

I remember when I was called one of the things that I had done was, while I was in a bookstore, in a second-hand bookstore, I found a particular Bible, a very small Bible, a little red one that I was able to carry around, and this Bible had the New Testament in it, but it also had Proverbs and Psalms in it. And one of the reasons I wanted that particular small Bible was that I have always been interested in the book of Proverbs. And one of the reasons *why* I was interested in the book of Proverbs was because deep down I had wanted always to understand the proverbs; I'd wanted wisdom. And I must say probably in hindsight now, some of that desire for wisdom was vanity. I wanted to be *wise*; I wanted to be *seen* to be wise. But another aspect was that I had wanted to manage the people that I was managing with wisdom. I had wanted to be fair - the way that God had seen it. And since then, Mr. Weinland *has* given a sermon with regards to wisdom being the mind of God.

So today the title of the sermon is *Living Wisdom – Part 1*.

As we mature spiritually, we come to see that we need to continue the fight within ourselves on a spiritual level while striving to love one another, to love God, and love one another. One of the main lessons we come to learn by being part of God's Church is that knowledge of and by itself is not enough. So just having knowledge...what good is it? And there is, of course, in the book of Corinthians, it talks about, well, just having knowledge of something, what good is it?

Now, when I reflected on this particular topic, I realize that one of the problems that I had had during the period of Laodicea was when the Church was going to sleep, when I was going to sleep, was that Christ warned the Church about being lukewarm and that we felt that we were rich and increased with goods, and it actually goes back and talks about a spiritual condition. One of these spiritual conditions is that 'knowledge puffs up.' So we became puffed up, thinking that we had all this spiritual knowledge. Well, there was at that point, truths, and that did separate us from the world, being the Worldwide Church of God. Well, the Worldwide Church of God *was* separate from all other religions and the world because of this knowledge that we had. In fact, it caused a problem within people's thinking; it caused a problem in *my* thinking because it actually elevated the self to think that we were better, that we had this superiority because we had knowledge.

Now, *that* is worldly, because that's what a carnal mind does with worldly knowledge. Someone that has human intellect believes they are better than someone that is lesser than them in their own eyes, has less knowledge. 'Knowledge puffs up,' and that's what that scripture talks about.

The purpose of *this* sermon is to look at how we can apply the spiritual knowledge God has given us to see, and the important part there is 'to *apply* the spiritual knowledge,' because knowledge by itself is just that. And we're going to look at some of those aspects of knowledge.

To 'live wisdom' is to 'see' the spiritual knowledge and then apply the understanding of God's word into our life. So the first part is we have this knowledge. We come to 'understand' after that, we come to understand *why* we have that knowledge. But that's still not enough! The most important thing now is to apply it into our life, and we're going to look at different examples of how we can apply this into our life.

If you'd like to start in Colossians 1:9, and this is Paul making comment in relation to the brethren in Colossae. **Colossians 1:9 – For this reason we also, since the day we heard it**, and what he's referring to here is what the apostles had heard was that the brethren there were in faith, the faith of Jesus Christ, and they had the love for the brethren. In other words, they were called and they were being faithful and they were learning to love one another. So **for this reason...since the day we heard it**, your faith, **we do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.** There is a lot said in there and we're going to go through various scriptures to explore that in more detail. And the first thing that we can see there, here Paul in particular was actually praying, asking God that knowledge would be given to the brethren, the knowledge of God's will in their life and with all wisdom. Now, that's a separate topic, to actually have wisdom or live wisdom. And spiritual understanding, that's a different topic again. And they are quite clear; there is knowledge, understanding, and then wisdom – actually living it.

Verse 10 – that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work, every good work of faith, and increasing in the knowledge of God. In other words, it's saying growth; growth was required. So this, having this knowledge, this understanding and wisdom, would cause us to walk worthy of God. And when we walk worthy of God, we please God...and then, of course, because of that we bring forth good works, which is God in us, living out to the benefit of others **...and increasing in the knowledge of God**, understanding more about God's nature – not just knowledge itself.

If we desire to live wisdom, we will begin to gain a peace of mind that *cannot* be achieved by mankind. This is because mankind is currently separated from God and they do not have the power to 'think wisdom.' They don't have the power to have 'spiritual understanding.' This describes the world today physically and spiritually – man's thinking.

If you look, turn to Hosea 4, and these scriptures will describe how man is. **Hosea 4:1 – Hear the word of the Eternal, You children of Israel, For the LORD brings a charge/cause against the inhabitants of the land.** So here it is God saying, "Well, there is a charge against you." Why? **There is no truth**, number one, **mercy, or knowledge of God in the land.** And we can see that today. There is no truth in the world today. There is no mercy – not Godly mercy. What man thinks is merciful is actually evil! 'And knowledge of God,' mankind *cannot* know God, and they don't know God at all! They don't know the way God thinks.

Verse 2 – By swearing/cursing and lying, which is about deceit, **killing**, which is about ill-will, 'to slay' that word means, **and stealing and committing adultery**, 'adultery' is 'unlawful relationships,' **they break all restraint**; they break down self-control; there *is* no self-control in today's society. And as the posts that Mr. Weinland has written, we can see how one thing leads to another and in the end what we have is sin upon sin upon sin and there *is* no self-control. There is no *restraint* by the people...**with bloodshed upon bloodshed**; sin upon sin. That's what happens – sin upon sin.

Verse 3 – And therefore, because of this, **the land will mourn/lament; Everyone who dwells there will waste away**, will become weaker and weaker, feeble physically, mentally, and spiritually, because of this sin, because of the lack of self-control, **with the beasts**, or living life **of the field and the birds of the air; Even the fish of the sea will be taken away.** They're going to be removed. Because of man's sin upon sin upon sin, the kingdom of animals and nature will be affected, and we can see that with our very eyes. This has actually happened.

Verse 4 – Now, let no man 'contend,' that word is actually 'argue' or rebuke another/correct another, and we'll go into this, *why* this is the point. **For your people are like those who contend/argue with the priest.** And what it's saying there is they won't listen to instructions from God, because the priest was to give spiritual instructions, to give knowledge – spiritual. A priest was to represent God. Well, the people won't listen. So what it's saying here is, well, there is no point because all you're going to get is arguments. No point in going out and trying to convince people that they should follow God's way because they're not interested in God's way because of their sin and lack of self-control. It also refers to 'an appointed authority.' A priest was 'an appointed authority.' So they don't want to be told what to do. They just simply don't.

Verse 6 – My people are destroyed/cut-off from a lack of knowledge. This is just even knowledge. They're cut-off. Just basic spiritual knowledge mankind has been cut off from. Why? **Because you have 'rejected,'** and that word is 'despised, refused,' **knowledge.** People are cut off because they refuse – they actually despise knowledge; the truth of God is despised by mankind. **I,** this is talking about God, **also will reject you from being priest for Me.** It's talking about a royal priesthood. **Because you have forgotten/ignored the law of your God, I will also forget your children.** This is going to happen to the generations. It's going to continue. Those that follow after you will be cut-off also because of what you do as a parent or as a leader. "Because of the way *you* act," God is saying, "Well, your children don't have a hope." And if you look at families today, when children are born into certain environments, why could we ever say to them that we expect anything of them? It's impossible the way that their parents are behaving, the way their parents act, the way the parents bring them up, or *drag* them up. Why would we have an expectation on the child? Well, God is saying here, "Well, this is going to pass on from generation to generation because *you* willingly have rejected My ways," God's way, God's way of living.

Verse 7 – The more they increased, the more they multiply, **the more they sinned against Me; I will change their glory into shame,** confusion. That's actually what's going to happen. They might have some knowledge of God, but they're going to pervert it...they're going to pervert it.

