

Pastor Rains

2/16/14

Transcribed by Whisper Transcription - Edited by Rev Bill Reeves

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What I have to say here this morning will not be understood by those who think according to the way the world thinks. In the scripture that would be called the natural man. And I know I won't be understood by them, but according to the-- I'm glad we're done with that now that we can go on. That's past.

How the natural man sees the world

The thinking of the natural man is according to the values of the world. That's where he gets his values. Not from himself really, believe it or not, primarily, but from the world around him. And as quickly he would agree with them. You see, the world thinks according to what they see and what they hear. And also what they can reason out according to the-- what could be real by natural processes, they would say. Processes of this physical universe and we recognize there are physical laws. God has put them there. But by those physical laws, they think that only by them can reality come to be. If there's any personal being beyond the universe, they deny it. Really, they do. They might with their lips give lip service to the idea that there is a god of some sort or a being of some sort beyond this physical universe. But their actions don't show that they believe that. They really believe that their reality is within this world, determined within this world, and that it goes no further.

What is Spiritual wisdom

I'd like you to open your Bibles with me and just listen to what God says. What authority can I give you greater than the Lord himself? The Bible is without error. It truly is. It doesn't contradict itself in any part. I can turn to this book or any of the books and find total harmony. How could we do that with any group of people writing separately, divided by hundreds of years sometimes, by over 1,000 years, or 1,500 years, and think that everything that they say is going to be in perfect agreement with everything that would be said later? But it's so. God has guarded the scriptures from error. Not always the translations, mind you, but the original autographs from error.

Go to 1 Corinthians chapter 2, verse 6 with me. 1 Corinthians chapter 2, verse 6. The apostle Paul, of course, is writing here. And this is what he says in this verse to the Corinthian church. "However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing." No, he doesn't get his wisdom from the world or from those that lead in the world. We want to know what kind of wisdom he speaks. He's talking about wisdom that agrees with God's mind and heart. And in the scripture, it's called spiritual wisdom. Spiritual wisdom, in other words, how do you come to have spiritual wisdom? "However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature." Mature? Well, those who have learned God's thoughts.

Secondly, those who have made God's thoughts their own way of thinking. You learn God's thoughts, you decide you're going to make those your way of thinking. That's a choice, a deliberate choice of your will if you will make God's ways your ways. But rest assured, your ways are not God's ways. And God's ways are not your ways by nature. If they're going to become your ways, you're going to have to make them your ways by your choice. But you will only be able to do that if you, first of all, know Him as your savior. But knowing him as your savior, God wants you to expose yourself to his words.

His ways will be given to you in His word, the scriptures. And then He calls on you to make a choice, to make those ways your ways. Don't get your ways of living, thinking, valuing. Don't get them from the world, he would say. Get them from Me, He would say. You have to choose that. Make that your way of thinking. Therefore, somebody who lives to please God and everything, who has learned God's ways and made them his ways and so lives to please God, that person would be called mature.

It isn't that they've reached the end of maturity. You know, we'll never do that in this life. But we're mature in the sense that we don't think as the world thinks. We don't get our ideas for values from the world. We actually think on a different plane. We live by a different set of rules. We live with a different purpose.

So when he speaks to those that are mature, that's what he's speaking. And then in verse 7, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for **our glory**." You would ordinarily expect him to say for His glory, right? Read that verse carefully. He did this for our glory. What did he do? Well, He has a certain wisdom. It's a hidden wisdom. He ordained this. He made this to be real. God, to make something real is not to make it a part of this universe. That's your error. If you think something is real only if it has three dimensions or if it can be subject to the laws of this universe, no.

Do you know that Christ's death on the cross was real before the creation? Yeah, the scripture says so. "He was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world."¹ It was a settled issue. You see, when something is settled with God in his will, it's real. Now, it may not enter into the three-dimensional world for a while. Actually, from the creation till Bethlehem, it didn't happen. But it was real. It was done. It was part of reality for God had intended it to happen. And if God intended it to happen, listen, he's God. It's going to happen. It was real. Christ's death on the cross was real. His resurrection was real. His ascension was real. And listen, it hasn't happened yet, but his return is real. Now, when it happens, it isn't going to be any more real. It'll be experienced by us, but it won't be any more real. Why? Because God has ordained it. It's going to happen. And he tells us about it.

