

The Riches of Christ in the Wisdom and Revelation of God

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's wisdom and revelation in order to build the house of God and live a life that is pleasing to Him.

Duration: 57:40

Scripture: 1 Kings 4:29, 1 Kings 5:12, Romans 11:33, Ephesians 1:17, Ephesians 3:10, Colossians 1:28, Colossians 2:3

Topics: "Riches Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the rapid development and advancements in the world, which are often seen as signs of human wisdom. However, the speaker argues that this wisdom is actually leading to the destruction of creation. The speaker also discusses the paradoxical nature of ministry, where times of feeling dry and limited can actually result in powerful impact, while times of abundance may go unnoticed. The sermon concludes with a reference to John Rustin's book on architecture, highlighting the importance of truth and the consequences of neglecting it.

Transcript

Lord, we remind our hearts before Thee that the initiative in everything has ever been with Thee. We can initiate nothing and we ask Thee that Thou would keep things in Thy hands and take full charge to have them as all out from Thyself. Thine own Son did say that even the Son can do nothing out from Himself but whatsoever He seeth the Father doing.

This morning we know, oh, how we know, that in this world we can do nothing out from Ourselves. Let it all be out from Thee, Lord, do. And, of course, the glory will be Thine.

It cannot be otherwise. And we will see that it does come to Thee in the name of the Lord Jesus. I knew it was going to happen.

It's inevitable. When the Lord is in anything there are always twelve baskets pulled over. When five thousand have had all that they can take there's the embarrassment of the surplus.

Those disciples were embarrassed beforehand and had a conference as to how it was going to be done. Feeding of that multitude. It doesn't on record, but I think it must have been that after it was over they had another conference what are we going to do with this? Twelve baskets full of fragments.

And I think that's our embarrassment today. It's mine this morning. I don't know how we're going to get through but the Lord knows.

He will help us. Well, on then with this overwhelming and inexhaustible fullness of the unsearchable riches of Christ. And will you now turn to a number of fragments of the word.

Of course Ephesians 3.10 is our foundation word which we need not repeat again. But if we go over, we come back to chapter 1 from chapter 3 at verse 17. And I want you to underline the common word in all that we are going to read.

Ephesians 3.17 God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of him. I won't stop with that word. But it's a very important thing.

Unfortunate that the translators did not correctly translate here. But we'll leave it for the moment. A spirit of wisdom.

Letter to the Colossians chapter 2 chapter 1 and verse 28 whom we proclaim admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom chapter 2 and verse 3 in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. Now back to the letter to the Romans Romans chapter 11 and verse 33 all the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. All the depth of the riches of the wisdom.

And please back to the Old Testament in the first book of the Kings chapter 4 verse 29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much and largely of heart even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And chapter 5 and verse 12 And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom as he promised him and there was peace and there was peace. So the riches of wisdom the Bible has a great deal to say about wisdom and the New Testament gives a very large and importantly to wisdom to spiritual wisdom I will not trace that through make the statement and leave it with you.

Solomon has been our interpreter on these various matters through the second session of this week and he will help us on again this morning for Solomon the very name is the synonym for wisdom above everything else that God gave to Solomon was wisdom and it was out of that gift of wisdom that everything else did come as we have seen the Lord said because you have asked for wisdom I give you all the other things wealth, riches and so on but the spring of all is wisdom we know a little about the wisdom of Solomon it says here he speak three thousand proverbs he comprised or composed one thousand and five songs he spake of trees the cedar that is in Lebanon unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall the whole range he spake of beasts and fowls and creeping things and fishes master in the

realm of natural history and we can say much more about him his wisdom queen of Sheba came from a far country and I am impressed with the way it is put to see the wisdom of Solomon not to hear it to see the wisdom of Solomon you will see the point of that in a minute but when we have said everything about Solomon's wisdom its many sidedness its versatility its range and its depth the climax the peak of Solomon's wisdom was the building of the house of the Lord all the wisdom that God gave him headed up and was focused in the house of the Lord the building of God's house the fulfillment of the life ambition of his father David to find a place for the Lord the house was Solomon's masterpiece when you look both here and into the New Testament you will find that wisdom finds its chief

