

Wisdom's Cry

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon 'Wisdom's Cry' explores the personification of wisdom in Christ and its passionate call for humanity to embrace redemption and eternal life.

Duration: 52:12

Scripture: Proverbs 8:1

Topics: "Wisdom"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching the word of God with passion and love. He shares an encounter with an intellectual man who had theological questions but was missing the essential message of God's love. The preacher criticizes the practice of feeding people with empty words and focusing on materialistic pursuits rather than the work of God. He reminds the audience that they are called to be messengers of God's heart, sharing the cry of Christ for forgiveness, hope, and eternal life.

Transcript

Go to the book of Proverbs chapter 8, please, if you will, in the Old Testament. We're going to begin there. I'm going to be turning quickly to Scripture tonight.

You may want to keep a hand in the index if you're a new Christian. Essentially speaking, if you'll stay in Proverbs and perhaps the Gospel of John, you'll be fairly safe. You can get there quickly.

Proverbs chapter 8, Wisdom's Cry is the title of this message. Wisdom's Cry. Beginning at verse 1. Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, and by the way in the places of the paths.

She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom, and ye fools, be of an understanding heart.

Doth not wisdom cry. Now, I had just two little books in the Bible to Isaiah chapter 11. And you're going to see as we read Isaiah 11 verses 1 to 4. Isaiah speaks of Christ as the one upon whom wisdom in its purest form rests.

Isaiah 11 verse 1 says, There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse. And of course this is the seed, the lineage of David. And a branch shall grow out of his roots.

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. The spirit of wisdom and understanding. The spirit of counsel and might.

The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And shall make him, this wisdom and understanding, this counsel that rests upon him. Shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.

And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears. In other words, he will have an understanding of something of the heart of God. He will not walk by what his eyes see.

And he will not hear by just his natural physical ear. But he will be seeing something in the Spirit. And he will be constantly hearing something.

Which I believe, of course, is the voice of God the Father. With righteousness shall he judge the poor. And reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.

And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth. And with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. In other words, there's going to be power in his words.

He's going to have power to lift the poor out of the dunghill, as the scripture says. He's going to fight for those that have nobody to fight for them. He's going to smite the wisdom of this world.

With the words of his mouth. And he's going to slay those who are short as it is in their wickedness. Ultimately, it means an invoking of a justice that God is going to send when he judges the whole world.

But till that day, the wisdom of Christ, and you'll see it all through the life of Jesus Christ, had the power to literally slay the wicked right in their tracks. I mean, slay them in a spiritual sense. They are comfortable in their religiousness.

And they are righteous in their works. And they are clean in their own exterior physical garments. But the voice of Jesus comes into the midst and slays them right where they stand.

And this is the evidence, in a sense, of the wisdom that was in Christ. He fights for the poor. He sees something that God sees.

He hears what God is hearing. He moves in a realm that brings truth into every situation. Now, Proverbs chapter 8, if you go back there, verse 22, speaks about this wisdom.

We sang about it this evening, that was involved in the creation of all things. Now, wisdom in Proverbs is referred to in the first tense, as a person, not as a concept. It's a person.

And if you look at this, of course, you have to understand that the Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit. And wisdom speaks in the first tense. For example, it's chapter 8, verse 12 of Proverbs says, It's speaking in the first tense, as if it's a voice, literally, that is speaking to us.

Verse 22, he says, Wisdom says, before the earth was. Now, if we take wisdom to be Christ, which I truly believe the Scripture is pointing to and speaking about, if you take it to be the heart, the very life of Christ, he says, I was there from the beginning, before the earth even existed. When there were no depths, I was brought forth.

And when there were no fountains, abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. Verse 26, When he prepared the heavens, I was there.

When he set a compass upon the face of the depth. When he established the clouds above. When he strengthened the fountains of the deep.

When he gave to the sea his decree that the water should not pass, his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth. Wisdom was involved in creation. Now, we know John saw this in John chapter 1, verses 1 to 3, he says, The same was in the beginning with God.

And all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. So, this wisdom that was with God before the foundation of the universe itself is Jesus Christ. Verse 30 tells us that he rejoiced before God the Father.

