

# Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

## *You Must be Born Again!*

*“The habit of preachers today is to address their people as though they were all Christians and just need instruction...men and women are being treated as saved who never knew they were lost.” [Lloyd-Jones]*

*“In my lifetime I did not care to hear that word that cut me most, and showed me my lost estate aright. I was vexed to hear my sins mentioned, and laid to my charge. I loved him best, who deceived me most; who said, Peace, peace, when there was no such thing.” (Jer. 5:30,31).  
[Bunyan, John. A FEW SIGHS FROM HELL]*

[www.sermonaudio.com/crc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/crc)

[www.unholycharade.com](http://www.unholycharade.com) (blog)

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## ***One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism – Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians***

*Part 10 – Wisdom Not of this Age  
(Pt 2)*

***May 5, 2024***

**Sermon Text:** 1 Cor 2:6-16

**Scripture Reading:** 1 Cor 4:6-21

1Co 1:30-31 And because of him

you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, (31) so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

In these first two chapters of 1 Corinthians, we have been learning of two kinds of wisdom – the wisdom of man/the world, and the wisdom of God. The natural man, that is, the person outside of Christ in their fallen state as they were

born into this world, has a mindset which is radically opposed to the mind of Christ. The wisdom of God.

Listen now as I read John Bunyan's comments on the rich man (Dives) and Lazarus and how we see the world's mind evaluating these two men:

Verses 19–20 run thus: *“There was a rich man who would dress in purple and fine linen, feasting lavishly every day. But a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, was left at his gate.”*

If only these two verses had been spoken by Jesus Christ, nearly all the world would have cast a wrong interpretation on them. If Jesus had said only this much, the world would have made this conclusion: “Then the rich man was certainly the happy man.”

For at first view it represents such a thing; but take all together, that is, read the whole parable, and you shall find that there is no man in a worse condition than he, as I shall

clearly hold forth afterward. Again, if a man would judge men according to outward appearances, he shall oftentimes miss his mark.

Here is a man who, to outward appearances, appears as the only blessed man — better by far than the beggar, inasmuch as he is rich — and the beggar poor; he is well clothed — but the beggar is nearly naked; he feasted lavishly every day — but the beggar would be glad to have dog's food. “He desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.” The rich man feasted lavishly every day — but the beggar is glad for a bit when he can get it. Oh, who would not desire to be in the rich man's state?

A wealthy man, with all sorts of new suits and dainty dishes every day, has enough to make one who minds nothing but his belly, his back, and his lusts to say, “Oh, that I were in that man's condition! Oh, that I had as much as that man has! Then I would live a life indeed; then I would have heart's ease aplenty; then I would live pleasantly, and might say to my

soul, ‘Soul, be of good cheer; eat, drink, and be merry. You have everything aplenty, and are in a most blessed condition.’” This is the conclusion with those who judge according to outward appearances. But if the whole parable is well considered, you will see that *that which is held in high estimation with men — is an abomination in the sight of God.* The wisdom of God is foolishness to the natural man.

From this we observe that those who judge according to outward appearances (ie, according to the wisdom of the world), for the most part, judge amiss (John 7:24). Those who look upon their outward enjoyments as tokens of God's special grace to them, are also deceived (Rev. 3:17).

For here in the parable, a man of wealth and a child of the devil may be the same person; a man may have an abundance of outward enjoyments — and yet be carried by the devils into eternal burnings! (Luke 12:20).

This is the trap in which the devil has caught many thousands of poor souls, namely by getting them to judge according to outward appearances, or according to God's outward blessings.

Ask a poor, carnal, covetous wretch — how we should know a man to be in a happy state, and he will answer, “Those whom God blesses and gives an abundance of this world to.” Yet, for the most part, they are the cursed men. Alas! Poor men, they are so ignorant as to think that because a man is increased in outward things — therefore God loves that man with a special love, or else He would never do so much for him, never bless him so, and prosper the work of his hands.

Ah! Poor soul, it is the rich man who goes to Hell. “The rich man died, and in Hell [mark it, ‘in Hell’] he lifted up his eyes.” To see how the great ones of the world go strutting up and down the streets, makes me wonder. Surely they look upon themselves to be the only happy men; but it is because they judge according to outward

appearances. They look upon themselves to be the only blessed men, when the Lord knows the generality are left out of that blessed condition. “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called” (1 Cor. 1:26).

Bunyan, John. A FEW SIGHS FROM HELL: The Groans of a Damned Soul (pp. 13-15). MAGNA GRATIA Ministries. Kindle Edition.

Do you understand? As long as a man or woman remains in their natural state, as long as they refuse Christ, they have the mindset of the world. Real truth, God’s wisdom, is foolishness to them.

Is it not true? What kind of person, for instance, does the world generally encourage young people to emulate? What is their measure of success in life? Is it not an advancement up the career ladder? An increase in wealth? What kind of son or daughter is Mr. Worldly Wiseman proud of? How does the world define greatness? The

world’s wisdom sets the famous athlete up upon a pedestal as a model for children to emulate.

And yet, the great of this world, giving no thought to God, to eternity, to their soul – will end in hell just as this Dives did. At the same time, the last will be first. Lazarus was the one who was a true success. When the Apostle Paul was still Saul the Pharisee, were his Jewish parents not quite proud of him? What do you suppose they thought of him when he renounced his past successes to follow Christ?

The wisdom of the world leads to hell. It is Broadway. The wisdom of God leads to heaven. It is the Narrow Way. Few are they who find it.

As parents, as grandparents and even great grandparents, which way are we encouraging our young ones to follow? Are we teaching them worldly wisdom, or God’s wisdom?