expression in building the apostle Paul takes hold of this and says as a wise master builder I laid a foundation was there ever a wiser master builder among men than the apostle Paul he built so well that for

twenty centuries men have been on the one hand trying to pull down his buildings and it stands intact today triumphant over all the others on the other hand the building that building through the apostle is the one thing in which we are finding so much of the divine treasure the divine beauty the divine glory the divine preciousness what Paul built by its defying all our attempts to fathom it to exhaust it to explain it here we are again after all these years still in the freshness of it he built well a wise master builder well as with Solomon this building wisdom was a gift from God

a real gift from God the apostle who had so much the understanding of this prays as we have read God of our Lord Jesus Christ the father of glory would give unto you a spirit of wisdom a spirit of wisdom in, and now I can come to the word in the full knowledge of him I say it's a pity that the translators made this mistake well we don't blame them they had a real business on hand but here it is you will notice that the simple word knowledge is used in the New Testament in relation to the beginnings of things this is life eternal this is life eternal that they may know thee the only true God Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent that's the beginning of the Christian life this knowledge, knowledge but when you come to the advanced point of the Christian life as we have it in Ephesians in the

original you have that little prefix epinosis epinosis full knowledge and so the apostle is not praying that these believers may come into the first knowledge the elementary knowledge he is praying that they may come into the full knowledge and to come into the full knowledge requires this gift of a spirit of wisdom and revelation but let me note another thing common in Solomon and in this prayer of Paul this wisdom is a wisdom of the heart for building the building requires wisdom but it's wisdom of the heart you notice what it said about God giving Solomon a wise and an understanding heart I have given you a heart of wisdom a heart of wisdom we said the other day the heart has far better reasons than the head love love is a profound well of wisdom the apostle prayed he would grant unto

you a spirit of wisdom revelation in the full knowledge of him the eyes of your heart being enlightened an illustration in the life of Solomon of this very thing you remember the incident the incident of the two harlots and their two babes they lived in the house and slept together and their two babes one of them was overlaid and smothered died in the night and then the quarrel the quarrel as to who should be the living babe terrible situation of life and death life and death death and life and the whole thing came to Solomon it was brought to him and in his wisdom he looked not at but through these two here is this one woman screaming and shouting that that living baby is mine that belongs to me oh she's she's in a state of she's giving herself away the other poor woman is in tears she's

wringing her hands pathetic picture Solomon says to his God bring me a sword take that living baby and divide it in two and give half and the one woman stands back she is done coldly icily the other woman says oh no, no, no don't take the life of that child give it to her rather than kill it Solomon says give the baby to her the answer to this is heart heart wisdom is a matter of the heart you see the other thing is death undoing spoiling but building oh anybody can destroy any fool can but it's only where the heart is that there will be building now here's a great illustration of the kind of wisdom the eyes of your heart being enlightened well but what is wisdom? what is wisdom? wisdom is more than knowledge wisdom is knowing how is knowing how years ago I knew a man who wanted a large

job done building and reconstruction in his house and he got in touch with the builder and showed him what he wanted done and the builder sent his men and started to work got away with it when he finished he sent in his bill it was just a totality bill an intrusive bill for doing such and such a job so much and a very heavy sum the man whose house it was look at this how does he make all this out? so he went to the

builder and he said look how do you make this all up? this is a big sum give me the details will you? how you make it up so the builder said material so much men's time so much one or two other details so much and the man standing over said but that's only half the bill what's the other half? the remainder is for knowing how yes more than half the bill is knowing how that's

wisdom wisdom is knowing how and I suggest to you dear friends that the real problem building the house of God is that of not getting people, material and not working on them but the real problem lies in more than the other half how to build wisdom to build wisdom is more than knowledge it is knowing how and the value of divine wisdom is in its ability to build and so to build as will stand the test of the centuries of life all time remain intact not only at the end of time but throughout eternity so to build is the essence of spiritual wisdom now the system of this world as probably you know, you do know the system of this present world order including man himself rests upon a lie rests upon a lie the foundation of everything in the present world order has a lie in it man himself though

of course he has blind spots about himself man himself is a lie you and I by nature are a lie we are false we are not true to the original pattern there is a lie in us somehow or other that lie and you know how and when a lie was accepted hath God said it? hath God said it?