God's ways should be a glory to mankind. Just simply obeying one of the commandments should be a glory, a credit to mankind; it's something from God! But mankind refuses it; therefore, God has given them over to confusion, and that's what we see.

Verse 8 – They eat up/consume the sin of My people.... because that's what happens. Because of the way Israel is, people follow. And if you look at today's society, what happens is there is a proclivity for the nations of Israel to go to look at other people's religions or other ways of living life. It's a proclivity. Just the other day we were watching a particular show and there was a group of people that had put up a tent and they were giving away all these insects that they had cooked. There was like all sorts, scorpions and whatnot. They'd cooked them, and they'd cooked ants and put chocolate on them – and the line is full and they're all carrying on saying, "It's fantastic! It's full of protein!" And you think, the insanity! What God gave to His people, Israel, as we understand it, physical Israel, were laws of clean and unclean, but they're rejected. They're rejected! Now, we shouldn't expect nations that weren't given the law to follow God's laws about clean and unclean; they weren't taught them, they weren't given them. They were given to Israel. In the wilderness, they were told what they should do. Other nations didn't know about clean and unclean, so why would we expect *them* to obey clean and unclean laws?

Verse 9 – And it shall be: like the people, like the priests. In other words, it's not going to be any difference, both are going to multiply sin. **So I will punish them for their ways and reward them for**

their deeds. Now, there are laws of blessings and cursing's. We understand that obedience on a physical level to God's law brings a blessing because that is a law of God. That is a law that He has established. Well, when we break that law we also are going to pay a penalty, and that penalty starts in the mind – starts in the mind, the way we think.

Verse 10 – For they shall eat and not have enough; they shall commit harlotry, but not increase; Because they have ceased obeying the LORD. They have ceased from following wisdom. They have ceased from living wisdom.

Verse 11 – Harlotry, unlawful relationships, **wine,** false doctrine, **and new wine enslave the heart/enslave the mind.** They *change* the way we think. **My people ask/desire counsel from their wooden idols...** the insanity of humans! When you really think about the insanity of the human mind – a man will take a wooden (from the forest as scripture talks there), they take this bit of wood and they carve it into like a monkey and an animal and they stick it up and they put candles all around it and they light them and then they go to it and kneel to it and ask it to intervene into their life. That's the natural carnal mind, and God's saying, "What sort of mind, what sort of *thinking* is *that*?" But that's what we do. It's referring here to things that have no wisdom – things that have no wisdom, have no thinking, yet man turns to them. There is a whole race of people that worship *cows!* *Worship* cows. And they pray to things that have nothing, big statues, and yet people turn to them... **and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray** in their thinking, **and they have played the harlot against their God.** The point being, all truth, right knowledge, spiritual understanding, and Godly wisdom can only come from God.

When we are first called by God into a relationship with Him, we begin to gain spiritual knowledge from God through His Church. Now, this is a point that is often forgotten by those that leave fellowship with God and His Church. *Where is it* that spiritual knowledge and understanding came from? Where was it? Was it out in the world? It was through God's Church. That's where it comes from!

So when this happens, this calling, there is a time of great excitement. Being called, we get quite excited, and the first thing we get excited about is...*knowledge.* It's the knowledge that actually excites us. We learn things that are new to us and it's really exciting! Then we find out that others in the world do not share this same excitement. They don't see it the way you see it or I see it. They go, "Oh, you're losing it, mate... you're losing your marbles! What's wrong with you?" And we're excited about things of God and they think it's really weird that you're so excited! We soon learn that knowledge by itself is not going to change the way we live towards God or the way we live to others, or towards others. It is just that, knowledge. And we're going to look at some of the things about knowledge, that we can have knowledge, but does knowledge of itself *change* us? It actually doesn't. Knowing something doesn't change us.

We have to be careful with this new knowledge, that it doesn't trigger in us pride. And that's what happened in and during Laodicea; it triggered pride, because 'knowledge puffs up' the carnal mind, because there is a level of, "I am better than you!" We start to look down on others because they don't have this knowledge that we have. We begin to think we are better because we have this new knowledge.

Now, examples of new knowledge – I want to just come to some of the Truths with regards to 'knowledge.' So let's look at some of the examples of 'knowledge' and just see whether they actually change anything in us.

6 (3) God's purpose for mankind. God is reproducing Himself and no other church knows or preaches this truth. We are to be born of God and become God—in the God Family: Elohim.

We know the purpose of *life*! Isn't that *exciting*? That we know this? *Nobody* knows it! But has that changed us? Does that make us live more Godly, having that knowledge? Of and by itself, it doesn't. Someone could actually read that and go, "Oh, okay. So," and then continue on their life as they always have been, continuing with sin, because this 'knowledge' is knowledge and at this point it doesn't change us.

7 (4) Who and what is God. God is a Family into which we may be born. God's spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are begotten children of God.

That's incredible, too, that we know this! And these are the things we get excited about! We get excited about God's plan! It's incredible! And that we can be begotten. We come to understand that we have a mind, but it requires God's spirit in us to begin to think spiritually. It's very exciting! Then we go and try to communicate to others this excitement and they can't understand a word we're saying *because* they haven't got the spirit of God witnessing with *their* spirit, so we can't communicate. They just think we've lost it!

8 (5) What is man? Man does not have an immortal soul.

Isn't that incredible *knowledge* that we have? Incredible knowledge! And the world is out there running around believing in heaven and hell, a man-made theory that has permeated certain religions, and they use it for the purpose of fear, that if you don't do this you will *burn in hellfire* forever! Well, if you're half lucky you could get caught half-way in purgatory or limbo. That's one of the doctrines. Well, of course if you're quite 'good' you could end up in heaven! We *understand* those lies! We understand that's just lies and *this* is the truth. Isn't it incredible to understand these truths? Truth 8 continuing....

Man is a temporary living, mortal being that returns to the elements of the earth at death and does not go to heaven or hell. Only God can give mankind immortality in His Family.

If we go around communicating this 'knowledge' to others, they can't understand what we're talking about. Because to 'understand' that really requires other truths to be added to it so that we can actually comprehend it. "What do you mean we don't have an immortal soul?" No, we're temporary, physical, and we're passing through. If we get to seventy years, God says that's a blessing – past that, greater blessing – but we're all, every one of us no matter what our age, on a countdown to death. Reality. We accept it. We know it. And for the last 6,000 years, life and death have progressed and continued. That's the way it is.

All of this is incredible knowledge to have, but nothing has changed within us still. We still have knowledge, but what's changed? We're still going about our daily life; nothing's changed internally.

9 (6) The human spirit in man. The difference between the human mind and animal brain is that there is a human spirit within the human brain that gives the ability of free

thought, creativity, and memory. This human spirit must be united with the spirit of God for man to be able to come to know the true ways of God.

Now, that is incredible knowledge that we have, but no one out there does. No one out there has that knowledge. It's only available in God's Church. I was thinking the other day an example of what man does – if you look at all the cartoons of the world, you realize that what actually has happened is mankind in his 'wisdom' has changed animals, the way God made animals and their nature, which is a repetition of habit. They don't think outside of their actions. Cows eat grass; they know where to go to the udder. It's just that God has built it in them. It's an instinct. But man has turned animals into humans, and if you look at all the cartoons – Mickey Mouse, he's been humanized. Goofy, Donald Duck, ducks humanized. They have human nature. Isn't that incredible? And you have to think, "Why's that? Why has man done that?" Because that's what man does in his own thinking. But God didn't make them that way at all. God made them for the benefit of mankind.