You know, he tells us a lot of things that we wouldn't know except that he tells us. So he talks about the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is something that operates by the values and by the rules from outside this universe. The wisdom of God doesn't operate according to this created universe. The wisdom of God comes from the mind and heart of God. And if somebody is going to speak to us about the wisdom of God, they're not going to get it from this world. It's not where it comes from. And because it doesn't come from this world, when they speak it, the people that are tied into this world and only think the way this world thinks, they don't understand it. Actually, the scripture says "they think it's foolishness."² And of course, if they think it's foolishness, guess what they think about the person who speaks it. If foolishness comes out of my mouth, they call me a-- you got it. Now you're with me. A fool.

They don't know who the real fools are. I'm not saying you should go out and tell them, not too bluntly anyway, because when you do that, you may create enemies. You may cause them to shut their ears to some good news that you have to tell them. So you want to be careful that you tell people the truth, but choose an approach to tell them the truth that doesn't turn them away from the truth.

I used to have a brother in the Lord that was a great-- he was a great evangelist. He loved to see people receive Christ. And he thought that the way you really-- the only way to really help them receive Christ is come up to them and say, hello, do you know you're going to hell?

Reminds me of the barber who got saved, and he wanted to be an evangelist. He wanted to lead his customers to the Lord. And so he would seat

¹ Rev. 13:8

² 1 Cor. 2:14

them in the chair, and he would throw the towel around them and tie it, and he would lather up the brush and put it on their cheek. He'd take that straight razor and strop it a few times, and then he would lay it on their throat, and he said, are you ready to die? [LAUGHTER] You know, that's not effective. [LAUGHTER] Listen, that'll get their attention. But you may lose some customers that way. You know what I mean? I mean, they'd shut down. They're not interested in whatever it is that you have to say. They just want to get out of there.

That's the world's wisdom. So when we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, that means, in a way, a mystery means that which is not revealed. It's like lifting the curtain. If you lift the curtain on a mystery, you show it. A mystery is the thing behind the curtain. If you speak the wisdom of God, and there's a curtain over it, the world says, I don't see it. I don't understand it. I don't get it. I think you're foolish. You're a fool. You're talking about stuff that exists behind a curtain, and that's not real. But if you want to speak about those things, and we can, the hidden wisdom of God, we can speak about them, they're ordained before the ages for our glory.

Do you think heaven was a late thought of God? Do you think that God just decided to make a heaven maybe, oh, in the first century or something? Or do you think he had that already in his mind to do all that maybe 1,000 years before Christ? How about 1,500 years before Christ? That's in the days of Moses. How about 2,000 years before, in the days of Abraham? How about before that, in the days of Noah? How about before that, in the days of Adam and Eve? Do you think God had ideas about a heaven, an eternal heaven? Well, it was already in place, you know, when he cast Satan out of heaven.

What about Satan

The Bible makes it very clear that when Adam and Eve were in the garden, Satan showed up there in the form of a serpent. He used the form of a serpent because it seems that the serpent was a more powerful serpent. He used the form of a serpent because it seems that the serpent was the most beautiful of creatures. It's most subtle in-- well, most alive, most beautiful in its movements, coordinated, like some of us aren't, you know? I mean, the serpent is so coordinated, so rhythmical, so beautiful in its movements. And so apparently, he chose that animal as the way that he would come to them so that they would listen to his voice. Even Satan knows this. You've got to be careful how you approach people so that they hear your message. And he tempted Adam and Eve. He won that day. They made a choice that was a very bad choice. They chose to go their way instead of God's way. And the whole human race,

spiritually, we come from Adam and Eve. They're our ancestral parents. Our nature comes from our parents. We're aliens to God when we're born.