God knew it the injection into the soul life of the creation of the race of a lie a falsehood Jesus said he is a liar from the beginning and the father of it this inoculation injection of a lie it is right at the very root and core and basis of this present world order and that lie is going to find out man and the creation eventually because that lie is developing and developing and developing until it reaches full growth and then it will be discovered it will be shown to the universe how false this thing is John Rustin the great critic went to Italy to look at some of the great buildings and the architecture there he came back and wrote his famous book the seven lamps of architecture and one chapter was the lamp of truth and he tells how he went from building to building and he came upon

a building which had always been very beautiful in its appearance at one time but now the beautiful frescoes were spoiled by rain having got in and the wonderful suppose marble pillars had had their marble washed up and the roof was slanting out of the street and the building was deserted and he said when I investigated I found that there was a lie in the foundation the builder had built falsely insincerely and he had put a lie in the foundation in the end an exposure of that falsehood in the well-like collapse of the whole thing the desertion of it a monument to a builder's untruthful lie and it's like that with this creation make no mistake about it you and I by nature are at the very root of our being false there's a lie in us we inherited it from the beginning it's there in our nature

and in this whole present world system there's a lie a deception a falsehood a misleading a duplicity a trick and how is it working out? well we in our day dear friends it's a remarkable time in which we are living oh what has happened in our lifetime in the lifetime of some of you youngest but in the lifetime of some of us older ones what has happened in the rapid development in this world we are seeing all this development aren't we? in the universe man is coming to full growth and man calls it his wisdom his wisdom thinks he's wise oh so wise to send a man to the moon send men into orbit get out and walk in space and to create all these atomic things isn't he pleased? isn't he congratulating himself? isn't he vaunting his wisdom? isn't he in rivalry on full stretch to beat the other

one? isn't he still more clever? and there's such a lie in it that the end is that that wisdom is going to destroy this creation now don't you make any mistake about it with all that they may do to counter to

obviate they are not going to succeed if Peter wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and here it is a question whether you believe in the inspiration of the scriptures if Peter wrote as an ignorant and unlearned fisherman could never have written on the atomic age this is going to happen the elements are going to be on fire and be burnt up with fervent heat as all these things are going to be dissolved a universal Hiroshima it's going to happen I don't want you to skedaddle to your shelters but it's going to happen it's prophesied foretold all these things must be dissolved

whether the church will have gone to fall or not that's another matter but it's going to happen because there is a lie in the wisdom of man and James says the wisdom which is from beneath is devilish demoniacal wisdom that is from above peaceful pure this falsehood this false wisdom is destructive and God is doing now what he did in the case of Israel I wonder if you have ever noticed why the children of Jacob had to stay in Egypt four hundred and eighty years the Lord told Abraham when he made the covenant that they would I see told him they would be in Egypt in bondage four hundred odd years why? well the answer may have more than one aspect but the Lord has shown why in one particular the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full while these people are in that country being built up a

mighty people strong people numerically a great nation they are being prepared to occupy the land of the Amorite the Amorite is an inclusive phrase the land of the Amorite but God is not going to deal with the Amorite until their sin has got where he can stand it no longer the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full oh if this is still applies it's rather a sad sad verdict upon what's happening today well we listened to Billy Graham in London a week or two ago night after night he was uncovering the awful state of things in America and of course in Britain and we know another part of it within living memory the awful avalanche of moral decline oh it's it's terrible how swift this is amongst the youth and others it's a shocking situation and it's being done with impunity with impunity

going on the iniquity the cup of iniquity is swiftly filling up that's one side of course of the picture there's another side thank God but that is one side of the picture and it's a very vividly terrible sign yes the cup of iniquity is being filled up you know when Israel went into Babylon at last it was for that reason in their case I was shocked shocked and you would be shocked when I was reading again through Israel and Nehemiah well this charge was laid to Israel's account and that charge and that charge and that no I beg your pardon not Israel Josiah the great revival under Josiah the account says this and that and that was laid to the charge of Israel and then it came on one clause in Jerusalem he destroyed the house of the Sodomites the houses of the Sodomites in Jerusalem my