He said, Then I, still speaking in the first person as wisdom, and I was by him as one brought up with him. And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. And when I read this scripture and I move thousands of years, literally, from what this speaks about into the New Testament, I think about Jesus Christ when he prayed in John chapter 17, verse 5, and he said, I was with you, as it says in the scripture, I was daily your delight and rejoicing always before you.

And he says, Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with you before the world was created. I was with you, and I knew your glory, and we rejoiced together, we walked together in perfect unity. Proverbs chapter 8, verse 31 tells us that wisdom found his delight in the world and the people that God had created.

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth. And my delights were with the sons of men. That's an amazing thought when you think about it.

In the New American Standard Bible, it says it this way. Rejoicing in the world, his earth, and having my delight in the sons of men. You see, the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit have always worked in perfect unison.

We know that God the Father was, in effect, if we look at it from just a natural standpoint, the agent as it is in creation. Moving in unison with the Son, who's described in Proverbs as wisdom. By the power of the Holy Ghost, always working together this manifestation of God in three persons.

And he says, I was rejoicing in the world, and my delight was as your delight, Father, in the sons of men that you had created. Now, I've proved this to you in John chapter 17. Go there very, very quickly with me.

John chapter 17, we're going to go... Remember, the concept we're speaking about is this wisdom. We're speaking in the first tense. It says, I was with you, and I was rejoicing with you, and I was rejoicing, and my delight was in the sons of men.

John 17, verse 20. Jesus said, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. He says, Father, your delight is in the men and women that you have created in your image, and I have come that the desire of your heart might be fulfilled, because you have sent me to them so that they might know that you have loved them in the same manner that you have loved me.

You loved me before the foundation of the world, and it is your desire, and it is also my desire, that they be with me one day where I am, that they not only might behold my glory, but they may be partakers of my glory, they might become one in us. Jesus was talking about the culmination of the entire work that God the Father had sent him to do, when one day you and I are going to be gathered together with him for all of eternity. We see him now, the Scripture says, through a glass darkly, but there's a day coming when we're going to know him, even as we are known.

And as he is, so will we be. This mortality will have put on immortality. This corruptible flesh will be no more.

We will be given a new body, it may or may not resemble the one we're in now, I really don't know, but I know it will be incorruptible. We won't be able to sigh or groan, we will not get weary, we will not faint, we will not have hunger or thirst. There will be no sense of loss or sorrow in this place.

We will have minds that are potentially, exponentially, thousands of times more knowledgeable than our minds are today. There will be an explosion of knowledge when we come into the presence of God. We'll be committed by the Lord himself to rule and reign with Christ throughout all the universe.

A universe that scientists, with their most fantastic instruments, are only starting to scratch the literal surface of it. It is so vast, it is so grand. Jesus said, in my Father's house are many mansions, and I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there you may be also.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. The delight of God is in the sons of men. God's delight is in you.

I don't know if you realize that or not tonight. He would have destroyed this world. He would have destroyed it the moment Adam sinned in the garden were it not for you and I. Were it not that he would be destroying somebody that he had predetermined should live, and did not want to lose for all of eternity.

Were it not for you sitting here tonight, the world would have been destroyed long, long ago. But God so loved you that he waited and sent his only begotten Son, that you might believe in him and not perish and have everlasting life. Because his delight is in you.

It takes a while to understand this. It takes a while for it to get into your spirit. Now we're talking about wisdom tonight.

Christ as the embodiment, as it is of the wisdom of God. The manifestation of the true wisdom of God is in Jesus Christ. John knew it.

He said, we beheld him as of the only begotten of God, full of grace and truth. A natural vocabulary, I'm sure, that failed John. How do I describe this Christ? How do I describe the incarnate, always existing God in the flesh? How do I put it into the limited knowledge I have, the limited vocabulary? All he could say is,

we beheld him.

There was no doubt. We saw him. We knew he was God.

This was an ordinary man. Nobody could stand against his words. He had words that he would speak that the smartest of the generation would be dumbfounded.

There were times that people dared not even ask him any more questions. He could answer even beyond answer. It's as if he knew all things.

It's as if he was there in the beginning. It's as if he had the master plan for all of the universe in his hand. And nobody could form an argument against him.

Nobody could snare him in his words because the spirit of wisdom and might and counsel was upon him. The wisdom of God manifested in Jesus Christ. But then Proverbs chapter 8 and verse 1 ask the question, does not wisdom cry? Does not wisdom cry? Now, we take Jesus as the manifestation of God's wisdom.

