world that is fallen. It's the product of an age that is corrupt and it's passing away. It will come to nothing. I've seen that in my own life, some of you have, many of you have.

I can remember when I was probably 20, the fringe groups of society, the hippies and then the radical Yippies had an expression. They talked about the generation gap and there was this statement, "Don't trust anyone over 30." I think it was Jerry Rubin that was one of the leaders of that that's attributed with that. I think someone else thought that up, but it was said back then. So I was 20 and that seemed – "Aw, 30 is way off." But some of those guys were about 30 when they said it. It wasn't long before they disqualified themselves, and those whole ideas and whole movement came and it went, and those personalities have come and they've gone, and it's that way in every generation. They come and they go, they make an impression for a moment, they're on the front page of the newspaper, they're in the news, and then they're gone.

Why, then, as Don Carson asks, should Christians be infatuated with paper heroes who win the passing applause of a dying world but who, from an eternal perspective, are without significance? That's true. From an eternal perspective, they are without significance and their ideas are without significance, and what they get is the passing applause of a dying world, a world that's passing away and they're passing away and it's all just dying applause. I think David makes the same point in Psalm 1 where he wrote of the righteous and the wicked and the wicked will perish in the judgment and he says they're like the chaff that the wind drives away. That's the wicked, chaff, weightless,

without substance, and the judgment comes and really tests the quality, and they're just driven away. Why follow that?

No, what Paul taught was very different from what the world called wisdom, and in verse 7 he gives the positive description of what he taught. He calls it God's wisdom in a mystery. He says it was hidden wisdom. That's what a mystery is. Paul didn't mean that God's wisdom is mysterious or mystical. He uses this word "mystery" in other places and it's used to refer to truth that until now had not been known and could not have been known except by revelation. So the New International Version translates this "God's secret wisdom that has been hidden." But God has now revealed this wisdom in the gospel of the cross of Christ and the Corinthians had it. They knew it. The secret is not salvation by grace through faith. Men have always been saved in that way.

Abraham was saved through faith alone. He was saved by the sovereign grace of God. Men have always been saved in that way, that's not the mystery. But now Gentiles share equally in the blessings with the Jews and that's how Paul explains the mystery in other places. That's how he explains it, for example, in Ephesians chapter 3. He speaks of the mystery of Christ and then he explains that Jews and Gentiles are equal partners in Christ through faith in Him alone. We don't become Jews to enter into the blessings of God. We all equal Christ and the blessings of God equally through faith alone. That was the mystery and he elaborates on that in other places. In Colossians 1:26-27 he speaks of the mystery as Christ in you, the hope of glory, Gentiles and Jews are alike in Christ and Christ is in them equally. Colossians 2, he says that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Through our union with Him we have access to the wealth of heaven.

How do you measure that wealth? How do you measure that wisdom? It's beyond measure. It is great. But until God revealed that to the apostles, it was a secret. Now, it doesn't mean this is



something new or novel or something that was invented by the church or the apostles. It is recently revealed but actually old truth. It has been in God's plan from all eternity. Paul describes it as wisdom that God predestined before the ages to our glory. So it's predestined wisdom, it's a predestined plan. Before time began, God ordained a plan that would result in our future eternal glory as well as glorious benefits and blessings in this present time. These great truths were like that oil under the desert in West Texas. It was hidden and had been there all along but no one knew about it. It was a complete secret for a long time but it's now a secret no longer. And any sensible rancher who had that on his land would appropriate it and possess it and use it.

That's what these Corinthians were to do with God's secret wisdom. It is a great, vast treasure of wealth and they're to appropriate it, they're to use it. At the end of the book of Romans, Paul gives a benediction and says, "Now to him who is able to establish you according to my gospel." God uses the gospel, the good news of salvation through Christ, to establish us, to make us firm and strong in this life so that we won't be blown about by every wind of doctrine, so that we won't be carried about by all the different philosophies and ideas that come along, so that we'll be stable. While everyone else is unstable, while everyone is drifting this way and that way, we are firmly fixed, we know what we're about, we know what we believe, and we grow and mature as God's people. That happens, that maturity, that growth happens as we appropriate the truth of God's Word.

It's God who does it, the Spirit of God who sanctifies us and changes us and transforms us and establishes us, but He establishes us by means of the Scriptures. As we use them, as we study them, as we obey them, we grow and become firm and mature. And Paul wants the Corinthians to do that. He wants them to appropriate the treasures they have in Christ, the wisdom that they will get from the Word of

God and that only Christians have access to. Listen, that is an infinitely greater treasure than any analogy or illustration that we can find in this world, oil and gas, gold and silver, stocks and bonds, whatever. That stuff can make a person materially wealthy and certainly it can give a very nice life, no doubt about that, but that is wealth that doesn't last and that is wealth that at best has its limits. If it doesn't take wings and fly away, we do.