Let’s look into these things further. There is much here in verses 6-16

and we may not get through them all today:

1Co 2:6-16 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. (7) But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

(8) None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (9) But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— (10) these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

(11) For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

(12) Now we have received not the

spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. (13) And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

(14) The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

(15) The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. (16) “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

### A Secret and Hidden Wisdom

6 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. (7) But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for

our glory.

Among the *mature* or, as the KJV has it, *perfect*. The Greek word means “full-grown.” It is the same word used here:

Heb 5:11-14 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. (12) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, (13) for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. (14) But solid food is for the **mature**, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Understand? The Apostle is rebuking these Hebrews for being immature, children, dull of hearing. In contrast the mature are able to receive the wisdom of God in what the Apostle had taught them.

God’s Word is *wisdom* to the mature Christian. But to spiritual infants, they stumble over the meat of the Word. And they are children spiritually because they have been careless and lazy in utilizing the means of grace and growth which the Lord has provided.

Remaining a spiritual child is *dangerous*. It is like a child who resolves to only finish the first grade and go no further. To such a person, the wisdom of the world is going to bait them and remain attractive to them. They will choke on the wisdom of God. All they want to hear is that because THEY have believed in Christ, their sins are forgiven and they are on their way to heaven. Don’t trouble them with anything further. But see the DANGER:

Eph 4:13-14 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (14) so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every

wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

In the history of this church, there have been many people of all ages choose to remain infants spiritually – if they are even born again at all. But just look around. Consider for instance the children and young people who have been here at one time – where are they now? I can tell you – *the world swept them away. They were overcome by the wisdom of the world and its enticements.* They were lured by Broadway.

Paul's words here are a rebuke to these prideful yet infantile Corinthians. They boasted of their wisdom, but they were not recognizing Paul's teaching as wisdom.

*“Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.”*

God's Word is wisdom. The gospel, His entire plan of redemption, is wisdom. *But it is not a wisdom of this age. It is not the wisdom which the rulers of this world govern with. Their wisdom leads to wars and chaos. Get to the top. Conquer. Be great.* That is why there was all that division going on in Corinth.

God's wisdom is entirely opposite. At completely different mindset and worldview. It requires a converted, regenerate, mature mind to recognize it. It is the servant who will be the greatest. It is the last who will be first. *This is a wisdom which is not of this age.* It is the wisdom of God's kingdom, of the new creation, which is eternal.

We live in an *age, an era, a portion of history* which is characterized by a way of thinking. But God's wisdom is the wisdom of another age, an era which is to come. Which has, in part, already begun. And those citizens in it who are mature understand this. For example:

Mat 10:34-39 “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. (35) For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. (36) And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. (37) Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (38) And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. (39) Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

And again:

Mar 10:17-23 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (18) And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. (19) You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’”

(20) And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.”

(21) And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

(22) Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. (23) And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will be

This is the wisdom of God. It is the wisdom of His kingdom, the mind of Christ. And yet many, many people who claim to be Christians stumble over it. They do not recognize it as wisdom. They reject it and instead embrace the world's wisdom which says *family is the thing. Family must always be first. We must never walk away from family.*



for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!”

God’s wisdom, you see. And yet it is foolishness to the world. That is why the rich young man walked away from Christ.

*But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.*

God’s wisdom in Christ, His plan of redemption – was secret. It was unknown in eternity past. He decreed it before the ages. Before time began. Before He created this world and us. This wisdom is what the Apostles were preaching *for the glory of all who would believe it*. This means that God’s wisdom is a wisdom *which is not of this present world. It is not something that man could ever think up. It is a wisdom which must be revealed to us by God.*

Consider then:

*(8) None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had,*

*they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (9) But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— (10) these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.*

Who, in their right mind, would crucify the Son of God who came into this world to save us? But man in his sin does not have a *right mind*.

Isa 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. (9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Now, Paul tells these Corinthians that the gospel he preached, the doctrine and truths he taught them, were so foreign to the world’s wisdom that man, left to himself, would never see, hear, or imagine them. The New heavens and earth

which Christ has prepared for His people is so far beyond man's imagination that – well, Paul was given a glimpse of it and he couldn't even tell us about what he saw!

But here is the emphasis and the point – *the Holy Spirit must reveal God's wisdom in Christ or we would never, ever, conceive of it. And this is exactly what He has done.* The Spirit of God has revealed to us the depths of God. That is what the Apostles preached and that is what you have right here in your Bible.

Listen, if anyone thinks that they can figure things out, that they can walk through life and be able to find the Narrow Way and avoid Broadway, if anyone believes that of themselves they can be wise, then they have not heard a word that Paul is telling us here. God wisdom, God's Word is light:

Pro 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. (6) In all your ways acknowledge him, and

he will make straight your paths.

Psa 119:103-105 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (104) Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. (105) Nun Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Anyone who is careless in regard to God's Word is, to that degree, walking in darkness. Unbelievers are in the dark. They don't get understanding because they prefer their own wisdom to God's.

So, let's put some serious questions to ourselves-

If the wisdom of the world resulted in the rulers of this world putting the Son of God to death,

If God's wisdom is only given to us through His Word by His Spirit,

If leaning upon our own understanding to guide us through this life and safely into heaven is a

walk in pitch black along a bottomless pit,

Then what position are you in today? Are you really walking in the light, guided by God's wisdom, even though that means you are a fool in the world's judgment? Or is your life being guided by the world's wisdom, just like this guy:

Luk 12:16b-21 “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, (17) and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ (18) And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (19) And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ (20) But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ (21) So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”