Follow me on this. He was there when the world was created. He was there when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden.

He knew the heart of his father. He rejoiced before him every day. He knew God's delight was in the sons of men.

He knew that the father was not willing that any should perish, but all should come to the saving knowledge that God was willing to provide for them through the blood of Jesus Christ. Does not wisdom cry? Jesus came to this world. And one of the things we see in this Christ, this manifestation of God is a cry.

There was a deep cry in Jesus Christ. In the temple, John 7, I'll just read it to you. Verses 28 and 29.

The scripture says he cried as he taught the people in the temple. It was not just a tip. You see, he was not a boring religionist.

There was something in him. It wasn't just, well, listen, guys, I have the answer. No, there was a cry.

Wisdom has a cry. And he cried in the temple. And he said, I represent one.

This is the New Living Testament that you don't know. And he is true. I know him because I have come from him.

And he sent me to you. It was a cry in the heart of Jesus Christ. His teaching was beyond mere fact.

There was a passion in his teaching. He had been sent of the Father for one express purpose. To redeem the sons of men that had fallen short of the glory of God.

To tell them that there was a way back into everlasting fellowship in life with God the Father. And it wasn't just a theory. You're lost.

Here's the way out. It was a cry. That's why the writer of Proverbs says, does not wisdom cry? He cried at the feast.

John chapter 7. The people were celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles. Where they dwelt in the wilderness. And God, in their hardest places, brought water out of a rock.

And at the last day, the great day of the feast, it's as if he couldn't contain it anymore. And the scripture says, he stood and cried. And said, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

You see, it was the rock, the scripture says, that followed them in the wilderness. He was the one who gave them drink. He that believes on me, as the scripture said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

There was a cry in the heart of God to give living water to those who would trust in him. At the grave of Lazarus, when people were standing around disillusioned and disappointed. Even though the living Christ was in their midst.

The scripture says, he stood on the hilltop. He could have just as easily said, just take away the stone and bring him out. His word whispered has the same power as a nuclear blast and beyond.

But the scripture says, he stood on a mountainside and he cried, Lazarus, come forth. Because this is the embodiment of wisdom. This is the cry of God, because one day, Jesus is going to call out of the grave every person who has ever trusted in his blood.

He's going to call them out. Paul says it in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, verses 16 and 17. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.

A cry, a season, a time. Why a shout? Because God says, I've waited for this. From the day I created the world, I've waited for this.

I've longed for a bride. I've wanted fellowship. I've created you because I loved you.

God waits. God cries. He waits for every man, woman, child, young person who's ever going to hear, until they hear.

He waits until the clock as it is perhaps ticks down. When the last person is given an opportunity, who will be given that opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. And I do hope they make the right choice.

And finally, the Father, Jesus knows his wisdom. He knows the desire of the Father's heart. And finally, one day in heaven, because he's now seated at the right hand of God.

He's just going to lean over and say, Son, get your bride. I can see Jesus. The Bible says he mounts a white horse.

This is all figurative. I don't know exactly what it's going to look like. But the Scripture seems to indicate he's coming back in the New Testament with thousands times ten thousands of his saints.

That are all ready, gathered around. He's coming back. And he's coming back with a shout.

He shouted once for Lazarus, but he's going to now shout for every saint that's ever received him. From the time he gave up the ghost on Calvary. From the Roman centurion, who I believe gave his life to Christ.

To the last person, I hope it's here in Times Square Church, that receives Christ as Savior. He comes with a shout. And the dead in Christ are going to rise first.

And those who are alive are going to be gathered together with him in the clouds. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Doth not wisdom cry? Jesus, Matthew 27, verse 50, records Jesus' last physical act as a cry.

The Scripture says when he had cried again with a loud voice, he yielded up the ghost. The last act was a cry. The cry that he uttered on the cross was followed by the rending of a veil.

The shaking of the earth. The raising of many who are dead. And the conviction of some of the hardest sinners, including a Roman centurion at the foot of the cross.

This cry of God is always followed by making a way. It's an evidence, this cry, that there is a way for every sinner, no matter how difficult your situation might be, to find your way home to God. He tore the veil, making a way for every man, woman and child now to come into his presence.

