



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Colossians 2: 1-5

Lesson 6 of 15

2018

"Hidden Treasures"

TRANSCRIPT

Well, good morning. We're in Colossians chapter two this morning and we are going to study verses one through five. Paul writes,

<sup>1</sup>For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, <sup>2</sup>that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and *attaining* to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, *resulting* in a true knowledge of God's mystery, *that is*, Christ *Himself*, <sup>3</sup>in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. <sup>4</sup>I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. <sup>5</sup>For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

Colossians 2: 1-5

May the Lord bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of studying it together. Let's pray.

Father, we do thank You for this time together. It's always a blessing to be with Your people on a Sunday morning to do what we're doing—Worshiping You in song, reading the Scriptures, and spending time considering the meaning of this text and how it applies to us. Lord, I pray that You'd bless us as we do that; that You would illuminate our minds and that You would give us an understanding of the things that Paul wrote to

the Colossians—And he wrote them to us as well; for they apply equally to us. They faced challenges; they faced false teaching; and Paul has given them the key to dealing with that—It's the Scriptures; and it's 'knowing Christ', and availing ourselves of the treasures that are in Him. And so I pray Lord that You would bless us with an understanding of this text and the urgency that is upon us to act upon the things that Paul says—to read the Scriptures; to study them; and become men and women who know Your Word and can live by it and apply it to the issues of life. So build us up Lord to that understanding. Give us what we're told is “in Christ” —And that's 'wisdom and knowledge'. May we have some more of that as a result of our time together this morning.

Lord, we need Your blessing in the material things of life as well. We are dependent upon You for every breath of life that we take; so we look to You for everything. And we should, for we tend to drift a little bit in that way when sometimes we take things for granted. But the reality is that everything, every moment of our existence, is a gift from You. We live and move and exist in You; and You are gracious to provide for us; provide every moment of life for us.

We pray for those that are in difficulty. We know some of our members are going through difficulties; are in rehabilitation centers, or the hospital, or at home recovering from various problems. We pray You'd bless them, strengthen them, give them healing, and give them encouragement in the midst of these trials of life and give them a sense of Your presence.

And for those of us who are here and are not going through any particular physical difficulty, but we may be going through other kinds of difficulties. You know that too; You know what we're dealing with. And we ask for wisdom and your encouragement as well.

But also give us a grateful heart for the good things You've given to us in such abundance. It's a great thing to be here, to be with Your people, and to have the freedom that we do to open our Bibles and study it together and sing hymns of praise to You.

So Lord, as we do that in this hour, bless us. May the Spirit of God illuminate our minds. We pray that Christ would be with us; that He would fellowship with us and teach us. We look to You to bless us and thank you for this time.

We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

A really big thing happened one morning in the hills above Sacramento when the foreman at Sutter's mill saw a sparkle in the stream. He took the yellow flakes in his hands, studied them for a moment, and knew what he had. Excited, he ran to his crew and said, "Gold, boys. Gold." That began the California Gold Rush.

Paul had a similar message. But he had ‘gold’ of a different kind, and of a higher value than anything dug out of the ground. He calls it “...the treasures of wisdom and knowledge...” He says, ‘It is found “in” Christ’. And every Christian has access to it. It's ours. That's what he tells the Colossians, (and us), in Colossians 2:1-5. We are rich, the richest people on the planet. Through Christ we have the revelation of God—life-changing knowledge. It is better than gold dust or shares of Apple.

You question that? Well, the Psalmists didn't. More than once they tell us that the Law, the Word of God, His revelation, is “...more precious than gold, yes, than much fine gold; ...sweeter also than honey...” (Ps 19:10). It's quite a claim.

We know gold. It's solid. It's reliable. In 1849, Americans in the thousands left everything to go west and make their fortune. Men will risk all they have for a sack of gold. But according to Paul and the Psalmists, we have something more valuable and practical than bars of bullion. It is spiritual riches that give a sound mind and a productive life—the best life.

But again, do you believe that? Paul was so convinced of the value of these treasures that he said “are hidden” in Christ, that he traveled far, and he suffered much to make them known to the churches. And he spoke of all the sacrifices for the saints that he had made in Chap. 1 (vs 24f). But he didn't do it ‘in his own strength.’ He did the “striving”, he said, “according to” God's power working within him, (vs29). It was a supernatural thing. He says that—But Paul did it: He labored; He suffered; And he did it

because he loved the saints. He wanted them to know the riches they had so they would mine them; so they would dig them; so they would live them. —And it was a labor of love on Paul's part.