we've got down pretty low haven't we no wonder the judgment of Sodom must come upon Jerusalem into captivity thus they go it's like the cup of iniquity being filled this is the lie at the foundation the false wisdom why am I saying all this because this building this building that the Holy Spirit is doing and this wisdom given by Him for building this house for eternity which will never be burnt up or consumed or overthrown or destroyed this building by this wisdom is the embodiment of that which is absolutely and utterly contrary to the lie it is the embodiment of the truth the truth with no lie no falsehood our brother has put his finger upon one word regard to that great building the symbolism of this church in the book of the Revelation transparency transparency nothing opaque nothing

double nothing unreal nothing untrue nothing false no duplicity no insincerity you know the word sincere what it means it just means that you can see through right? open quite open open to the light nothing to be ashamed of no question no falsehood this house is to stand as the undoing of the lie the contradiction of everything that make it a lie city you see or without or without the city everything that make it a lie oh isn't

this challenging challenging to us this of course gives the tremendous emphasis upon this matter of soul and spirit dear friends it is truth in the inward path it is in the spirit where the spirit of truth is but our souls will deceive us up hill and down dale make no mistake about it if you live live on the level of your soul if that is your realm of life you are

going to be deceived if it is the emotional side of your soul where you live on your feelings and in your feelings your very large heartedness can lead you into terrible mistakes your very feelings can involve you in something that is a contradiction true? that's a field we could profitably investigate but it's true oh if I am governed just by my feelings, how I feel what mistakes I'm going to make with all good intention with the best motive like David bringing back the ark in his emotions feelings getting that new car ah remember holding up the testimony for years for many months by his good motive soulfulness if he had been moving in the spirit you just come back to your bible and I'll show you that it's not new cars that I use it's living sanctified people who are to carry the

testimony well, there are many side lights on this matter the same is true if you live on that other side of your soul, the intellectual the intellectual, well of course it's obvious here, anybody who's always living in their head in their intellect is always in difficulty always in difficulty be careful that you're not there and you don't come back even after these messages with lots of merely mental questions mental questions go to the lord and say lord, I don't understand this I don't understand this that has been said but lord, it is the truth you give me light you give me light you have to do that we who minister have to do that continually here is something in the word now what does that mean there's something there, it's in the word we know there's something there what is the

lord's meaning in that well then, off to the bookshelf and see what this man says and that man and yet another man when we've done it all all the confusion not one of them agrees with the other this book of Revelation all the bookshops full of various and disagreeing interpretations of the book of Revelation and then you've got hold of them all you don't know what to make of it you're up here you see it's heady find now we have to go, not repudiating or go to the lord lord, what do you mean by this now lord the reality of the spirit of wisdom and revelation what do you mean I'm waiting and waiting it may be waiting for days might be weeks or months about that thing we see it in some way it comes oh how wonderful how wonderful you know I had a wonderful experience like that once over

Gideon and his fleece real perplexity as to this, whether it's the right thing to experiment with the lord with fleeces the lord allowed Gideon because she was moving in the time of the kindergarten illustrations and so Gideon was accepted and he said now lord I'm going to put this fleece out overnight and if in the morning this dry fleece is saturated with water well let it be let it be saturated with water without any rain are you through the night let the dry fleece be saturated it was Gideon told me but lord but lord let me turn it round the other way I put this fleece out full of water drenched and if in the morning it is dry all right then I believe that I have to go and do this job well the lord did it now in my perplexity about whether it's right to experiment with the lord by

putting fleeces out you may have done it in your kindergarten in your immaturity you may even do it today but I think it's a mark of spiritual infancy to do this sort of thing however we won't argue about that we can get into trouble but I was perplexed about this and praying and thinking much about this as to whether I dare tell people that they could put out fleeces you see and put the lord to the test in that way the lord brought me over to a passage which our brother quoted yesterday death worketh in us but life in you oh this is the dry fleece and Gideon is going to lead Israel into life a ministry of life and salvation for Israel

through the man who himself is feeling himself so insufficient so dry now there are some preachers here have you not had this experience that sometimes