Another one is just looking at art. If you look at art, there is art that is beautiful. Now, if we look at it there's two mindsets; there is one mindset – God's, and everything that comes from God's mind is beautiful, is beauty. Then there is another mindset called satanic – Satan's thinking, rebellious, and it is evil. So there is two mindsets. So when we see art and we see beautiful art, we look at beautiful pictures of nature, of animals, of scenery, things that have come out from God's mind, things that God has created are all beautiful. And something we might consider a little bit ugly, a certain fish that we see, you might think it's ugly, if we'd stop, take a photo of it and really looked at it, it's *stunningly beautiful* because it came from God's mind. Then there is another way of art... and there was a program the other day and it showed a picture of Ned Kelly – piece of art – and it had a square head and it was like a stick man. And I commented that my granddaughter at six could draw it, and I think it sold for four million...because it's coming from the mind of man.

There was an artist in Australia and he revealed why he's a famous artist – he's dead now – he was a famous artist and he sold paintings between two million and seven to eight million dollars, and he revealed where it came from, and it's probably what we would call 'abstract' to a degree. Well, what he did was that he used to go into a room and lock himself in for three or four days and the only thing he had in there was water, and he took heroin and drugs and in that delusional state he would paint, and at the end of it when he came out there were paintings in the room, and people come in and say, "Isn't this *incredible art!*" Whose mind did that come from? The natural carnal mind influenced by something else, that's where it came from.

So, we should understand beauty from what God says is beautiful versus what man says is beautiful – and there is a big difference! And you'll find that man values what comes from his own mind. True beauty comes from God's mind, is the point.

12 (9) Only those whom God the Father calls and draws to Him can be converted.
Only those God chooses and calls now can come into the Church of God. Satan has deceived the whole world, and the Church is [the called out ones] called out of that world.
(John 6:44)

Now, we are part of that and that is something for us to remember: How do we have this knowledge? Because we were called out of the world from that delusion, from that deception, from that mindset

into God's Church. Has anything changed within us still? It's knowledge, just knowledge, and just to know it, what's changed?

That last truth was one of the main problems within the Church that's scattered. They have lost the knowledge and the understanding that it is God that does the calling and it's not just an open door. God's Church is not just an open door that anybody can just walk in. Because what's the point? Unless God is calling somebody with His spirit to empower them to understand the 'spiritual knowledge' and have the 'spiritual understanding,' to be able to 'live wisdom,' what's the point of the Church? There is no point in somebody coming here. It's no point in filling up a big room with people without God's spirit! What good's it going to do? We looked at it before. What good is it going to do? It's just more knowledge. It's just going to be words to them because it's just knowledge. They don't have the power to understand on a spiritual level or the power to *live it...* which is the key to all of this.

13 (10) The resurrection to judgement. The resurrection to judgment is the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20). This period of judgement covers 100 years and follows the time of the Millennial reign of Christ on earth. God has not been trying to “save” the world over the past 6,000 years...

But the world thinks that that's the case! The world out there, the word 'proselyte' comes into place. I remember many of the conversations that I've had – people want to know a little bit about God's Church, and one of the things I used to be able to say to them and have said is, "We don't proselyte." Because people say, "What's the Church of God?" Well, we keep God's Commandments. Okay, well, explain the Sabbath. "You're Sabbath keepers. You're Jewish!" No! We're Sabbath keepers, but we're not Jewish. And I'd say, "Well, we don't proselyte. We don't go out trying to 'get' people to come to services." That's God's job. That's God's role. I don't get past that. I don't go on and tell them that they don't understand it. I say, "We don't proselyte." "I've never heard of you...never heard of you!" I think, "Well, that's true! We don't proselyte." It's not our role to try to get people to come to Sabbath services. That's God's responsibility. He draws them.

Well the Church that's scattered, many of those groups, have lost that knowledge that it's God that calls people to Him, to a relationship with Him, and so they advertise almost to get people to attend, and that's why they count numbers. They count numbers because it's *proof*, proof to *them*, that they're the right church, when actual fact it's no proof at all. It just means your advertising program is working reasonably well. That's all it does. But God has to do the calling.

Now, isn't that great knowledge that we have? Isn't that incredible that we know that? That *God* does the calling and we don't have to worry about numbers? We don't have to worry about those things? And more importantly, one of the greatest things is, aren't we so blessed to have been called? That's the way I look at it. What *incredible* knowledge and understanding to have, that God chose me for a purpose! *Incredible*, the fact that we have that opportunity to be here! So mankind tries to save the world. This is still knowledge.

And the last one I want to cover, the seventh day Sabbath.

1 (1) The seventh day Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath has remained one of the most basic signs of God's true Church. God's people have always obeyed the seventh day Sabbath.

So that is knowledge. Now, we have that knowledge, but nothing's changed. Scripture states that we are to *guard* what has been committed to our trust. So this truth has been committed to us. We are to avoid vain and idle babblings and contradictions and what is falsely called knowledge. We're not to go down that path. *True knowledge* sits within the Church of God – PKG. That's where *true* knowledge is. If we want to gain 'understanding,' true understanding is given by the power of God's spirit, and anybody that does not have God's spirit *cannot understand* 'spiritual knowledge.' It's not possible. And we're going to look at that which is... I found it rather exciting when you go into this, because back in my mind when I was first called I'd always wanted to understand Proverbs, and it's only been of late that I can actually say I've started to 'understand' them *more*. I'm starting to understand them more, and I found it quite exciting! After thirty years, I'm starting to see things that I realize now I couldn't understand it back then. A lot of the times I never had God's spirit, so I couldn't understand it, whereas now I'm starting to 'see' it more and God is revealing more. It's really exciting! But there's a challenge in seeing this as well.

We are to 'grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,' and we can only do this if we remain connected to the vine. Anybody that leaves God's Church cannot *understand* 'spiritual knowledge.' It's not possible.

Let's look at **John 15:1**. This is Christ speaking...**I am the true vine and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me**, in Christ, *connected* to Christ, **that does not bear fruit**, *spiritual* fruit, **He/God takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes/corrects** – why? – **that he may bear more fruit**. So we, brethren, are in the Church of God to be corrected. Isn't it wonderful to know that? And, therefore, when correction comes, how we respond to that correction is important, very important. God the Father says He will correct us. He will prune us for a purpose, to gain more of His mind, to think the way He thinks. Now, when we're first drawn into the Church we think we have knowledge of God's ways. We don't fully understand it. But later on we come to start to understand it then we have to implement it – that's the challenge – 'living wisdom' is actually the challenge. So here it is saying God will prune us. He'll correct our thinking because we have so many wrong thinking's, wrong way of thoughts, wrong thoughts; we have them. We think we know and understand certain rules and principles – well, we don't. Compared to God, we don't. So God says through His Church He's going to correct that thinking, and therefore, for the purpose that we will *grow* in His knowledge more. That's what correction is about.

Verse 3 – You are already clean/washed because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide/dwell in Me, and I in you. So we have to be connected with Christ. We have to be connected to the Church. We have to be connected to the Church, have a relationship with God and His Church! **As the branch cannot bear fruit**, spiritual fruit **of itself**. No one out there can just go off and bear spiritual fruit. The moment we sever that relationship with God and His Church we stop growth. We're cut off. The vine is severed. There is no more sap, no more God's spirit flowing into the person, **unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me**. There is no more spiritual knowledge. There is no understanding. It goes the other way. We lose our understanding. We lose our knowledge, and when we lose knowledge and understanding we can't live wisdom, because to 'live wisdom' is to *live the mind of God*, so we have to stay connected to God's Church and to God, to Jesus Christ.

Verse 5 – I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me... we're connected... **and I in him, bears much fruit...** spiritual growth will come because of it... **for without Me you can do nothing**. Without Christ, the Head of the Church feeding the Church spiritual food, we can't grow. We're going to wither and die.