He wanted the Colossians to know all of this and that's how he begins Chapter 2. He wanted them to know how great a struggle he had on their behalf because of his love for them. Now remember, he says in verse 1 that he ‘didn't know them.’ He says that ‘they had never seen his face.’ And yet he put up a great struggle for them and for those in Laodicea, another city in the Lycus valley near Colossae.

Now that's very instructive I think; very instructive about love: It's more than words—it's more than feelings—it's action. And Paul's actions were serious—They were ‘agony’. That's the word that he uses here—this word “struggle”, (vs1), has the idea of ‘agony’. It's the kind of effort athletes, like wrestlers, give. It's all-out effort. And Paul gave the Colossians and Laodiceans that kind of effort because he loved them—even though he'd never met them. He ‘struggled’ for them when he labored in and around Ephesus to give the gospel. And people like Epaphras received it and then went to Colossae and Laodicea and evangelized.

So through the missionaries that went to the Lycus valley, Paul became the spiritual father of the saints there. He felt a connection to them. His labors in Ephesus were for them as much as for anyone. But his ‘struggles’ for them continued long after his great Asian ministry ended—even into the Roman jail where he wrote to them ‘in chains’ (4:3). His letter was a labor for them, again, ‘a labor of love.’ He had to think carefully about their situation; think about the false teachers that threatened their faith; think about the nature of the heresy they were dealing with; how to correct it and how to give the best defense against it. And that took labor—intellectual, mental labor. He did that because they weighed heavily on his mind.

He spoke of that, indirectly at least, in 2 Corinthians 11 where he speaks about all that he had done; all the physical hardships that he went through; all that he had experienced in getting and giving the Gospel to the Gentiles. And it wasn't just physical hardships. He also speaks of the daily pressure that he felt due to the concern that he

had for all of the churches—and that included these Colossians and the Laodiceans. He had a personal concern for them; so he prayed for them. He could do that in jail and no doubt he did it daily; and he did it earnestly. He bore them on his heart, and it weighed on him constantly.

But love not only has feeling and action, it has direction. And Paul gives the direction of his concern in his labors in verse 2 where he gives three goals of instruction to them. *First*, he wanted them to be encouraged in the faith. *Second*, he wanted them to have assurance in the truth. And *third*, he wanted them to be grounded in the truth about Christ. He wanted them to have the truth of Christ fully and correctly.

So his first goal here was to have “...their hearts...encouraged, having been knit together in love...” (vs2). Love is key. Love is important. Error had come into that church and it no doubt had caused some confusion and disruption. They needed to be strengthened and encouraged in their faith by their love for each other. This love would then give them assurance in the truth: Because it is a demonstration that ‘The Faith’; that Christian truth; that the Christian life; is real and alive.

Paul has explained that his ministry was to make known to the Gentiles the “mystery”, which he defined in chapter 1, as “...Christ in you...” (v. 27). Christ lives within them, he's saying, as He lives within us. He lives in us through the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, and he wanted them to understand that. He labored for that. He prayed for that.

Now for us that requires study; it requires learning; it requires effort—but not just that. The Christian life is not just knowledge but also action. It involves deeds of love. It involves concern. And that must be experienced to really learn and know fully the truth. So Paul was urging them to take a personal interest in each other and improve their brotherly love: And through that, they would strengthen one another; they would encourage one another; and also they would confirm the truth of the Christian life. Paul was an example of doing that. He didn't know them personally for they had never met. And yet he ‘struggled’ mightily for them—to bless them, to strengthen them, and to defend them. He did that because he and they were ‘knit together’ spiritually.

That's what he speaks of in verse 2, "...having been knit together in love..." They were joined together spiritually. They were part of the body of Christ and, because of that, they could not help but have a concern for one another. It's natural in our spiritual family to have a concern for one another. Now, if he had that concern having never met them and yet loved them and sacrificed for them; how much more should they, who knew each other, love each other and care for each other? That's the way of a normal, healthy church.