He shook the earth as a sign that it doesn't matter what foundation you're on, nothing can hold you anymore. Doesn't matter what people have told you about your life, who you are, what you're going to be, what your destiny holds, what your future is. It doesn't matter.

God says, I can shake it and change it. Just as a sign, it's as if God's voice can't be contained. The scripture says, many who are dead rose up and went into Jerusalem, into the temple among the people and testified.

Incredible. It's as if there was an overflow in that final shout. Like, I just can't wait.

It's like the man who shouts before the last, the ball is only thrown, it hasn't gone through the hoop, but he can't wait. He shouts before this final score is tallied. And he shouts and people race from the dead.

That's how powerful the voice of God is. The centurion standing there says, surely this was a righteous man. He saw the depth of the cry.

Now, Proverbs chapter one, if you go there with me, please, talks about this cry of wisdom. Proverbs 120 says, wisdom cries without. She utters her voice in the streets.

She cries of the chief place of concourse. That means business in the opening of the gates. That means in the places of the city where their plans are made for the future.

In the city, she utters her words. Here's what wisdom cries. How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity and scorners delight in their scorning and fools hate knowledge.

Turn you at my reproof and behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you. And I will make known my words unto you. You see, wisdom cries for men to turn from evil, that they might be filled with God's life and presence.

This is wisdom. Wisdom does have a cry. Proverbs chapter nine and verse one to six says it this way.

Wisdom has built her house. She has hewn out her seven pillars. Interesting, because number seven speaks of not only perfection, but it speaks of the rest of God.

The seven churches, as it is in Revelation, for lack of a better illustration. She has killed her beast. She has mingled her wine.

She has furnished her table. In other words, the sacrifice has been made. The nourishment is all there.

It's all provided. Verse three says she sent forth her maidens and she cries upon the highest places of the city. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither.

As for him that wanteth understanding, she says to him, come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live and go in the way of understanding. Now, wisdom has built a perfect house.

Now, this perfect house is called the church of Jesus Christ. This is the dwelling place of God. It's the temple of God.

It's the individual believer. And it's the believers as we collectively gather to worship God. But we are individually the temple of Jesus Christ.

Wisdom has built this house. The provision has been placed into this house. You and I have the knowledge that we need.

We have partaken of the sacrifice of Christ. We know that our sins are forgiven. He has saved the best wine as it is for last.

He has filled us with the Holy Ghost. Given us power. We have a table, as David said in Psalm 23, that is furnished in the presence of our enemies.

Our enemies are all around us. I heard a preacher say recently on the radio, our enemies are there, but they're not eating. They're only standing around to pass the biscuits when we're hungry, as we tell them.

But verse 3 says, wisdom is sent forth through maidens. And she cries upon the highest places of the city. This is interesting.

There's this perfect house that's been built by God. It's been established in wisdom. It has the sacrifice.

It has the provision. It has all that people will need. And this house sends forth messengers who have the same cry as does the heart of Christ for men who are created in the image of God.

Proverbs chapter 11 and verse 30 says, The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that wins souls is wise. Wisdom is demonstrated in godly passion for the lost. This is wisdom.

Wisdom is not an accumulation of knowledge. Wisdom is not seven principles that we accumulate to step over to better ourselves in this life. That is knowledge, and some may be good and some may not be good.

But if we are a people who truly have wisdom, if the wisdom of God has been planted in us, then the passion in the heart of God becomes our passion. It doesn't mean that we walk into the business place and we start shouting at 8.15 in the morning at everybody to turn from their sin. It means we have this secret inner cry.

We cannot go through our day unmoved by human need. Unmoved by the thought that people around us are destined to perish and go into a godless, Christless eternity of torment without God. If we have wisdom, we have this passion.

You see, that's why the scripture says, The soul winner is wise. The evidence of his wisdom is that he is a soul winner. It proves he's wise.

He has moved and entered into the very work that his master came to do. It proves his wisdom. It's a total opposite to this thing that Paul speaks about in the last days, where people are going to be always learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Seminars about how to attend seminars. New little corners on the father heart of God. And all this other stuff.

I'm not making fun of that. Well, actually I was, but I shouldn't have. New little corners on the diamond.

Always learning. Consider the coffee table and baffle people and bedazzle them with all the knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek that they're accumulating. But they haven't won a soul to God in years.