Verse 6 – If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered. It's talking about spiritual death. We wither up spiritually. We can't think spiritually because God's spirit is no longer with us... **and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.** That's what it leads to. The rejection of God's ways means we will wither up on a spiritual level and we will reverse back to our natural carnal mind, and unless we repent, the end result will be a second death.

Verse 7 – If you abide/dwell in Me, and My words/My thinking abides in you, you will ask... It's talking about in prayer... **what you desire...** What do we desire, brethren? We desire wisdom. We desire God's character. We desire to think like God. That's our purpose! That's *why* we're in the Church! We're in the Church because we want to be more like God! We want to *live wisdom!* ...**and it shall be done to you.** So the way to gain wisdom, the way to gain spiritual understanding is to ask, to ask God for it. We're to seek it.

Verse 8 – By this My Father is glorified, that you may bear much fruit... We'll grow spiritually. We'll take on the very thinking of God... **so you will be My disciples.** That's what we'll be. We'll be connected to God, Jesus Christ, and His Church. We will be able to live wisdom because we're connected.

God desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. That is God's desire for mankind, but it's in a time order that will happen. This knowledge of the truth will come in their allotted time when they are called *into* the Truth. That's when it's going to happen. But *our* responsibility is that we have been called into this truth now for the purpose of gaining spiritual understanding and living wisdom. We have been called to 'see' the truth now and to start *implementing* the knowledge of the truth into our life. The key to spiritual growth is implementation – it's action – because knowledge by itself, it's just knowledge. This then causes a change of our thinking and our actions. For example, the Sabbath – we're going to look at the Sabbath, what it's about. Firstly, we stop working on the Sabbath. We're told to stop working, then, in time, we progress to come to spiritually understand this new knowledge. We have to now apply it into our life. That's the difference. We now have some knowledge and some understanding of that knowledge. As we progress we then 'see' and begin to learn to apply the knowledge with understanding in the way we think and live towards others.

What's mankind's current thinking about God's way of life? **Job 21:13** – it's referring to the wicked. **They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.** They die. What Job was referring to back here was that there are people in society that live their whole life acquiring wealth – and they acquire it – but the end result is the same result for all of us; they die.

Verse 14 – Yet they say to God, Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways. That's what mankind is, because if we're wealthy and we've got a lot of wealth, why do we need God? "I'm doing pretty well by myself! I've got three houses, two cars... I've got everything, so why do I want to hear what God's got to say about anything? Because I am quite comfortable. I'm quite happy in my selfishness." That's what they're really saying: "I'm quite happy! What's God got to give to me?" Because we take it to ourselves that we've gained it all.

They say, (verse 15), Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him? So the attitude really is, "What's in it for me? I'm doing really well! What advantage is there for me to start listening to God and praying to God? What's the point? I'm doing really well!"

If we come to know God's ways then we come to understand His way of thinking and we begin to implement it into our life.

What is it that others think around us? 1st Corinthians 2:14, just quickly take a look at this one. **1 Corinthians 2:14 – But the natural man**, the carnal mind, which is where we came from, what we have, **does not receive the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them...** the natural mind can't hear what is being said today. It's not possible. To them it would be just a mob of self-righteous gobbledegook; it really would. They can't understand it. It's foolishness to them. They can't know it **because they are spiritually discerned**. So the topic we're going to go into is a spiritual matter and it can only be revealed by the power of God's spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:6, we'll just go back there. **However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature**, and that word 'mature' really is 'being perfected,' because that's what God is doing. God has called us out to mature us spiritually, to perfect us in our thinking, **yet not the wisdom of this age**, not man's thinking, what they call wisdom, **nor the rulers/man's rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing**. All of that knowledge that they have, that intellect of what raises them up as being 'better' than God's people, it's all going to come to nothing.

Verse 7 – But we speak the wisdom, the thinking of God in a mystery, the hidden which God **ordained/predetermined before the ages...** the reason was... **for our glory...** for our glory. Now, we can carry glory by having God's thinking in us. If we live wisdom, we're living glory. The mind of God is the glory of God, to think like God. What a great blessing to be able to have that ability, to be in situations in life where *we think like God!* Isn't it amazing that we have that power, that ability?

Verse 8 – which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known they would not have staked the Lord of glory. They wouldn't have killed Christ if they knew that Christ was the mind of God. He was wisdom. Christ was wisdom! He had the mind of God. He lived wisdom, and if they knew of that wisdom they wouldn't go and kill Him because they would have required it...but they didn't want it because to them, and we know all the scriptures where Christ comes up and says certain things and they thought, "It's just crazy. You're talking double-dutch here!" (That's no offence to the people in The Netherlands.)

Verse 9 – But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man, into the mind of mankind, **the things which God has prepared**, and planned, **for those who love Him**. We have an outline of what God has planned for us, but mankind has *no idea* of the truths that we just talked about before.

Verse 10 – But God has revealed them, these hidden truths, this knowledge, this spiritual understanding and wisdom, **to us through His spirit**, by His power that He's doing it. **For the spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God**. And that's what we're going to do. We're going to explore the deep things of God. We're going to explore how *God* views a particular topic. This is what we are striving to do in this sermon series. We are going to *strive* to understand so that we can strive to live wisdom towards God and towards others.

Verse 11 – For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of man which is in him? Because that's what it is. It's human knowledge. It's human reasoning, and they know it because there is a spirit in man which is not in animals. And yet mankind, of course, in his 'wisdom' takes animals and tries to teach them how to count and to act like humans, because they believe we evolved from them, and therefore, they're trying to go back and say...trying to get a monkey to count, trying to get a monkey to

reason, to draw. I remember there was some special art, and in India they got this elephant with a brush and it painted. Remember seeing that? And they say, "That's *incredible. Look at that art!!*" And they were selling them for \$1,000 a go, and you sit there and think, "*Insane people!* It's an elephant with a stick, dabbling in a bit of colour on a canvas! That's not beautiful. It's *crazy!*" That's the thinking of mankind – it staggers the mind sometimes! Well, it's all done from the spirit in man, the ability to think and reason.

Even so no man knows the things of God, so we can't know these things we're talking about today, **except the spirit of God**. We have to have God's spirit to understand what we're talking about. What a blessing it is to be able to 'see' spiritually. What is so incredible is that we can know God! Amazing! Amazing what blessings God has given us!

Verse 12 – Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, not that carnal thinking, **but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God**. So we have 57 Truths and we have understanding at different levels, and we have understandings of the way we apply this understanding in our life, which is the living of the wisdom.

Verse 13 – These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, not human intellect, **but which the holy spirit teaches**, God's mind, God's power in us teaches, **comparing spiritual things with spiritual**. And that's what we're going to do.

So how does God view man's intellect, the way man thinks? Now, you might think we're going a long way around this, but I'm trying to establish a foundation that there is a complete difference between human *intellect* on analysing something and working something out on a human level versus the way God sees it. And when we get further into the sermon series, we're going to use real examples in life so that we can understand it, so that we can actually apply it and live wisdom.

1 Corinthians 3:18 – Let no man deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, human intellect which puffs up, causes pride because we think we know it all, **let him become a fool**, let him humble himself, let him admit that God's knowledge, God's wisdom, is *far beyond* any human intellect, **that he may become wise**, spiritually. So it's going to take a humble mind to begin to understand the mind of God, to think spiritually.

Why? **Verse 19 – For the wisdom**, the human reasoning of this world, the carnal thinking **is foolishness to God**, because mankind tries to work all these things out – hasn't come from God at all. It's just come from its own reasoning. Like evolution is from human reasoning. Leave God out of it and we'll analyse it and you can easily tell we came from apes! That's human reasoning! That's human intellect! **For it is written, He catches/God catches the worldly wise/the proud in their own craftiness** because mankind is using human logic, human reasoning, human intellect.