But it's also necessary; because through the experience of brotherly love, (or love that is like family love), Christians experience the love and the life of Christ. And this is a priority with the apostles. For example, you read all through 1 John statements like, "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth..." (1 John 3:18). And "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God;..." (1 John 4:7). Where did John get that? Well, from the same source Paul got it—from the Lord Himself: "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you." (John 15:12). Well, how did He love us? He loved us unconditionally, sacrificially. And it's as we understand His love for us, (the love of God for sinners), it's then that we want to love one another; that we want to do what Paul did; that we want to sacrifice our lives for our brothers and sisters. That's biblical love, not sentimentality.

In fact, as explained previously in chapter one verse 28, Paul 'taught' and he 'admonished.' He gave the truth—he gave the whole truth. And he corrected people—for love doesn't ignore errors or failures. A person who really loves others will be honest and give correction where that is necessary.

And there's a right way to do that: And that right way is '*tactfully.*' Proverb 25:15b, "...a gentle tongue can break a bone." Well, that's wisdom. And that takes *care*; that takes *patience*; and that takes *skill*. But love corrects, as well as cheers, as well as encourages.

Now, here's the point. It's as we do that and experience it, (having love for one another and receiving love from one another), that we get a truer understanding of Christ. Christ is not only a story from a book: He is concrete—He is real—He is alive.

The mystery of Christ “in” us is not just an idea—it's an experience. As the New Testament scholar F. F. Bruce wrote, the revelation of this mystery, “cannot be properly known apart from the cultivation of brotherly love.” When we see theology in action, when we see faith in action, we get a fuller understanding of biblical truth. We see Christ alive in the love of the saints, because it is His life in us, and lived through us. It is a demonstration of the very thing Paul is talking about, “Christ in us”. We see His life in the reality of it.

And that leads to the second goal—*Assurance*. Paul wanted all Christians to be firm in the faith. We cannot progress in the faith if our minds are clouded with doubt. We cannot progress in the faith if we're not *assured* in it. So he urged both truth and love. Doctrine is lived. It's not just in the mind. It has to be there to begin with, but it has to be lived. That gives *assurance* of the truth; *assurance* in the faith.

And that leads to Paul's third goal for them, and that is that they have a true *knowledge* of God's mystery, that is, Christ. The ‘mystery’ was defined earlier in chapter one as ‘Christ in you’, (v. 27). But here, the emphasis is on the person of Christ. We need to know Him. We need to know all about Him. We need to know who He is and what He has done. Paul was telling the Colossians to have a knowledge of the real Christ—not the Christ of the heretics. They taught that He was not sufficient; They denied His deity; He was only one helper on the path to enlightenment and to God; He was only one of many mediators.

Paul was praying that the Colossians—and the church down through the centuries—would know the true Christ. He's not less than God. He is God—God the Son. He is sufficient. He is the only mediator between God and man, the only bridge between heaven and earth; and He is the key to knowledge. He's the key to understanding the Word of God. Now He himself said that in John 5, when He was in a hostile confrontation with some of the Jews, probably the Pharisees. And He said to them, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, it is these that testify about Me." (vs39). And “For if you believed Moses you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.” (vs46).

Now that's a very significant statement. A significant statement in a number of ways, but certainly in terms of understanding the Bible and how to interpret it—Because what He's saying is that He's at the center of the Bible. The Old Testament is all about Christ. You will never understand it if you don't see Him as its subject. He is the subject of the Old Testament. He is the subject of the New Testament. From the beginning to the end— It's about Christ. And Paul says in verse three that you will never have the treasures if you don't know Him, “...in Whom...” (that is in Christ), “...are hidden all the treasures...”.

If people had left everything to get gold in California, and had gone to Los Angeles instead of Sacramento, they would have found nothing but palm trees and movie stars. They would have gone to the wrong place if they wanted gold. And the same is true here. Paul says ‘all the treasures’ are hidden in Christ (v. 3). So where do we go to find the treasures? Well, the world points us in all directions. But what Paul says is, ‘there's only one direction, there's only one place—And that's Jesus Christ.’

Now what does he mean when he says they're “hidden” in Christ? Well, he doesn't mean they're concealed (he doesn't mean hidden in a literal sense), but ‘laid up’ or ‘treasured up’. They are there waiting for us—All the treasures; We are rich with lasting treasures!