I had a friend one time who was going to seminary. And it infuriated me. I told him, I said, before you let any man in any classroom teach you, or any woman, you ask them a question.

How many people in the last five years have you won to Jesus Christ? I said, if they haven't won a soul to Christ, they have nothing to teach you. Nothing. There is no genuine wisdom in them.

Wisdom has a cry. Does not wisdom cry? Wisdom has a passion that comes with it. Wisdom is a life that has everything in its right order.

Sees with the eyes of Christ. Moves with the delight of God. Has entered into the work of God on this side of eternity.

True wisdom has an enemy. We find the enemy in Genesis 3. You don't have to turn there, but we heard about it earlier this afternoon. The serpent who comes and attempts to lead those created in the image of God into something which seems reasonable.

And it shifts the focus from the cry that comes with wisdom to the elevation of self. Or the satisfaction of self. You see, much of what's preached today is an enemy of the cross.

That's what Paul calls it. He said, many, I tell you, even with tears, he said, they are enemies of the cross. He said, whose God is their belly.

Whose glory is their shame. And whose mind is on earthly things. They use the gospel of Jesus Christ to elevate themselves and to find some destiny of greatness.

They use the gospel of Jesus Christ for a bigger slice of the economic pie. They use Christ's gospel for political power. They use it for authority and influence over people's lives.

But there is no true cry of wisdom in them. They really are enemies of the cross. There's no true cry to enter into that which is the work of God.

You see, you are the work of God. And tonight, you're probably very thankful that somebody had that cry. Somebody came to you.

Somebody came to my house in 1978 who had a cry. Who just didn't seem to want to let go of me for some reason. As rude as I was, as much as I questioned them and blew smoke in their face, whatever I did, they simply would not go away.

There was a cry in them. It was a silent, it was not audible, it was a silent cry. Yes, it manifested in everything about them.

Their whole life and their whole focus was on winning this really straying policeman to Jesus Christ. That was their focus. I never forget in my heart how I looked and felt these people really care.

It's not just a program to them, they really care about me. Because I took them beyond their program, trust me. I exploded their evangelism explosion right in their faces.

And it had to be real. I didn't want religion. I had my fill of it.

I was fed up with it. I wanted reality. If this was real, it had to be proven to be real.

But there was a cry. These people wouldn't have been at my house if their motivation for serving God was for self-improvement. They wouldn't have been at my house.

That's for sure. I had nothing to offer them. Looked fairly poor, actually was fairly poor in those days.

I had no political power. I had no influence in the community. I had nothing to give them.

Absolutely nothing. There was no reason to be there unless they had something in their heart that society doesn't possess. Proverbs 5 warns that this enemy of wisdom produces a religiousness which depart from the words of God's mouth.

Proverbs 5.1, he says, My son, attend to my wisdom and bow thine ear to my understanding that thou mayest regard discretion, that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb. Now, I've always interpreted this to be strange religion.

Her mouth is smoother than oil, but her end is bitter as wormwood and sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death and her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou should ponder the path of life, her ways are movable and you cannot know them.

See, this is a serpentine religion. I've listened to a preacher one time, well-known on television years ago, and I saw this. I literally heard a serpent preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Would say something that was not right, but then moved very quickly into another point. So you didn't have time to stop and consider. And then when you began to realize that he's going in a way, this is not truth either, then he moves again.

It's a serpent preaching the gospel. Lest you should ponder the ways are movable and the undiscerning can't know them, because before you have a chance to think, he's on to another thought. And they seem to be exciting spiritual principles, but they're all contrary to the word of God.

Or even worse, two-thirds of them might be truth, but the one-third is enough to take your spiritual sight in your life. Verse 70 says, Hear me thou therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house, lest I give thine honor to others and thy years to the cruel.

You know, unless you end up in a place just like the children of Israel did. Fed straw and sent out to build monuments to men's egos. I see a lot of people there today in the church throughout the world.

They're fed straw week after week, and then the first offering is taken at 1015, the second at 1035, the third at 1045. Work, work, work, work, work. Go out, make bricks.

Because we've got to build, build, build, build, build. Here's a little bit of straw to do it with. Truth that cannot sustain you.

Words that don't give you any passion for the work of God. Passion for some monument somewhere, built to somebody's ego, but no passion for the work of God. Let strangers, he says in verse 10, be filled with thy wealth, and thy labors be in the house of a stranger.