Now that we have this foundation we can now look at examples of God's wisdom, God's thinking, living love towards God and our neighbour – because that's the purpose of living love. We're living God. We're living wisdom.

James 1:5 – If any of you lacks wisdom... Now, we all do, brethren. We all lack wisdom. We all lack spiritual *understanding* so that we can live wisdom – and we all do. There is nobody that could not. There is nobody that couldn't want to have more of God's mind. **If any of you lacks 'wisdom,'** and that

word is 'sophia' [sof-ee'-ah]. The word 'sophia.' What do we do? **...let him ask God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.** Now the first thing to acknowledge here is that *all wisdom* comes from God. All wisdom comes from God. So what we have to do is we have to humble ourselves and go to God and ask for wisdom, ask for more of His power in us, the way to think spiritually in all situations.

Verse 6 – But let him ask/desire in faith... we have to believe with assurance... **with no doubting/no wavering, for he who doubts, he who wavers is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not a man suppose/think that he will receive anything from the Lord.** Now, if we don't believe that wisdom comes from God, that spiritual understanding comes from God, and we doubt and we think, "Ooooooh, maybe God isn't, you know, the great mind..." and we're wavering, well, why would we bother asking? Is God going to give us something that we doubt? We go to God believing He'll give us wisdom according to His will – that's an important aspect. It *is* according to His will and purpose, and we'll get to some scriptures that reveal God's great power about this.

Verse 8 – he is a double-minded/wavering/doubting man, unstable/inconsistent/restless in all his ways. He's a wishy-washy person. We use the term in Australia, "He's wishy-washy." He's neither one way nor the other. At one moment, he's swishing this way, and the next moment, he's swishing that way. He's unstable. You can't rely on him. He says one thing, but he'll probably change it tomorrow. He's a doubter. We don't know. He lacks direction.

We have to believe that *all* wisdom comes from God as a gift from Him. Wisdom is the application of the thinking of God. In fact, all physical abilities and spiritual thinking come from God – and that's another aspect – that people take it to themselves, that they think that those physical attributes that they have, that *they* acquired them, but it's genetic. God allowed it, so God gives *everything*!

Mankind has no right to take *anything* in the way of credit to himself for *anything*! Nothing! Absolutely nothing! We shouldn't take credit to ourselves on *any* level at all! It's only by the grace of God and the mercy of God that we have anything at all. We even have life...that we even have life!

Exodus 31:1 – Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: (verse 2), See, I, God, have called by name Bezalel, (I think that's the right pronunciation), the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I, it's talking about God – I, God, have filled him with the spirit of God. Now, this is not talking about the ability of God's spirit to think spiritual. This is about God's power, **in wisdom**, on a physical level, **in understanding**, on a physical level, **and in knowledge, and all manner of workmanship.** So what it's really saying is that God is giving an ability to somebody. He's called this person and given them this physical ability to achieve something. This is not spiritual wisdom in the way to live life. This is about a physical attribute. And what's this physical knowledge for? **...to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, and in bronze**, so God is giving this *ability* to a person, **in cutting jewels for setting**, which is a physical ability to have, **in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.** So here is a skill or ability.

Now, in human life we understand that some people have more abilities in certain areas than others. Some people *can* take a picture of something, for example a human or an animal, and they can put it on to a canvas and it's *amazing! It's amazing!* It's just like it's almost three dimensional, and you look at it and you think, "That is *incredible!*" Me, personally, I don't have that skill at all! I draw stick-men, but I don't have that attribute. But that came from God, that attribute. The person's problem can be that if they think that they take it to themselves that they *have* that ability by their *own thinking* or their *own*

ability. No, it's a gift from God. God has put it into the person, and it can be genetic. Why does one person run faster than another? Why is it that one person can look at a jewel and work out how to cut it versus I'd smash it? It all comes from God. And this is the point of this. This physical ability, it all comes from God as well; God is giving this ability to people for a reason.

Verse 6 – And I, indeed I, God, have appointed with him Aholiab, I think it is, with the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all who are gifted artisans. So this artistic ability has come from God **that they may make all that I have commanded you**, and this is about building the tabernacle, **the tabernacle of meeting, the ark of the Testimony and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furnishings of the tabernacle.** So it's all a physical ability to be able to design these things. It's just not anybody could just queue up and make these things that were required for the tabernacle.

Verse 8 – the table and its utensils, the pure gold lamp stand with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering with all the utensils, and the laver and its base, so it was all to be crafted, but it took a skill to craft it. **The garments of ministry** were required to be crafted in a particular way, **the holy garments of Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests...**

Verse 11 – and the anointing oil, so it wasn't just an ordinary oil. It had to be worked out, and this ability to work out what the oil was and what scent it had to have, incense, there was an ability given to some to be able to manufacture it, **sweet incense of the holy place. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.**

We know that Solomon was given great knowledge and some understanding by God. We know that wisdom, the book of Proverbs, (we know Psalms was written by David), the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon, because God had given him wisdom...but He had given him knowledge, but not the *true understanding* necessarily of the spiritual intent of a matter. He had some understanding, but the *depth* of that understanding was not given because it required God's spirit. So there are a lot of things written there that were not fully understood in the sense that Solomon had worked them out on a spiritual level. Well, we have the power to read these Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and gain the spiritual understanding. Because words written are words written. There are millions of people out there that have read the book of Proverbs and do not obey God. They're not living wisdom – but they've read it, but they don't do it because it's just knowledge. It's just words written on a piece of paper.

2 Chronicles 1, we're going to look now at how Solomon was given this and why, because it's an important part for us to come to understand of *why* Solomon was given this gift from God. And God purposed it, of course, but there is an attitude involved as well. **2 Chronicles 1:1 – Now Solomon, the son of David, was strengthened in his kingdom, and the LORD his God was with him and exalted him exceedingly.** It's God that was raising up Solomon. **And Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to every leader in all Israel, the heads of the fathers' houses.** So it's talking about the various tribes. **Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was in Gibeon; for the tabernacle of meeting with God was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.** And we read that before, that it was a beautiful designed object as far as the tabernacle. Well, here it is. It's continued on and this is its location now; and we remember some of the problems that David had in trying to move the Ark of the Covenant and it was all about not following instructions. He wasn't wise. That's true. He wasn't wise and somebody paid a penalty for it.

Verse 4 – But David had brought up the ark of God from Kirjath and Jearim to *the place* David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. Now the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the LORD; Solomon and the assembly sought Him/God *there*. So here they are, and this is the right thing to do of course. **And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.** Isn't that incredible? Imagine that day! A thousand animals were sacrificed on that day or over that period, and offered up. A thousand animals! Now, I know within our minds, brethren, most of us think we are so blessed that we don't have to do that today, that we don't have to go sacrificing animals, that God has replaced that system and now it's about sacrificing ourselves. That's something to rejoice in, true? ...the spiritual understanding of that.

Verse 7 – On that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, Ask! What shall I give you? We should consider here, brethren, *how* we answer this question, if this was given to us. Let's just say, an example, that this question was asked for us. Our answer would actually reflect what we treasure the most. Our answer would reflect our state of mind. \$20M would solve all the problems – state of mind. The blessing that God has given here to Solomon was *because* of an attitude and *why*.

Verse 8 – And Solomon said to God: You have shown great mercy to David my father, and have made me king in his place. He recognizes that God has done it. He hasn't taken it to himself. God has done this. **Now, O LORD God, let Your promise to David my father be established, for You have made me king over the people like the dust of the earth in multitude.** He's saying, well all of Israel here and You, God, have made me king.