There is an old movie, a classic, *The Treasure of Sierra Madre* (1948). It's as old as I am, so I don't think I'll ruin the ending of it for you if you haven't seen it. But it's about a miner who leads a couple of inexperienced partners to a vein of gold in the mountains of Mexico. They mine the gold and fill their bags with gold dust—They're rich! But that's when their troubles begin—with greed, distrust, and finally...loss. In the end, all the gold blows away back to the mountain. It's really a morality play that shows the uncertainty of riches and the vanity of pursuing them. That's not where happiness lies. Even Hollywood can get that right. And this is what Paul warns of in 1 Timothy chapter 6; people who want to get rich with the treasures of this world “...fall into temptations and a snare...” and are plunged “...into ruin and destruction.” (vs9).

But that's not so with these riches—What Paul calls, “...all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (vs3). This is what we should want. This is what we should seek. These riches not only bless; they increase our fulfillment in life and for all eternity. They are the knowledge of God and man in the Scriptures. This is what we need to study and believe. And for these Colossians, as well as for us, it would enable them to discern truth and error.

Two weeks ago I quoted Calvin and the first line of his *Institutes*: "Nearly all the wisdom we possess consists of two parts, the knowledge of God, and of ourselves." And then later he writes, "It is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face, and then descends from contemplating Him to scrutinize himself." Now that's only logical. We need to look at the Creator to understand ourselves as the creature. This is so true—We need to look at His perfections to understand our flaws, and how far short we fall.

"There is no study more edifying and more profitable than the study of God." Charles Spurgeon said that. And this is a statement that I've read more than once, because I think it's quite profound. It's in a sermon that he preached dated January 7, 1855. Spurgeon said, "There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in the contemplation of the Divinity. No subject more humbles the mind than thoughts of God... But while the subject humbles the mind, it also expands it." 'It enlarges the intellect. It comforts the soul. Nothing calms us during trials or gives us peace in sorrow', "...like musing on the subject of the Godhead." He said that as he began his ministry in London when he was 20 years of age. Now that's a great deal of wisdom for a man of 20 to have. But what it shows is that he had fed deeply upon the Word of God. He studied the Scriptures and they changed him. They gave him 'wisdom and knowledge'.

This is what Paul was praying for the Colossians; that they would have this, that they would do this; that they would seek that; and that Christians down through the ages would do that as well to get their riches. It's greater than the wealth of nations. It is “wisdom and knowledge.” Money can't buy that, but we Christians have free access to it—now. We can know things that men can only speculate about.

Brilliant men speculate on so much about the universe, about man, about the future, and get it wrong so much of the time. But we have access to ‘The Revelation’. We have access to the truth. We don't speculate. We understand what God has revealed to us. We know God. And we can learn His character and attributes, His works and glory. And we know Him by studying Christ. “He is the image of the invisible God,” Paul said earlier, in chapter one (v. 15). He is God the Son. We see God's attributes in Christ as we look at Him. We see God's power over creation. We see His power over the elements and over the Devil. God's compassion for the sick is seen in our Lord. His compassion for the needy. His holiness. Christ is the sinless Son of God. He is righteous, and we learn from Him what the nature of the Godhead is. He stilled the storm on the sea and cast out evil spirits. He healed the sick. We see God's power in Him. But we also see the grace of God exhibited in His Son.

And what we learn from studying Christ is that God is personal, and God is faithful. The God who gives promises is able to keep them. In fact, it is impossible for Him not to keep His promises—It's impossible for Him to fail us. Paul learned that from the beginning of his Christian life when Christ spoke to him on the road to Damascus. And he learned it all the way to the end of his life when he stood trial before Caesar.

In his final book, he told Timothy, in 2 Timothy 4, that ‘at his trial no one supported him’ (vs16). They all deserted him. Imagine that. The apostle who brought the gospel to the Gentiles; who suffered and struggled for them; was concerned for them day and night; and prayed for them daily; was “deserted” by them. "But," he said, "the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear;" (vs17). That included Nero himself.