But before Adam and Eve were tempted, Satan was up in heaven. There was a heaven. There were angels, a great host of angels, we understand, by the word of God. And many of them, perhaps a third of them from something we read in Revelation,³ maybe as many as a third of them followed Lucifer, who became Satan. And God put up with it for a while. We don't know how long. And finally, he just cast them all down to the earth in a split second. Jesus says in the Gospels that he beheld Lucifer fall as lightning from heaven.⁴ It was instantaneous. When God decides to judge, he doesn't do it slowly. Does it instantly. Judge Satan, the angels that sinned, they're now known as demons. Here they are in this world, leading this world in its way of thinking.

By the way, Jesus said something in John 8 about Satan. When he talked to the Pharisees, he said, "you're of your father, the devil." Now, the devil is a term used for Satan. There's never in the Bible a plural to the word devil. There are no devils. There are demons, but there are no devils. There's only one devil. The devil is Satan. You're of your father, the devil, and his deeds you do. He says he was a liar from the beginning. Another beginning. When he had a beginning, he had a beginning to create a creature.

But apparently, very early in his career, he started talking to the other angels, and he was lying. He was a liar. Certainly, he was a liar from the instant he was in this earth. Anything he said to Adam and Eve that we have in the scriptures is a lie. Anything he says to Jesus in his time of temptation is a lie. Anything he says in the Old Testament, as he says even from the earliest book, the book of Job, is a lie. He's a liar, Jesus said, and the father of lies. There's no truth in him. So when Satan instructs the world on how to think and where its values come from, they are based on lies.

He would say, you know, there is no God. There is no God. There is no right or wrong. You're a free-willed creature. You can do what you choose to do. There is no judgment. There is no time for you to appear before God in eternity. There is no afterlife. This is it. Sadducees bought that one. They didn't believe in a resurrection. That's how far it had gone in Israel. The spiritual leaders were split on the issue. You had the Pharisees saying, oh, there's a resurrection. You had the Sadducees saying, no, there's no resurrection. So the Sadducees are called the liberals. The Pharisees are called the conservatives. But I want you to know, even though they were the conservatives, they were wrong. Their whole

³ Rev. 12:3, 4, 9;

⁴ Lk. 10:18; cf. John 12:31

idea of how to get to heaven was based on their good works. The Sadducees were wrong. They were philosophers. They didn't believe in the reality of eternity. There was nothing past this life. The reason the whole purpose for living this life was to do the best you could.

And how do you do that? You just set up the standards. You're the one that decides what's good and bad. And you do your best. And then at the end, you just cast aside your shell. And that's the end of it. You've done your best. You want to cheat somebody so you can make a little more money? Well, there's really no right and wrong. So tough on them that they were wrong on how to make money. And you knew the way to do it. And so they had to suffer the hurt. It was their problem, not yours. Take care of mom and dad after they get to be old. Dedicate everything you have to the church-- well, to the synagogue. And go ahead and live it up. Use it for all you want. And when you die, if there's anything left, it goes to the church. You're not obligated to take care of your mom and dad. They had a name for that. They called it Corbin.⁵ It's dedicated. It's dedicated to the church, to the synagogue. That was their way of talking about God. That's the world's thinking. Live for yourself. Use up whatever you have for whatever wants you to have. Enjoy it. Don't bear some moral obligation. Don't bear some moral obligation, especially to people like your parents or your children. You're better than that. You live for you.

That's Satan's number one idea. If something looks better for you-- that's what he said to Eve-- go ahead. Don't cheat yourself. It looks good. It looks like it's going to be good to taste. Taste it. Eat it. Don't cheat yourself. That's the thinking of the world, the wisdom of the world.

God's Wisdom and Salvation

The wisdom of God's not like that. It operates according to values that are outside this universe. Those values come from the mind and the heart of God. So in the scriptures, these things, from the mind and heart of God, are spoken in a mystery. They're spoken in a way that isn't understood by the world. So the veil is there, you see. It's a mystery. They don't understand it. They can reason all they want to. But you see, their reasoning is bound. They have a premise to their reasoning. They already have told themselves, if the thing isn't able to be seen or heard or felt, and if it can't be reasoned out as part of this universe, it doesn't exist. See, they tell them so. That's their premise. So when they come to the stuff that you would tell them, from God, they'd say, that is nonsense. It doesn't compute. It doesn't go along with my foundations. And they're right. To them, it's a mystery.