Verse 10 – Now give me wisdom and knowledge – why? – that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours? Isn't that a beautiful attitude? Solomon is saying, "Well, all of these people here. I've got to make judgements and decisions and I've got to lead them and I don't know how to do it. I'm going to make so many errors and I accept that the only way this can happen, God, is if you give me the knowledge, the understanding, and the wisdom to make right decisions for *Your* people." He didn't say, "My people, all these people I'm the boss of." He acknowledged these were God's people and he didn't want to make wrong decisions for the people. He desired the ability to *serve* others. That's what he wanted. He wanted to *serve* God's people.

Verse 11 – And God said to Solomon: Because this was in your heart, this was in your thinking, this is your way of thinking; he desired to serve the people, **and you have not asked riches or wealth or honour or life of your enemies...** because he could have turned around and said, "I want to just... I want You, God, to wipe out all the people that were against David. I want lots of wealth. I want honour. I want to be raised up." All selfish things **...nor have you asked for long life,** and if you look at it, all of those things were selfish. They were all about him, 'me,' this is what 'I' want... **but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself,** which he acknowledged that was going to have to come from God; God had to give this wisdom and this knowledge, **that you may judge My people,** God's people, **over whom I have made you king—wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honour such as none of the kings have had who were before you, nor shall be after you.** Isn't that incredible? Isn't that incredible. Because he had the right spirit in seeking Godly thinking, God said He would bless him – because there is a reward for seeking to know how God thinks. God says He will look after us and grow us. Well, we can have this same attitude, brethren, we can have this very same attitude. Let's seek God for spiritual understanding and wisdom. That is *our greatest priority in life* –

that's actually why we're in the Church. That's why we are in the Body of Christ, to gain this, what Solomon was going to be given.

Proverbs 1:1. In our thinking we can often get unbalanced, because we can think that the physical things of life are more important than spiritual understanding or spiritual knowledge or living God's way, and we can get shaken by it and our focus can be on those physical things rather than the things of God. But God desires His people to seek Him, to seek His mind, and that's the purpose of this sermon series is that we're going to look at ways to do that.

Proverbs 1:1 – The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, and it outlines the purpose, **to know wisdom**, to be wise, **and instruction**, that word 'instruction' is 'discipline, correction.' We understand we are here to discipline ourselves, and we are here in God's Church to take correction, because we acknowledge we are *not right* in our own eyes. We actually acknowledge we are wrong and we desire to repent **to perceive the words of understanding**. To *discern* is another way to look at that. We can have this knowledge, but we want to be able to *understand* that knowledge. That's what we desire. We desire to *understand* it. And we're going to look at one example in a moment. He desired to rule wisely and not to make unGodly decisions, to know when to discipline or correct somebody and to have the discernment on how and when to do it. Now, there is a lot said there. There's a lot said there, because it's about *life*, when to speak, when not to speak, when to correct, when not to correct, when to advise, when not to advise. *How* to do it is another thing - how do we do it.

Verse 3 – to receive the instruction of 'wisdom.' That's a different word than the one up in verse 2, and it really means 'the understanding.' We can have knowledge but we've got to understand what that knowledge is really all about **...to receive the instruction and understanding of justice, righteousness, judgment, and equity**, evenness.

Verse 4 – To give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion...

Verse 5 – A wise man will hear... a wise man will hear. We may get time today. I don't know whether we're going to get to it, but there is a point about listening and heeding. So if we're wise, we're in God's Church, we will *hear* what is being said. We will hear it **and increase learning**. We'll increase our *insight* into a topic, into knowledge. **And a man of understanding**, if we start to understand that knowledge, **will attain wise counsel**. We will seek advice and guidance. That's what we will do in a matter. And where will we seek it, brethren? We'll seek it from God, from God's Word. We're not going to go to human intellect and *reasoning* of humans. We'll go to God and seek counsel for what God says about a matter.

Verse 6 – To understand a proverb or an enigma, or an interpretation of a puzzle or a riddle, **the words of the wise and their riddles, difficult questions**. Because there *are* difficult questions that can be asked and we with God's spirit need to be able to work it out whether we *should* answer – is one way – or what type of answer is it. It's like the question which came up that somebody says you must give me an answer, "Have you stopped beating your wife?" Well, if you look at the question, "Have you stopped..." Well, that implies you *were*. So if you say, "No," it means you're still doing it! But if you say, "Yes," it means you *were* doing it! Because that's a riddle; it's a question that doesn't require the answer of yes and no. It's a direct question, "Have you stopped beating your wife?" You can't answer yes or no. You've got to answer, "I have *never* touched my wife physically to beat her." Because it's not a yes/no. But that's the way society is, trying to trap people into direct answers.

"Will you keep the carbon tax? Yes or no?" "Well, let me tell you..." Because politicians know you *never, ever* say yes or no! "Will you lower taxes?" "Well, we've got to get into government..." They know, they're *trained* in how to answer – I should say, to lie, trained how to lie. And you can avoid difficult questions.

Well, with God's spirit there are questions in life that we should learn how to answer them correctly, in a Godly way, not lying, not exaggerating, but answer them in a Godly way. And if you look back at Christ's life often He was asked questions and He answered them by asking them a question.

Verse 7 – The fear/respect of the LORD/YAHWEH is the beginning of knowledge. When we respect God's word, if we fear God and obey Him, it's just the beginning of gaining knowledge. Now, when we came into the Church that's exactly what happened to us. We began to obey God. We began to respect God, respect God's word, and we were given knowledge of the truth. ***But fools/carnal thinking despise/look down on Godly thinking, wisdom and instruction.*** A fool is not going to take correction, particularly from God. A carnal mind will *not* take correction from God.

We acknowledge that God is the provider of *all* spiritual knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. To respect God as the provider of all right thinking is the start of coming to see spiritual knowledge... spiritual knowledge, spiritual understanding. A foolish person will not believe that God provides spiritual knowledge and he will despise, look down on *any correction* given to him. He will defend and justify himself. That's just the natural carnal mind. It just won't take it. We should fear to disobey God.

Before we proceed to look at other areas of life where we have to live wisdom, where we can learn it, we are going to look at the Sabbath as a beginning establishing point of this application of knowledge, understanding, wisdom.

Exodus 20:8, we're using this as an example of how these three things come into play. This is knowledge: **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.** We have to remember the Sabbath, the seventh day, and we are to keep it holy. We're to remember that. Then, **Six days you shall labour and do all your work, (verse 10), but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.**

Verse 11 – For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, all the animals, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the seventh day/Sabbath day and hallowed it. He made it an appointed time. This is knowledge. Now, there are thousands of people out there in the world that have this knowledge, but what's changed? Nothing's changed. It's just knowledge. This is great knowledge to have, but it does not change a person's thinking. What good is the knowledge unless it is understood and then acted on.

Now to understand it. So we've come into God's Church, we now know, "Ah, the Sabbath!" We've got to stop working on the Sabbath. Physical thing. We know the Sabbath. Now to understand it. In time, we come to understand why God created the Sabbath for mankind, what is its spiritual intent. Because it was a physical command in the sense, but it's actually got a spiritual motive behind it.

1. We are not only to stop working physically but stop working/thinking on a physical level, working on the Sabbath in our minds. Why? So that we can focus on the spiritual. Now we're starting to understand the purpose of the Sabbath.

2. We come to understand that we are to come before God (commanded assembly). Why? Because on this day He pours out His spirit in sermons in the speaking and in the hearing. Why? To educate, to change the thinking of His called out ones.