The Lord God, the Triune God, is personal. He is faithful. He stands with us when others don't. He strengthens us when we are weak. All the apostles learned that, as the saints have down through the ages. As they walk by faith and find themselves in a difficult spot, they find God faithful. So, know Christ —that's Paul's counsel. Christ opens all ‘the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’ to all who do. He has given believers a new

mind. He has given us a new orientation. He has given us the ability to understand Scripture, to live it, and to be obedient. Through God's Word we learn the fundamental truths and principles of life: Our origin and destiny; where we came from; where we're going. We have knowledge of the world and human nature; and God's plan for it all. We know these things. The world doesn't. We have access to all that knowledge. We have access to the knowledge of the ultimate end of all things.

Paul called it “...the hope of glory.” (Col 1:27). That's the ultimate end for God's people. And that hope gives us courage as well; to live a life well in this world. And it takes courage to do that, because we face challenges. But to know what we have, to know what is before us, to know the end of all things— “the hope of glory” —that gives us encouragement to stand firm.

And that was the same encouragement that the writer of the Hebrews gave to his saints. He was writing to a group of people who were weak and suffering from the challenges that they were facing. And so he reminds them of their earlier days and how they stood firm against great challenges. They suffered much. They suffered the loss of their property for their faith. And they were able to do that willingly and joyfully because, he said, they had “...a better possession and a lasting one.” (Heb 13:14).

Now that's what they knew. They knew that ‘things’ are temporal and that everything is passing away. This life is short. Even the longest of lives is lived briefly. They knew that, and they were able to let go of everything with the knowledge of what lay ahead. That gives wisdom in life—Living life with the knowledge of heaven and the world to come before us. We have all of that in the Word of God.

Well, that's ‘the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’. How can we fully explain it in the few minutes that we have, or in a single sermon: This great expression, “the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”? Well, of course, we can't. But I think we can sum it up in one word: Scripture. That's it: ‘The treasures of wisdom and knowledge.’

You're all familiar, I'm sure, with the five slogans of the Protestant Reformation, the *solas*: ‘The five onlys’, as they are called. “Grace Alone”, “Faith Alone”, “Christ

Alone”, and “Glory to God Alone”. But the first of the five is, (and I would say), ‘the first among equals’ — “Scripture Alone.” The Bible is the fully inspired, inerrant Word of God. And it is our standard. It is our authority. That's the meaning of “Scripture Alone”. It's our sole authority for faith and practice. Without it we cannot know anything with any certainty. We cannot know the truth of the other *solas*— the other ‘onlys’. We can't know if they're true or not. We can only know those truths by the Word of God. We begin with Scripture—We begin with Scripture and faith in it.

But we can never understand the Bible if we don't first believe what it says about Christ. He's the keystone to Scripture. Remove Him, and the whole arch of the Bible collapses—the whole structure of the Bible collapses. So we must study it through Him. And that's a lifetime of study. But He offers us all ‘the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’. Why would we not want to know Him? Why would we not want to have that?

I ask that almost rhetorically because the fact is, we have other things that interest us in life, don't we? We are easily distracted. Now, I'm not against entertainment; I'd be a hypocrite if I said was. I was in the midst of studying last night when I set it aside and went and watched a college football game, (And we lost. That was my repayment.) Now that's not a bad thing to take time for some entertainment or amusement. I'm not suggesting that. But here's the problem. Often, we miss the best while *Amusing Ourselves To Death*, (to use the title of a popular book in the 1980s). We're distracted to our own poverty and peril. Because ‘the knowledge of the Lord’ leads to knowing Him better; And that knowledge is transforming: He causes changes in us; He makes us better; We are transformed as we see Him in the Word of God and study Him. But the knowledge of Him and His word also protects us in this deceptive and dangerous world where the enemy is constantly on the attack and seeking to draw us into his web of lies and tears.

That's why Paul informs us of our great treasure here. He informs us of that so that we will avoid those traps and those dangers. That's what he says next in verse 4.

He didn't want them to be misled by “...persuasive argument.” That phrase actually means ‘persuasive *false* argument’. It's an argument that seems plausible but is untrue. But that's true of all effective error—It's persuasive. It can even use the Bible to make its argument. So how do we counter that?

