

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”,  
Message # 25 – “The Hidden Wisdom”, Presented in the Adult Sunday School  
Class, by Pastor Paul Rendall on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.**

**Chapter 2 – Of God and the Holy Trinity, Paragraph 1 -**

The Lord our God is but (a)one only living and true God; whose (b)subsistence is in and of Himself, (c)infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself; (d)a most pure spirit, (e) invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who is (f)immutable, (g)immense, (h)eternal, incomprehensible, (i)almighty, every way infinite, (k)most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute; (l)working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, (m)for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; (n)the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and withal most just (o)and terrible in his judgments, (p)hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the (q)guilty.

**1. The Preaching of Christ is a hidden wisdom –**

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2: 6-8** – “However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.” “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

We see here that those who are mature will hear and heed the wisdom of God. This is not the wisdom of the rulers of the world; to trust in earthly riches and have an earthly kingdom. It is evident that their wisdom is coming to nothing. Unless their wisdom reflects their having received the gospel, and the Christ of the gospel, and unless a ruler is ruling according to Biblical principles and obeying Biblical commands, all of what they attempt to build will come to nothing. This is true, not only of kings, but also of all men. The wisdom which is in God, and the wisdom that comes from God, is hidden from the natural man, the man who is without the spiritual wisdom and understanding which comes from only from God’s revealing it to them. And what God reveals to men is that they are not by nature wise; they are only wise according to the grace which is given to them and the truth of the Bible which is revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. It is God’s wisdom that He purposed to save a certain and definite number of people from their sins, by His sending His only-begotten Son into this world in the Incarnation, to become a man and die for the sins of everyone who would trust in Him. This is what is termed here – A hidden wisdom.

**John Gill says:** “Even the hidden wisdom; the Gospel lay hid in God, in the thoughts of his heart, in the deep things of his mind, the counsels of his will, and purposes of his grace; it was hid in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; it was hid under the types and shadows of the ceremonial law; and is hid in the Scriptures, which must be diligently searched for it, as for hidden treasures. It was hid from angels, and from Adam, until revealed; it was in some measure hid from the Jews under the former dispensation, to whom it was made known; and in some sense from believers, under the present dispensation, who as yet know it but in part; and is entirely hid from natural men, even from the most wise and prudent among them. This epithet expresses the preciousness, secrecy, and also security of the Gospel; hidden things being commonly of value, and being kept secret, are also safe; hidden and secret wisdom has been always esteemed, both by Greeks and Jews: hence that saying (u) of the latter, “he that would be rich in learning of the law, *שהיה צפונה והחכמה* “and that wisdom which is hidden”, in a hidden and secret place, should hide and secrete himself from the children of men.” The apostle adds, which God ordained before the world. The Egyptians and Grecians boasted much of the “earliness” of their wisdom, but neither of them are to be mentioned with the Gospel for the antiquity of it; it is the birth of God’s counsels of old, the produce of his purposes, which he purposed in Christ before the world was; a scheme of things he drew in his eternal mind; it is a transcript of the council of peace and covenant of grace, which were from everlasting...”

**Colossians 1: 24 - 2: 3** – “I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, of which I became a minister

according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints." "To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." "Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." "To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily." "For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

**What is a mystery?** A mystery in the context of Biblical truth and teaching is a particular truth related to salvation and to the kingdom of God and Christ that God conceals until He chooses to reveal them. A minister is a steward of the mysteries of God.

**What is the mystery revealed here in these verses?** It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. What is the duty of the Christian minister then? To warn every man and teach every man in all the wisdom of the Scriptures; everything related to important of being in Christ by faith, and being made perfect in Christ through His sanctifying and glorifying grace.

**What are the riches of the full assurance of understanding talked about here?** It is the fact that the greatest mystery of all is the mystery of God; that both in the Father and in Christ Jesus the Son are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, those truths that will permit us to know God and have fellowship and communion with God because Christ is in us by His Holy Spirit leading us into all the truth of God's word.

**Nicholas Byfield says:** "The admirable excellencies of wisdom and knowledge in Christ are said to be hidden: 1. In respect of our apprehensions, because we can never reach to the depth of them." 2. In respect of the cross that that followed Christ and His members; for the cross, like a veil, obscured the glory of Christ's perfections, both in Himself and the communication of His gifts to His members." "And may not this teach us singleness of heart and humility, even more to seek to be good than to seem to be so?" "Christ was contented His treasures should be hidden, and shall we fret ourselves when our drops of grace are not admired?" "Shall it not be enough to us that we shall appear in glory when His glory shall be revealed?"

**John Gill says:** They are foolish creatures in their own and the world's esteem, yet Christ is their wisdom; He is so –

**Efficiently** – Christ is the author and cause of all that spiritual wisdom and understanding in divine things they are possessed of.

**Objectively** – Our highest wisdom lies in the knowledge of His Person, blood, and righteousness, of interest in Him, and salvation by Him. With which knowledge eternal life is connected.

**Representatively** – Christ is our Head, in whom all their wisdom lies; He acts for them as their wisdom to God, He is their Counsellor, their Advocate, who pleads and intercedes for them, and as their wisdom to men, and gives them a mouth and wisdom which their adversaries are not able to gainsay; and having the tongue of the learned, He speaks a word in season to themselves, when weary, distressed, and disconsolate, and for them in the court of heaven; He is their wisdom, to direct their paths, to guide them with His counsel, in the way they should go, sake to His kingdom and glory."

## **2. This Wisdom is hidden from those who think that they are wise in themselves**

**Matthew 11: 25-27** – "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes." Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight." "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father." "Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

Jesus is praying here and he is thanking the Father that He has hidden these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them to babes. The things that He has revealed are the truths of the gospel; the truth related to Christ and His being the Son of God, of His being the Lord of glory, the Savior of sinners, and the One who has fullness of blessing and grace to bestow upon all people believing in Him. These things are hidden from the worldly wise and worldly prudent people of this world. But they are revealed to those who confess their own ignorance of the knowledge of God and of Christ and turn to the Scriptures and Christ Himself to find it. Christ is one with the Father and equal to Him in power and glory in His essential deity. And the Son is the only One who perfectly knows the Father. The Son is the only One who can will to reveal the Father; perfectly knowing the eternal purposes and electing purposes of the Father.

### **3. The Hidden Wisdom of God is found by receiving God's words and inclining your ear to the Scriptures.**

**Proverbs 2: 1-8** – “My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, And preserves the way of His saints.”

**John Gill says on verse 6** – “Natural wisdom in all its branches, with all its improvements, and in its utmost latitude and perfection; and spiritual wisdom, which lies in the knowledge of a man's self, his own folly, impurity, impotence, and misery; being wise unto salvation; in the knowledge of Christ, as the only way of salvation, and of God in Christ; in partaking of the true grace, which is wisdom in the hidden part; in being acquainted experimentally with the doctrines of the Gospel; and in walking wisely and circumspectly, and as becomes it, which is practical wisdom: and all this is the gift of God; as is also Christ, who is wisdom, and is given to be wisdom to his people. He is the gift of God to them, in all characters he bears, and relations he stands in; he is a very large comprehensive gift, an unspeakable one; which is given freely and liberally, and is never taken away again. Now this is said, partly to caution such who search after wisdom, and find it, not to attribute it to their diligence and industry, but to the grace of God; and partly as a direction where to go for it; and as an encouragement to hope to have it, since the Lord freely gives it.”

**2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3: 14 and 15** – “But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”