Now we're starting to understand why the Sabbath was created for us. We come to understand that God uses this day to assemble His people together as a family in unity of spirit. We come to understand that that's why it was. Why? Not only to educate us but also to encourage us because 'iron sharpens iron.' We come to understand that the seventh day Sabbath is symbolic of the thousand years called 'the Millennium,' a time of rest from Satan and His demons. We come to understand *why* the Sabbath was made. Now we have that understanding – this is great understanding to have, but it does not change the person until this understanding is acted upon, implemented into a person's life, unless the person starts to live it. This implementation of the knowledge with understanding reveals what a person's real character consists of. Wisdom is the application, the implementation of the spiritual knowledge and understanding. That's what wisdom is. Now we have to implement it.

So we know the Sabbath. We understand it, but we haven't changed yet, so what do we have to do? Well, we've got to act on it. Now we've got to *live wisdom*. We set aside the day as separate – that's the first thing we do. We stop working on that day. We may even have to go to our employer and ask for time off. We will stop working on the Sabbath so now we're implementing the knowledge with some understanding. It's limited but we understand why. Now we're doing it...*now* we're starting to live wisdom. We're doing something. We're changing who we are, the way we think, the way we act.

I remember when I was first made aware by God's spirit of the need for the Sabbath. At that point of time I was working on Sabbath's in a country town called Albany, and I actually organized, missed the ministry various times coming down to Albany, and I had driven up to Perth to meet two particular ministers. I didn't know at that point they were ministers, the Worldwide Church of God, and I knew someone was turning up in the hotel room. I opened the door and sure enough – I opened the door and to me it was definitely two Mormons standing there. They were in a suit! I think it was a Wednesday night. They're in a suit with a tie on on Wednesday night. I was really casually dressed – invited them in and we had this discussion about the need to obey God, the Sabbath, and when they left I was convinced at that point the need to implement Sabbath keeping into my life. We didn't have mobile phones at that point. I can't remember whether I called my wife or not. I don't think I did... normally what I was like. I came home (I think it was on the Thursday), and I said to my wife, "I've got to start keeping the Sabbath. I've got to go in and tell them I'm going to keep the Sabbath." I have to implement this knowledge with some understanding (limited, but understand a little bit of it). I'm going to do it. I'm going to implement it, which is starting to live wisdom.

I went up to a guy called Guy. Prior to that he'd said, "Oh, I'm going to another country town and you can come over and I've got a job for you." Well, at that point I had no intentions of necessarily keeping the Sabbath when I was offered that. I said, "No, I'm happy in Albany. I'm going to stay here." So I came in on the Thursday, I remember, went in and saw the two managers that were there and said, "Listen, I'm not available anymore Friday night's and Saturdays and I'm going to start keeping the Sabbath." "The what?!" "The Sabbath, the seventh day Sabbath. I'm going to start keeping it." Well, how do you expect them to understand any of this? I'm a zealous type person and I'm telling them with all this zeal; I have

this knowledge. I have no real understanding and I'm not really implementing it the right way. It was only a short time we then went off to Bunbury, about six weeks later and ended up in Bunbury, and of course, there was no job there because I'd made this decision to start keeping the Sabbath. So we're implementing what we learn. We implement it. Now we're starting to live wisdom.

We now face family pressures, financial pressures, because of this decision. We now focus on God's word, on His way of living. We don't watch TV for entertainment because now we're implementing God's way of thinking into our life. We don't run with the world by attending sporting events or worldly parties. We strive to attend Sabbath services where possible, to be educated in God's way/thinking. That's what we do. We now desire to have physical and spiritual fellowship with God and His called out ones. We now start to live wisdom.

So that's an example of knowledge, understanding, and living wisdom; it's the way we live towards others. It's what we implement into our life.

1 Corinthians 1:16. Just as a lead up into this, what was happening amongst the Corinthians was that people were taking it to themselves in the sense of elevating themselves by giving credit to themselves of who baptized them. What it was, was it was like a competition and one would say, "Well, I was baptized by 'such and such.'" "That's nothing! I was baptized by an evangelist!" "*That's nothing!* I was baptized by *an apostle!*" Vanity! Paul is now correcting the Corinthians because of this competition in the mind of elevating the self of righteousness from who baptized you. But that's what was happening with the Corinthians at this point. **1 Corinthians 1:16 – Yes, I, Paul, also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.** So Paul is trying to bring the correction down because someone was boasting and they were boasting about it.

Verse 17 – For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, the good news of the Kingdom of God, **not the wisdom of words,** so not with wisdom of words, it's not about human intellect, man's intellect, **lest the stake of Christ,** the death of Christ, **should have no effect or have made no effect.**

Verse 18 – For the message of the stake, the death of Christ... the death of Christ was for the purpose of salvation... **is foolishness to those who are perishing,** those who are not called are actually perishing in sin. They are perishing not to eternal death but they're perishing in their mind. It's getting weaker and weaker and weaker. The message of the death of Jesus Christ, the message of salvation, the gospel of the Kingdom of God to man's intellect is foolishness. We're just a mob of fools to them. Man's thinking, it's the only way that they *can* think... **but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.** It's a wonderful blessing to have.

Verse 19 – For it is written: I, God, will destroy the wisdom, the human reasoning, **of the wise,** the human pride is going to be destroyed. **And I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent...**this human intellect that people have lifted themselves up with. God says He's going to destroy it all.

Verse 20 – Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolishness the wisdom of this world? When we understand God's plan of salvation we laugh at evolution. It's foolishness. God's going to bring it all to nothing when He reveals the truth to them. When we look at people that take credit to themselves, when we look at art, where man in his

perverted thinking creates something, God's thinking is going to bring all of that down. We bring it down in our minds. We go, "It's just stupidity!" Well, God's going to bring it all to nothing! It's all going to be of vanity because it's emptiness. It's vanity. It's nothing. Human intellect is nothing.

Has not God made foolishness the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through human wisdom did not know God, because they, this is what they choose, this is what the human mind chose, this intellect, was that they don't want to know about God's ways, **it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached,** the gospel of the good news of the Kingdom of God, **to save those who believe.** We are in the process of being saved...we are in that very process.

Verse 22 – For Jews request a sign... they looked for a miracle. Remember the Jewish leaders and the priesthood and that the Jewish nation, they always came up to Christ and said, "Show us a sign. You work this miracle in front of us, and if You do that we might believe You. We want a sign. We want proof of who You are." Well, Christ gave it often – you can justify anything in your human intellect. You can get rid of anything, the miracles of God.

I remember watching a particular program where there was an intellectual person and they went through the Exodus and the plagues that were poured out and they used human intellect to explain *every single one of them*, every one of them...and you sat there and you think, "*Incredible* what the mind of man can do!" No glory to God, His power. They actually justified it all. And when it came to crossing the Red Sea, on that day there was a low tide and there was a strong wind and it made a pathway. This is their thinking! It's just the thinking of man. It can be done. The human intellect just got rid of all God's miracles. Well, that's the Jews. They want a sign: "Show us the proof that this is true."

...the Greeks seek after wisdom. Well, they wanted proof on a physical human intellectual level. That's what they wanted. They had wanted to say, "Well, we want wisdom – explain to us in detail how it is," because that was the culture. Philosophize away everything; there is a theory behind everything.

Verse 23 – But we preach Christ staked/placed on a pole, to the Jews a stumbling block. It's not proof to them because somebody's been killed. This is not proof that this is God's mind...this is not God working here, **and to the Greeks foolishness.** They didn't have any proof. "What proof do they have? How can you talk about this? There is no evidence! So somebody's been killed...So?!"

Verse 24 – but to those who are called – us, brethren, to us – both Jews and Greeks, makes no difference what nationality we are. There is no difference if we're called. **Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.** Jesus Christ was the mind of God. Jesus Christ, the way He walked, the way He talked, the way He acted, was wisdom. He had the mind of God; He lived wisdom.