It produces a religiousness which departs from the words of God's mouth and leads to that ultimately, which is not the work of God. Leads to work, but it isn't God's work. The evidence that it's not God's work is there is no cry for the lost.

Any preacher you listen to, if you don't hear a cry for your soul, then get away from the ministry. You're not listening to wisdom. You're listening to another agenda.

You're listening to something that masquerades as a vessel of righteousness. But if there is no cry for your soul, saved or unsaved, if you don't hear the cry, then you know you're in the wrong place. Because wisdom has a cry.

Wisdom talks to the backslider and says, turn at my reproof and I will pour out my spirit unto you. Wisdom, true wisdom, does not flinch away from challenging that which offends the nature of God. Because true wisdom has as its foundation a passion for the righteousness of Christ to be given and manifested in the body, which is His church.

True wisdom wants Christ glorified. True wisdom wants Jesus seen in the marketplace, in the gates of the city. True wisdom believes that the Holy Spirit is fashioning a building where the voice and the heart of God are going to be heard through this people to a perishing generation.

True wisdom seeks to have the life of Christ implanted, not only in victory, but in ministry, as the Holy Spirit imparts it to every believer who's called by the name of Jesus Christ. True wisdom will not only cry, but produce in you a cry. It's very clear that you become like what impresses you.

They handed Jesus one day a coin and they said, should we be giving these things to Caesar or not? And he looked at the coin and said, whose image is on it? Well, give it to the one whose image is on it. That's all he said. You know, in the last day when people stand before the judgment seat, with Christ it's going to be that simple.

People stand, it doesn't matter what you've done, whose image is on you? Whose heart has been impressed into you? Who do you look like? When Jesus says to many who stand before his throne one

day, he says, I never knew you. It's simple. I'm looking for myself.

I don't see myself in you. You have another image. You've been impressed, but even in my name, but there's another image there.

It's self-seeking, but it's got another name. It's got my name, but it's not me. It's not my heart.

It never has been. A church that is not moving into the true wisdom of God is losing this cry, or it's becoming less and less. And we heard a warning this morning, and when I heard it, I rejoiced in my heart.

I said, God, you are truly speaking to Times Square Church. You're speaking to my heart first, but you're speaking to this church. That we not lose the things that God has done here.

That we don't become a people who are just content to come to church and accumulate knowledge. Take up a class here and a class there, and we think erroneously that this is wisdom. No, wisdom is a cry.

Doth not wisdom cry? Wisdom is a passion. Wisdom has a hard time to pass by human need. Wisdom can't switch the channel if it looks and sees starving people in Africa.

Oh, not that again. Switch the channel. Oh, here it is.

I'm not familiar with shows anyway that are out there, but if I named one, I'd date myself. You'd know how long it's been since I've... In some cases, the cry is no longer heard in the church. God help us.

God help me. I felt that this morning when Brother Dave was preaching. I said, oh God, help me.

Because I knew what the Lord had given me to speak, that I don't lose the cry. I don't lose the cry that can stand in the field in Jamaica, and in spite of what the whole world says, I can see thousands coming to Jesus Christ. They responded to the cry, folks.

It wasn't the preaching. It was the cry. One of the hardest thugs that was in the field one night surrendered his life to Jesus Christ and went to one of our workers and said, that man is crying for my soul.

I heard it. I heard him crying for me. Oh folks, he heard God's heart crying for his soul.

And it melted away all of his violence and all of his self-image just melted. His foundation shook, the veil tore, and this thug walked in to the presence of God. Not because he even understood what was being spoken, but he heard a cry and knew it was for his soul that this cry had come.

I don't want to lose the cry. And we mustn't lose it here in Times Square Church and substitute it for good services or substitute it for nice worship and substitute it for all the nice peripheral things that God has called us to do. These are nice in themselves, but they're nothing if we lose the cry of wisdom, the cry.

When you first got saved, you had it instinctively. When I first got saved, you lack a practical outworking of wisdom if you were like me. But I had the cry.

Wisdom was not fully developed yet, but I had the cry, which means I would preach to anyone, anywhere, anytime, under any circumstance. I stopped a church service one time because an altar call wasn't given and preached to the people. Not very good.