We die and we lose it all. We leave it to someone else. But even in this brief life, oil and money and material things can't make a person wise. It can't establish us as people with character. It can't cause us to mature. A lot of those rich Texas oilmen spent their lives rather foolishly. They made a lot of money and it's fascinating to read about that and to study the risks they took and the intelligence they had to do that, and they were able to make a lot of money, but that's kind of all they were able to do, a lot of them, and so they made a lot of money and then they used that money to make a lot more money and make a lot more money. And then what do you do? Build a house and then build another house and build a bigger house and buy an airplane and buy another airplane and even buy a private island, and these are the kind of things that one does.

What the riches of this world do to people is often very different from what the riches of the gospel do to people. As we walk with the Lord, He will provide for us. He'll provide for our material needs. He promises to do that. As we live a life of obedience, as we trust Him day by day, He will take care of us and He will not only take care of our material needs but through it all and as we study and obey the Word of God, He will transform us. He'll take that wisdom from His Word and make it our wisdom, wisdom that shapes our lives and shapes our thinking. He will make us into people of whom the world is not worthy. So the lesson here for the Corinthians – and us – is to realize that they have been blessed beyond anything that the world

could give them. They have God's secret wisdom. It's not a secret to them. They have it and they have it by God's sovereign grace.

Now, that's the only way that the way of salvation can be known. It's by grace, not because of our cleverness or our insight, it's by the sovereign grace of God. God must reveal it. It cannot be discovered by human reason, and men in their own abilities haven't discovered it. That's what Paul says in verse 7, that the rulers of this age, those who are so esteemed, so highly thought of by the world, none of them have understood. They don't have God's secret wisdom. They could never get it by their own power. In fact, left to themselves, men are blind to the truth of God and will always remain blind to the truth of God. And Paul's proof of that is the crucifixion. If they had understood, he says they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But they did crucify him, proving that they had no understanding. They were ignorant, they were blind, they could not recognize His glory, which is His deity. That's what Paul is saying about the Lord. He uses this expression "Lord of glory" in other places as a description of God, and so what he's doing here is ascribing deity to Jesus Christ. He's saying He's God. He's not God the Father, He's God the Son. He's the second person of the Trinity. He is very God, though, a very God. He is the God-man. He is the eternal Son of God and yet He had a real human nature, He was a real man who could be crucified. And again, this is the proof of man's natural ignorance of divine wisdom. This is the proof that men do not have real wisdom. The Son of God came into the world, He revealed the Father in His person.

That's what John tells us at the end of his prologue in John 1:18. He says the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He explained Him. God the Son explained God the Father. Jesus Christ is the one who demonstrates and explains who God is. He's the revelation of God. His divine glory was veiled in His human nature,

veiled in flesh, but nevertheless, the glory of God, the person of God, was revealed in His teaching, it was revealed in His character, it was revealed in His miracles. And the rulers of this age responded to that revelation by rejecting Him and even killing Him.

Again, the implication here is: Why would we be enamored of the world's ways and the world's wise men? Why would we be enamored by all of that? Why would we adopt their ideas when they can't recognize the truth when they see it? Why would we be taken with what has been called the faddish fancies of the cross-denying opinion makers who belong to an age that is passing away? Well, that was true of those back then; that's true of people today. They are still rejecting Christ and in effect crucifying Him. Why would we be enamored of all of that? They are not enlightened, they are not wise, Paul is saying, and the crucifixion proves that. At the same time, it shows the wisdom of God.

Think of that – He used the wicked men of this world and their ignorance to carry out His wise plan of salvation. By crucifying the Lord of glory, these very men accomplished God's purpose for us. That's wisdom. God cannot be frustrated and we have access to that wisdom, the wisdom that can take the most angry and implacable enemy and turn it into his good advantage and to our advantage. But again, it's only by His grace that we have access to this. It's because He revealed Himself to us; otherwise, none of us would have any understanding of the things and the ways of God. Human reason cannot discover them. And Paul proves that from Scripture. That's what it teaches.