Verse 25 – Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Verse 26 – For you see your calling. Do we, brethren? Do we see our calling? What we've been called into? We've been called into spiritual knowledge, spiritual understanding, for the purpose of living wisdom, because it's no point in having knowledge by itself. It's just no point. It's about implementing it **...not that any wise according to the flesh,** the world's standards, **not many mighty, not many noble, are called.** We're not called into God's Church because we are intellectual. **But God has chosen the foolish things of the world – us – to put to shame the wise,** human wisdom, **and God has chosen the**

weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty. In their own thinking they think they are intellectual and better than others. Well, God hasn't called that type of person in because it's very difficult to work with someone with *pride*! It's very difficult to work with someone that has great wealth and they're dependant on their wealth. They're self-reliant.

Verse 28 – and the base things of the world and the things which are despised, in other words, looked down on, **God has chosen.** God has called *us* for those reasons, **and the things which are not,** which we're nothing. We're actually nothing, **to bring to nothing the things which are,** the things that think they are better. So God is going to raise up us and others that He calls for a purpose, to give *Him* the glory. The glory has to go to God; it's not about us!

When a person is called it reveals God's great power. We can take no credit to ourselves for anything. We did not find God. God called us. If we have spiritual knowledge – God gave it. If we have spiritual understanding – God gave it. If we are able to live wisdom – God is doing it. We cannot take any credit to ourselves.

And the reason all this is happening? That God has called *us*, the foolish of the world? **Verse 29 ...that no flesh should glory in His presence.** We cannot take *any credit* for acting spiritually, thinking spiritually, or living wisdom – God does it. **But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom of God...** it's God that does it all **...and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, He who glorifies, he who rejoices, let him glory in the Eternal.** So *any credit* that we have for any ability we should always give God the credit.

We will just start to cover Proverbs 8. We may not get very far in it but we will start in Proverbs 8 and I'll see how far we get with it. **Proverbs 8:1.** In all of this there are physical applications that point to spiritual principles... **Does not wisdom cry out/show us, And understanding lift up her voice?** It should be obvious.

Verse 2 – She/Wisdom takes her stand on the top of the hill, so it can be seen, **besides the way where her path meets.** The way of life, living the correct way of life should be obvious, and it should be obvious because we can see what happens when we don't live the correct way – we pay a penalty. If we put our hand on the fire and get burned, surely we would learn not to put our hand on the fire? Surely we would do that? So what God is saying here is, well, wisdom, living God's way should be obvious. That if we do the right thing and obey God, there is a blessing. It should be obvious to everybody but man has rejected it.

Verse 3 – She/Wisdom cries out by the gate, at the entry of the city, at the entrance of the doors: To you, O men, I/Wisdom, the wisdom of God, God, you could say **call, And my voice is to the sons of men. O you simple ones, understand prudence/shrewdness,** knowing when to say things, when not. It's like understanding what's going on and making a decision accordingly **...and you fools, be of an understanding/discerning heart.** Work out right and wrong on a spiritual level in our thinking. "Listen, you idiots," is another way to put it, "learn good sense!" Because really, if we don't think like God, we are being an idiot. We really are; we're being stupid.

Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, and from the opening of my lips will come right things. This is coming from God, God's word. It will make straight paths. "Don't miss a word of this. I'm telling you how to live," is another way to look at it. God's going to explain how to live, how to live it your best. This

is for mankind. If we were to take on this knowledge and God gives us the understanding and we implement it, this is the best thing for us. **For my mouth will speak truth, which is wisdom, wickedness/sin is an abomination to my lips.** We can come to understand this fact of God's thinking. We *know* that God's word is truth. *Truth does not hurt others.* So if we implement truth into our life, it won't hurt others. It won't hurt ourselves, and it won't hurt others. To understand this is to see that sin hurts others and hurts our self. Sin affects the mind. Sin corrupts our thinking and cuts us off from God. Sin leads to death.

Now, that is a great understanding to have. Why? Sin is rebellion and all rebellion must be destroyed. God's way of thinking, way of being, is peace. Sin is the opposite to peace.

Verse 8 – All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; nothing crooked or perverse in them. So God's way is pure. His motive and His intent are pure.

Verse 9 – They, God's word and wisdom, **are all plain.** They are all straight **to him who understands.** Now, we have to have God's spirit to actually understand, **and right to those who find knowledge.** Brethren, we have found knowledge, 57 Truths. We have found it by a calling! God's called us into it and we have it. The world doesn't. We start to find knowledge once we are called then we start to understand that knowledge. We understand the *why* of the knowledge. It is plain to our thinking while God's spirit dwells in us...and that is an *incredible truth.* God's way of life is *easy*, in the sense easy to understand, easy to know *if* God's spirit is in us, because we can only know it by the power of God's spirit. The moment we lose God's spirit we begin to lose knowledge and understanding and it's *impossible* to live wisdom without God dwelling in us. If we do not have God's spirit, the truth is not clear, nor understandable, and it cannot be lived.

Verse 10 – Receive, which another way is, take away with you, **My instruction,** take away My correction, from God...**and not silver.** It's about a focus, **and knowledge rather than choice gold.** So this is about what we focus on. What are we focusing on?

Verse 11 – For wisdom, the spiritual thinking, **is better than rubies.** It's better than *anything* physical. What we have the opportunity to do, to understand, is *incredible – absolutely incredible! ...and all things one may desire cannot be compared to her.* Nothing can be compared to the thinking of God.

Verse 12 – I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge and discretion – purpose and intent. By wisdom we can work out what is really going on. We can work out intent because it's God's thinking in us. By wisdom we know the true purpose of life – to enter Elohim. By wisdom we know the natural mind is selfish. We know this and we admit it. Who have you ever met in the world that has come up to you and said, "Hi, my name is Bill, and I am so self-centered it's *unbelievable!*" There isn't one single person that I've ever had that happen. We admit it, brethren. We are *different* because we understand what God has communicated to us. We have a natural carnal mind that is against God. We by nature try to please ourselves. We accept it. What *great knowledge* to have! What great knowledge.

By wisdom we know God's plan of salvation through the Sabbath, Passover, and Holy Days. By wisdom we know sin and the penalty of sin. It's because of God's mind in us that we know what sin is. We know what it is and we know what it does because God in His power has communicated it to us through His Church. If you go out into the world and you were to try to explain to somebody that not keeping the seventh day Sabbath was sin...they can't understand what we'd be saying. It's just impossible for them. They can't understand it. But by God's power we understand breaking the Sabbath in its intent is

actually sin, and we understand that unless it's repented of the penalty will be paid – death, a second death in the end.

With knowledge and understanding we can then live wisdom.

Verse 13 – The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. So the beginning of having this respect for God, we will learn to hate evil. We will hate the sin that exists in ourselves. **Pride and arrogance**, the exaltation of self, our own opinions, **and the evil**, the way of sin that is in us. Anything that is in opposition to God, **and the perverse mouth**, the things that destroy, God says, **I hate**. God hates them. Well, with wisdom we'll learn to hate them within ourselves.

If we fear and respect God, we will serve Him and strive to obey Him; and the word is *strive to obey Him*. To obey God *is* the *beginning* of wisdom. To disobey God is sin, which is evil. Wisdom is to hate sin in ourselves and every evil thought. Wisdom is to hate pride in ourselves, in our thoughts, words, and actions. Pride is when we take credit to ourselves, lift ourselves up and don't give the glory, *all the glory*, to God. If we fight sin in our inner being, if we're in the battle every day, we're living wisdom.

I'll stop there in verse 13, brethren, and we'll pick it up in verse 14 in 'Living Wisdom – Part 2.'

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