⁵ Matt. 15:3-7; Mk. 7:9-13

Look at verse 8.⁶ "Which none of the rulers of this age knew, for had they known"-- in other words, the mystery of God-- "had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." If the world and all the leaders in the world had understood the heart of God, the heart of love, that loved us from the foundation of the world, that provided His own Son because of His great love, if they understood that what motivated God to do all the things that we have in the Bible is his love for mankind, to reach out to us and try to shake us a bit, to admit to ourselves and to Him that our way is not perfect, and that we are going to have to answer to Him someday for that imperfection, just as Satan had to and does yet have to and all the demons, that all mankind are going to have to answer to God as the absolute righteous one. If we could see that, we would see the need to cry out for mercy.

Now, in the Old Testament, they didn't know all the details about the crucifixion, but it was settled with God. It was going to happen. But they didn't know about it. But they could come to the place where they cried out for mercy. Basically, they would say this in their thoughts and their intentions, oh, God, if you have provided some possible way, if there's some possibility that I won't have to come before you for judgment, if you could somehow forgive me. And I don't know, God. I don't have any way to justify myself or make myself worthy of being forgiven. But if in your love, in your kindness, you have a way for me to be forgiven, I cast myself on you. I look to you. I trust in you completely, Lord. I am undone. I have no other place to go. I give you myself, crying out to you for that mercy.

From the earliest days of the human race-- and I mean in the Garden of Eden and right after that-- we have evidence in the word of God that God showed Adam and Eve and then Cain and Abel that it was necessary for them to trust in him according to a blood sacrifice. I want you to remember how God clothed Adam and Eve after they tried to clothe themselves with sewn leaves together. He brought to them clothing from animal skins. It required the shedding of the blood of those animals. They had to accept that from God as better, as his wisdom on how to come into his presence. They had to come into his presence by blood.

And when it was time for Abel and Cain to offer sacrifice, when Cain tried to offer up a sacrifice without blood, and Abel offered up a sacrifice by blood from the flock, God couldn't accept Cain's sacrifice. It was not according to his plan to send his son to die, to shed his blood. That was the perfect sacrifice that had to come.

⁶ 1 Cor. 2:8

Jesus did not come as a plant. He came as a human being, came as something that we are, what we are, because he had to substitute for what we are. If he came to save the plants, he'd have to come as a tree or something. But he didn't come for that. Came as a human being to offer a sacrifice for what we are, to give up his life for us. He took on human flesh. He was born the way we're born. He wasn't conceived the way we're conceived, insofar as the conception by a father. But he came through a mother, made possible by a conception by the miracle of the Spirit of God.

You know, scientists, by the way, they do understand today that it's possible for an ovum from a woman to become fertile without male sperm. They do understand that now. They know it's true. Problem. They said, yes, but all the offspring would be female, because the one little thing that the male supplies isn't there. So at least they say there could be a virgin birth, but it'd be a female. But what God did was a miracle. He provided that which humanity couldn't provide.

I didn't mean to give you a biology lesson. The world can't understand the things of God. It's beyond them. If they had understood that Jesus' death on the cross would make a way of salvation for mankind, they would have understood that. But they didn't. They didn't. They didn't. They didn't understand that Jesus would make a way of salvation for mankind. Do you understand? They would not have killed the Lord of glory. And that doesn't just go to mankind. The scripture is very clear. Satan didn't even fully understand that. Do you know he actually thought that he had a great victory when Jesus died on the cross? It was his hour of glee.

He had no idea that all that he was working toward and getting people to cry out for Jesus to be crucified instead of Barabbas, that all he was encouraging people to do when they were beating him with a whip, smiting him on the face, pulling his beard, spitting at him, crowning him with thorns, nailing him to a cross. If he had been aware that all of that was going to bring about the salvation of mankind, he would not have done that. He would not have encouraged that.