when you have felt the most dry the most dry weak and limited oh so so useless and you have gone to your ministry it has often been such a time that most people have come and said oh what a bliss is that true I look round the other way sometimes we have a wonderful time oh the fleece is just wringing wet we are having a glorious time and no one ever comes and says anything about it death worketh in us but life in you and sometimes the life is in us and now of course I am contradicting what I just said life is in us when death is all around I don't know what your funeral services are like in the funeral services in England there is a paragraph in the midst of life we are in death no a thousand times no if the spirit of life is in us death all around the Midianites and the Amalekites and

the children of the east like the sand of the seashore death all around and Gideon in life in life we reverse the funeral service in the midst of death we are in life Paul had both experiences and that I am using there not for its own sake but by way of illustration you see it is just this matter after all of seeing a sudden ray of divine heavenly light upon something we did not understand the spirit of revelation illuminating something about which we were full perplexed either in the word or in our experience and being able to say now I see and you know when you get that kind of seeing you can't undo that that stands we had a young man once many years ago now he has been a missionary in Ethiopia for many years a lovely beautiful life but he was with us in our gatherings in London for a

long time and you know for about three years I was repeatedly hammering at Christ in you the hope of God the meaning of the indwelling Christ I was at it he heard it for years and one day he came to me with a smiling face a real teapot face oh well and he said Mr.

Sparks the Lord has shown me he has shown me that Christ is in me he was telling me something I didn't know anything about this I just did not know anything about it that was something in the Bible that was foreign to me because it had come to him like that why no one else knew anything about it so wonderful he was emancipated then something that he had been listening to for years hearing the words sitting as we say under the ministry for years something else emancipated man and out to serve the Lord for years hopefully in Ethiopia we have often had that now I see I see I see spirit of wisdom and revelation that building that building that is really building that is how the building grows what am I to do my time is gone well this morning but may I just underline this it's my turn this

afternoon if it happens so I can go on from here the hallmark of the spirit of wisdom in you and in me is our transparency the truth the truth oh what a pity can't have another hour just at this point Jesus said to the woman Samaria woman believe me the hour cometh and now he when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall men worship the father the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship in spirit and in truth is then all this that is in Jerusalem false all this that is in Samaritan Jerusalem false yes it's not the real thing it's not the real thing it has an outward form an outward shape makes an outward impression and people think it's the wonderful thing but it's not the true thing it is in spirit and in truth but the truth is found Jesus looking at the

temple that magnificent temple of Herod in Jerusalem with his disciples and with the others the others the critics the enemies he stood there he did not point to the temple but he was under its shadow and he said destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again they said forty and six years was this temple in building and thou raise it up in three days but John put his little parenthesis of comment this spake he of

the temple of his father and after he was risen they remembered his words what is the true temple that is being built it is not a thing however much it is the embodiment of man's ingenuity and cleverness and artistic ability however impressive may be its forms, its procedure its ritual and all its vestments and everything else what is the building that God is

doing it is just Jesus Christ our being built into Him and we being built into Him into us Christ is the temple Christ is the temple Christ is the house of God and only that which is built into Him the living stone built into Him is the temple where so ever two or three I gathered not in my name there is your phraseology needing adjusting unless you understand the meaning where so ever two or three I gathered into my name that is the real meaning into all the tremendous meaning of that name the name is the embodiment of Himself His incarnation His humanity His life His death, His resurrection His exaltation all that is true of Him is embodied in that name gathered into that there I am there I am be it garret or cellar or where ever it is that is the house that God is building how

different are our ideas of the house well I must leave it there and pick it up there again because we have done some very practical this kind of building does require wisdom you know oh wisdom how we can before we go to India when we go to India as soon as we get to the threshold of any house we have to take off our sandals and leave them outside how to leave ourselves outside is a way of wisdom to leave a whole host of things outside on the other side of the threshold I speak for good and there it's only Christ only Christ that's the house of God that's the wisdom which is from above that's incomplete I know it's the broken column but for the time being let us hold on and the Lord will carry us through again Lord we have to say it is with thee and for thee by the spirit to show us the

truth to illuminate our hearts and to guide us into all the truth our path is to be open submissive committed by thy grace so it shall be for thy glory in the name of the Lord Jesus Amen

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