We counter it with Scripture. We counter it with the truth. That's what Paul is saying. The best way to defeat error is with the truth. It's by knowing God's Word. There's no better example of that than our Lord Himself. He was tempted in the wilderness by the Devil. Satan tried to ‘catch’ Christ by using Scripture—His temptations were all veiled in Bible verses. Each time, Jesus answered him with a Bible verse out of the Book of Deuteronomy. When's the last time you read the Book of Deuteronomy? That's an important book. They all are. But that's the one that the Lord used to deal with the Devil. Christ countered the lie with truth. That's the way to overcome error.

But, of course, to do that we must know the Scriptures. And to know the Scriptures we have to spend time in them. We may have to set aside some things we might like to do in order to read and study the Word of God. And that's what Paul was urging. And he was doing that with all the support that he could give—giving all of the effort that he could give. He wrote in verse five, "For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ."

Paul was in a Roman jail. He was in chains. He couldn't be there at Colossae with them to face the enemy face to face. But his thoughts and his prayers were with them—earnestly and genuinely. And he could encourage them as he did here in verse 5. They were doing well, he says, showing good discipline and stability. And that's what the Word of God gives—It gives stability in thought and conduct. They had that because of their faith in Christ. They knew the gospel, believed it, and were joined to Christ; placed in Him like a branch in a vine. They were truly joined with Christ, and He was in them—and they had life in Him.

But that's just the beginning. The gospel is the beginning, but we need to grow from that. We need to develop in the knowing Him. And we have the means to do that.

We have in Christ all ‘the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’. We need to know how rich we are and what we have. And we need to get it. We need to mine those treasures. We need to dig them up. They are life changing riches.

Not long ago I read about the discovery in Egypt in 1922 of Pharaoh Tutankhamen's tomb. King Tut; the most famous discovery in the history of archaeology. Howard Carter found it. His first look inside the vault happened when he put a lighted candle through a small opening that he'd made in a sealed door. Behind him was the Earl of Carnarvon who had financed the expedition. The Earl was impatient. He had spent five years in waiting and now they've discovered something. And so he was pulling on Carter's coat saying, "What do you see? What do you see?" Carter answered almost breathlessly, "I see wonderful things." And those things have fascinated people for almost 100 years—The treasures of Egypt.

Carter later wrote of that moment when he looked into the tomb, "I was struck dumb with amazement." "Gold," he said. "Everywhere the glint of gold." Here's what's so interesting. He had searched the Valley of the Kings for five years, trying to find that tomb, and was about to give up when he dug one last time. He dug on the hill where they were camped—where they had camped every year for five years. He was sitting on the treasures of Egypt the whole time and didn't know it. Isn't that like us? We need to encourage each other to dig for our riches.

And we encourage one another to do that by loving one another. That shows the reality of our faith, which results in assurance and knowledge—knowledge that is life giving, life changing. And it's right before us in this book. In Proverbs 8, Wisdom is standing on the heights, standing by the way, standing in the street and inviting people to listen to her, (vs2f). ‘It's there to be heard, it's there to be read, it's there to place in our heart noble things, right things’, she says. “...I am understanding, power is mine.”, she says (vs14).

So, you want power, you want self-control? It's here. You don't have to search the world for wisdom. We don't have to dig down into the depths of the Earth or scale the heights of heaven to find wisdom. It's right here, right before each and every one of

us. It's in this Book. But wisdom also says, "...All those who hate me love death." (vs36b). May God teach us to love wisdom and knowledge. As Paul said, "It is hidden in Christ." It is laid up in Christ for believers.

If you have not believed in Him, then this 'wisdom and knowledge' is hidden from you, because the Word of God seems foolish to you. Yet the Word of God, the gospel of life, is near you. It's in these words: "...Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved..." (Acts 16:31). That's all—simply believe in Him. Receive Him and His sacrifice for your sins and for the forgiveness of all your sins, and for the righteousness that He imputes. That is being wise. May God give you that wisdom.

And may God help you be wise and give to you, and give to all of us here, a desire for His truth and treasures.

Let's pray.

Father, we do thank You for Your goodness to us. We thank You for making us rich—the richest people on the planet! Help us to understand that—and to believe that— and to act upon it. We have been given access to Your wisdom as a great gift. You have given us the ability to find it and to apply it for we have the Spirit of God within us, as Your people, to understand and appropriate it.

So, God give us the discipline to do that; the desire to do that—that we might live lives that bring glory to You.

We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen

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