He shows that in verse 9 with a free translation from Isaiah 64:4. You turn to that passage and it doesn't read exactly like this, but Paul gives kind of a paraphrase or free translation of it when he writes: "But just as it written, 'Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.'" On the one hand, that

indicates the unimagined glories God has prepared for His people, but on the other, it shows how inaccessible those truths are to the human mind. Men, and I mean by that natural men, unbelieving men of themselves could never even imagine God's plan of salvation. Couldn't think it up. Men have thought up different ideas for salvation. They all amount to about the same thing, man is saved by religion, by his good works, by his ceremonies, by being religious in some way. He does things to placate God and win His favor. That's not the gospel; that's false religion.

It would never enter our minds what God has prepared for those who love Him. It is beyond us. His plan of salvation is beyond us. So of course the cross seems foolishness to the so-called wise men of this world. They are completely incapable of conceiving of God's plan of salvation – they never will. They never will conceive of it, never will understand it, never will believe it when they hear it unless God reveals it to them. Reveals it to them as true. Men can understand what we're saying, they just can't understand it as true. It's just foolishness to them. I think Paul was especially aware of this because that was his experience. He came to know Christ through the miracle of the Lord's self-revelation to him on the Damascus Road. If ever there is an example of one, of a brand being plucked from the burning, it's that of the apostle Paul.

As a zealous rabbi, Paul was a student of the Bible. He exceeded his peers while he was a student under Gamaliel. He was his star pupil. Paul knew the Scriptures, he knew the ancient prophecies, he'd studied them, he'd studied all of the ceremonies and the offices that were types of Christ, prophet, priest, and king. Still, he was ignorant of God's plan of salvation. He didn't see Christ anywhere in the Old Testament. He was devoted to law keeping and to blotting out the very name of Jesus. But it was in the midst of that, it was in the midst of that zeal and blindness that Christ appeared to him and gave him

new eyes so that he saw for the first time and believed in Him. And then everything became clear.

Everything in the Old Testament fell into place. The Passover lamb was a picture of Christ. Not a bone of it was broken and on the cross, not a bone of our Lord was broken. Isaiah 53, that magnificent prophecy of the Old Testament that must have intrigued the apostle Paul. Suddenly he sees that's fulfilled by the person and work of Jesus Christ. He understood the New Covenant as established at the cross. Left to himself, these things would never have even entered into his mind. But by grace, God opened his eyes to all of that, everything that he had prepared for the apostle Paul and for all who love the Lord, and those great things, those glorious things in the future – it does speak of those things that are prepared for us in the future – are beyond our comprehension. We cannot begin to fathom that.

We cannot begin to think of what it is that yet awaits us, what the future is, the eternity that stretches before us, the glory of it. It's of a completely different plane from what we can imagine. Those things haven't entered into our mind, either, and as I say, we cannot begin to fathom all that God has prepared for us, but this statement in verse 9 is broader than simply the future glories that are ours, it refers also to God's blessings and what He has done for us at the cross, what He's now doing for us. He has made us into new creatures in Christ. That's what you are as a believer. You're not the person you were. You're a new creation. He's made us, to borrow Paul's words here, mature, complete, perfect in that we have everything we need to grow and mature and be very productive, to increase in that and be a blessing to those around us and to increasingly enjoy and know the Lord Himself. And He's using all of the experiences of life to cause that, to bring about that growth and maturity. He works everything together for our good, to cause us to grow right and become like Christ. That's Romans 8:28.

In other words, it's not only about the future, it is that, it's these glories that we can't even begin to imagine, but it's also about the present and yet it's not just about the present, it's also about this plan that goes back into the past, beyond the ages past, into all eternity. Paul says of these great blessings of salvation, he says of them that they were prepared. Now, that reinforces what he said earlier in verse 7, that God has done everything according to a predestined plan. It's not in some general way that He did this but He's done this in a very specific way. He's prepared this, He has predestined this for specific individuals. He says who they are. It is for you who love Him. Plan of salvation was in no way random or improvised. It's not Plan B. It's an eternal plan for specific individuals.

We have been blessed and made rich, but that's no ground for boasting on our part. We can't look at ourselves and the great blessings we have consider the wisdom that's ours and that the world doesn't have wisdom and then boast about that, not at all. The only reason that we love Him, know Him, that we are what Paul has called mature and have His wisdom when other people don't is only because God has given that to us. It is because, as he says in verse 10, God revealed these great truths. The world's rulers with all of their assumed wisdom and their abilities couldn't discover it, but He has revealed this secret wisdom to us through the Spirit. In other words, it's all of God's grace.