Satan doesn't have the wisdom of God. And mankind doesn't. Then Paul quotes from Isaiah 64:4. He says, "For since the beginning of the world Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, Nor has the eye seen any God besides You,"

Revealed by the Holy Spirit

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 1 Cor. 2:9

Who acts for the one who waits for Him. I told you the world gets their reality from what they see and what they hear and what they can think out by reason, right? That's exactly what the scripture is talking about here. "eye have not seen nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man," that's by reason, according to the logic of this world and the dimensions of this universe, "the things which God has prepared for those who love him." You don't see what heaven has for you. You don't see resurrection. You don't see victory and glory for eternity by what you can feel and what you can see and smell and touch and reason out from this universe. Those things don't have anything to do with this. But God has revealed them to us.

See, if you stop with verse 8 or 9, you think, well, you know, I mean, I just don't know anything about what God has in mind. Read verse 10. "But God has revealed them to us through the spirit." Now, you don't want to get into a discussion with anybody that doesn't know Jesus about the Holy Spirit, because again, you're on losing ground. They can't see the Spirit. They can't smell him. They can't touch him. They can't hear him. He doesn't exist for them. Why, because he's not a part of this universe.

So how do we see the things that God has prepared for us? Well, they're revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. That means the Spirit has omniscience. See, the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Godhead. He has all the characteristics of the Father and the Son. He has omniscience. Now, he has a job to do. The Son's job was to come and offer himself up on the cross for our sakes. The Father didn't die on the cross. The Spirit didn't die on the cross. That was the job of the Son. The Spirit has a job. His job is to come and offer himself His job--you have to pit him in a little way-- His job is to teach us. [LAUGHS] He has a tough job. His job is to do everything for us that God wants us to have if we would just let him do them. If you want to believe in Jesus, do you know how you get born again?

Read John chapter 3. Got to get born of the Spirit. There's no other way, Titus 3. No way to get born into the family of God but by the work of the Spirit. The Spirit does all the work for us. Jesus does all the provision. The Spirit doesn't make any provision for us. He just uses what Jesus provides. And Jesus provides what the Father said he should provide.

Now, I know that's a grade school way of telling you about the Trinity, but it works for me. So I call the Holy Spirit the worker. He's the worker, and he has a big job. How do you learn about the wisdom of God? From the Spirit. He

searches all that's in the heart and mind of God, and He makes known to us what God wants us to know. "For what man knows, the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him."⁷

So his example about how this works is you. You know something about yourself. You know that there isn't anybody in this world, and I'm not talking about God at this point, but in this world, there's nobody in this world that really knows all your thoughts except you. Okay? I know Hollywood plays around with this idea, and they can tell you they know what women want and all that, but that's not true. There's nobody in this world that knows your thoughts except you. You know what you have done. You know what you have thought. And you know you don't want everybody to know all that.

So you present to everybody what you want them to know about you. That you are polite, quiet, kind. That you smell good. That you are beautiful. We all think we're beautiful to some degree. No, we do, you know. If we didn't, we wouldn't try to improve on things when we look in the mirror. I mean, you know, you look in the mirror, you go, oh man, what a mess, and you do some arranging, and you get through, and you say, well that's better. That's better. You know, so we do have an idea, but you know what, we don't want everybody to see us when we first wake up in the morning with a white tongue, and a hair all over. We don't want that. We guard the world from seeing all that we really know about ourselves, so he says, who knows the man better than the spirit of the man that's in him, small s. That thing in you that is you that knows the truth.

Well, it's that way with God. Who knows the mind of God, the thoughts of God, better than the Holy Spirit? You wanna know anything about God, the Holy Spirit is the best one to let you know. And if you wanna really know anything about another person, the best thing is for the spirit of that person to tell you now, but they are not ready to do that often. That's only if you're in love, or you know, you let a little bit of that out. You wanna impress somebody.

Now, some people are really sneaky. They can watch your actions, listen to your words, and figure out a lot about you in the inner person, a lot more than other people can. You gotta stay away from those people, because they can just see right through you. You know? Have you ever met any of those? Watch out for them.

At least if you were offered friendship from them, you'd know it was genuine. If they offered their love, you would know it was real. 'Cause they saw all the bad stuff, and they chose to love you. Do you know that's the way it is

⁷ 1 Cor. 2:11

with God? “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”⁸ It was on the cross that he took all of our sins upon him. Isaiah 53, right? He loved us, and he loves us still. You wanna know the mind of God, you have to be acquainted with his word.