What Paul is really referring to here is illumination. God has given an objective revelation in Christ and in the Word of God. It's there, we have it in the 66 books of the Bible, but He's also given us an inner, private, personal understanding of it. The Holy Spirit enlightens minds so that we understand the Scriptures and believe them to be true; otherwise, they would remain secret to us. They're there, they're revealed, but we wouldn't understand it, we wouldn't see it, unless God had revealed it to us. Now, that is just the sovereign distinguishing grace of God. Paul teaches that, teaches that here,

teaches that elsewhere. That's not just Paul. Some people want to dismiss Paul as, "Yeah, he's the one that preaches, teaches on things like election and predestination." Well, so does our Lord.

Consider what Christ said in Matthew 11:27, He said, "All things have been handed over to me by my Father." Now, that speaks of His divine authority right there. "The Father has given me all authority," He's saying. Christ has the authority of God. And then He says, "And no one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son." In other words, these things, the knowledge of God, the knowledge of the triune God, are inaccessible to man. Human reason cannot obtain those things, not in its own abilities. But then the Lord adds, having said, "No one knows the Father except the Son and no one knows His Son except the Father," and he says, "And anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

Now, there is a division in the world. There is a division in mankind. Some believe; some don't. Some know and some don't. Why is that? Well, Christ tells us here. It's because He discloses it. He reveals it to whom He wills. Some do and some don't, some know and some don't because Christ chooses to reveal to some and not to others. That's what He said. Well, why did Christ, why did the Holy Spirit will to reveal things or illuminate your mind to the truth when He didn't will to reveal it to someone else? Why this distinction? And the answer is very simple, it's because He loved you. That is sovereign distinguishing grace. That is divine election. Now, you might say, "Well, but Paul just said that this salvation was prepared for those who love Him. We wouldn't be a part of that if we didn't love Him." And that's true. That's very true. But why do we love Him?

Well, John tells us in 1 John 4:19 that we love because He first loved us. Otherwise, we would not love Him – we'd be lost. Again, all of this is to say there's no reason for boasting, there's no basis for arrogance because there is no reason in us that He should love us.



None at all. We are no different from anyone else. The reason He loved us is very simple: It's because He loved us. That's it. We don't know why He would love us and reveal these things to us and not reveal them to someone else. But He did, we know that if we've trusted in Him. We may not know why He did it but we know that He did it. And He loved us so much, the Father loved us so much, that He gave His own Son to die for us. In view of that, of His love and His care and the truth of the gospel, why would we trade the wisdom of God for the wisdom of men? Why be tempted to follow the opinion makers of this world?

Now, I realize that they are smart and attractive – and I mean that genuinely. The rulers of his age are often gifted and brilliant. Many of them – many of them – are much smarter than any of us, more skilled in the ways of the world than we are. I admire men who can discover oil under the ground and turn it into a fortune. I admire men that can open up a well. I can admire men that can close one, too, and I wish some of them would do that down in the gulf, but admire that. There's lots to admire about the men of this world. They do things I could never do. But whatever the world offers, it cannot compare with what God has given to us. We have treasures beyond anything that the world can offer. It transforms us, it establishes us, it gives us the best life in this world, and what it gives is not just for this world.

Someday we will all leave this world, and what awaits us is far greater than anything we can imagine. It's not even entered into our hearts or minds what God has prepared for us. What He has given us and the wisdom He has given us and the treasures He has given to us, they are of eternal value. And it is all a free gift in Jesus Christ. So if you're here without Christ, if you know that you are poor and you want to be rich or if you're rich and you want to be truly rich, know that you are a sinner and want to be a saint, long for that, long for forgiveness and then believe in Jesus Christ and you'll receive it all. His sacrifice gained forgiveness and eternal life for all who believe in

Him. That's all one must do, is simply trust in Him. So may God give you the grace to do that and may all of us increasingly desire to possess the wisdom that is for us in Christ and to appropriate that and grow in our knowledge of the riches of His wisdom. May God help us to do that. Let's bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we do ask for that. Paul has reminded the Corinthians of the folly of looking to the world for what is best and seeking wisdom among men, and that's a temptation for all of us. The world is an attractive place and it offers a lot, and it offers a lot of tangible blessings and benefits. They're not all bad. Much of it's very good, but nevertheless, what the best offered by the world is cannot compare to what you have given us in Christ, and so I pray, Lord, that we would see that and we would seek to know you better and we would appropriate the treasure that's ours in Jesus Christ and we would grow in wisdom, we would make it our own in practice and experience, and we would be firmly established in increasing our maturity to your glory in this world. May all that we do reflect Christ. We pray that in His name. Amen.