You know, down here it tells you what you're supposed to do if you're really under the control of the spirit. I've gotta give you this before you go. It's Ephesians chapter five. You know verse 18? Ephesians 5:18, about being filled with the spirit. Now, when I turn you to this verse, I do not mean that you should dance around in the aisles. That's how you prove you're filled with the spirit. I don't want you to talk with unknown tongues to prove to me that you're filled with the spirit. Or start screaming out in ecstasy. There are some places that encourage that. You know, and say, well, that's how you know you're filled with the spirit. You gotta, you know, get up and do some of this stuff, and really let loose. I think that causes confusion.

Verse 18 of chapter five, “be not drunk with wine in which is dissipation, but be filled with the spirit.” You're filled with the spirit when you yield yourself to the spirit of God and give him control. And when you give Him control, He won't make a fool of you, but He will reveal God to you from His word and how you are to live it out. To be filled with the spirit allows you then to go to the word of God and to understand it. That's one of his jobs, teach you, give you understanding, help you understand what God is saying.

And then you have to make a choice. Do you choose to let what God says are his values? Do you choose to make them your values? Spirit of God has shown them to you. Do you choose them for yourself? If you choose them and keep on choosing them, moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day, that's living in a way that pleases God 'cause they come from his thoughts. They come from His values. They come from His heart. They come by the Spirit. And you know what He tells you to do? Look here, He tells you, verse 19, “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” How can you sing in psalms and songs if you don't know them? I think you have to read it and in many cases, memorize it. You can't sing a song if you don't know the words. That's why the bees buzz, you know, they hum. They don't know the words. You're supposed to know the words.

“Giving thanks always for all things.” And that means after you get yourself exposed to the word of God, even memorize it, certainly learn it, or certainly if you're gonna sing from the psalms, at least read it. Then he's talking about prayer, “giving thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

⁸ Ro. 5:8

So this I know, if you're gonna follow God and his thoughts and ways, you're gonna have to be exposed to his word, you're gonna have to make them your word for your joyous expressions, you're gonna have to memorize it and study it or at least read it. And then you're gonna have to have a life of prayer. Giving thanks for all things, everything you can see in your life that's good or bad. I don't mean your sins, I mean things that hurt. Thank God for them and ask him for what his purpose is in it. If it means that you trust him more, that you would be able to do that or whatever, thank him for it. Submitting to one another in the fear of God, that's the social side of it, that's the third dimension.

Make sure in your relationships with other people that you're not trying to lord it over them, you're trying to be one with them, you're trying to be united in heart with them, you're trying to be in spirit united with them. Be a wonderful answer for marriages, for child-parent relationships, for work relationships. If you wanna know, if you'd read the rest of the chapter and go into chapter six, those are exactly the subjects he covers. Husbands, first he touches about wives, then husbands, then about children, then about parents, then about servants, bond servants, that means in our culture it'd be people that work for other people by choice, and then those that are the bosses or the business owners or whatever, he talks to them. It's all there. If you really wanna be at peace with other people. And know the mind of God and live by it.⁹

Father, thank you for your word, your word is truth and everything that we have in it speaks to us of how you want us to live and thank you that by the Holy Spirit we can do that if we would surrender ourselves to him and be guided by your word and choose it, choose to live that way by your guidance, by your encouragement, by your teaching. Lord, you promised to fill us with your joy in doing it, to heal our relationships and our marriages and with our children, with our bosses and our co-laborers. You've promised, Lord, and I believe your word is true. You will do it. Help us to not follow the ways of the world, but the wisdom of God from your word, in Jesus' name, amen.

⁹ Principles of editing. I have done very little editing. I have capitalized some of the pronouns referring to God. But I also think I miss some of them. So when you read this, in context, you should be able to understand when a pronoun is referring to God. I have added a few footnotes to give you references of scriptures being discussed. The following text is transcribed from a sermon.

The document that I'm working with does not separate the paragraph, so as I have read it, I've tried to put it in paragraph form. Any errors on paragraphs are on my part. It is our hope that reading these sermons will increase your understanding of them. Reeves