I don't advise you trying to do that. But there was a cry. People had to know God.

They had to experience what I had experienced. There was this inner cry that caused me to speak to everybody that I could. It's amazing how we can substitute it for knowledge.

All of a sudden you're learning. I remember when I was a young pastor. I'm not getting into the Bible.

I won 52 people to Christ the first couple of years that I walked with him. You shouldn't count them, but I did. I kept a list of people that I won to the Lord.

And I didn't even know that there was an Old Testament. Then I began to read it, understand it, teach it, preach it. Then I got into a pulpit.

It's interesting. The more I preached, the less people I won to Christ. I was getting wiser, but was I really? That's the question.

I was preaching knowledge, but I was losing the cry. One day it just dawned on me something is wrong. I know more than I've ever known, and I'm winning less people to God than I've ever in my life.

I won 52 people to Christ with just the knowledge of the Gospel of John. Now I'm in a pulpit, and I'm preaching. I may have seen a dozen or so come to Christ in the church that year, but I don't know if I'd won anybody outside of the pulpit to Christ.

Something is wrong. You see, it's wisdom's cry. If we lose it, we've lost the very heart of God.

We are called. He has built his house, and he has sent out his messengers into the marketplace and the streets and the gates and where you live and where I live. We are the messengers of this very heart of God for every man, woman, and child ever born into this world in the image of Almighty God.

We are his messengers. If you're here tonight, and you're without forgiveness and hope and eternal life, you've heard the cry of Christ in this house. You heard it in the singing tonight.

You've heard it in the prayer that was prayed from this pulpit for mothers in New York City that need a touch. You heard a cry. It's not just praying.

It's a cry. It's different. I've been in places where they just pray, and the prayer has no cry in it.

But wisdom has a cry, and I heard it here. Thank God I heard it. In all of the prayer that was uttered from this pulpit tonight over the radio, I heard the cry.

And I know people on the other end hear it. There's a difference when there's a cry. Have you ever heard one of those theologically correct, absolutely boring prayers on the radio? It doesn't move you to do anything but turn the radio off or change the dial.

It's just so annoying, you can hardly even listen to it. It's completely correct theologically, but it has no passion in it. It has no cry of God.

I'd rather listen to a construction worker who got saved an hour ago praying for my soul because I'm going to hear in that prayer the passion of God for my life. It's going to stop me in my tracks. It's going to move me to consider what I'm hearing.

I'm going to be touched because there's something that is not just of human wisdom coming out of this vessel. There's something of God that is flowing through him. If you're without Christ, you've undoubtedly

heard the passion of God for your soul.

Turn, he says, in my reproof. Turn to me, and I'll pour out my spirit to you, and I'll make known my words to you. You see, a lot of people have it backwards.

They say, okay, give me the spirit and open my mind, and I will consider Christ. Jesus says, no, no. You hear my passion for you, and you turn to me.

Then I will give you my spirit, and then I will open my word to you. If you're lost or backslidden or defeated tonight, Jesus is crying to you. I hear the cry of Pastor David from this pulpit all the time, and whether or not you realize it, it has been the earmark of this ministry.

Whether it's what we consider an incredible grace message, and they all are, or it's a word of reproof, you always hear the cry of God. That's why the drug addict stands in the back and is so deeply moved. Pastor Dave preached at a youth rally.

Why are youth invading his pastor's conferences? By the hundreds, he travels around the world, and they have this ongoing problem of teenagers crashing the meetings, where they have to give altar calls so that the weeping teenagers can come to God to actually get that out of the way, in a sense. That's not a proper way of saying that, but to deal with that first so that the ministers know. Why is this happening? What does David Wilkerson, at 74, is he now? 3? Have in common with a 13-year-old in former Eastern Europe? Nothing.

Why do they come to the altar? Because there's one thing still in his life that's been there from 8 years of age when he was called. There is a cry for the sinner. Many of you came to Christ.

And you may have not even agreed with the message. But you're strangely moved upon to get out of your seat at the end and come to the altar. Even reluctantly sometimes.

I've seen it here. Even somewhat annoyed at what you've heard. But strangely, get out of your seat and make your way to the altar and you begin to cry.

And you don't know why. Because wisdom has cried out to you. You've heard the heart of Jesus Christ for your soul.

It has caused you to rise out of your seat and come forward. Something spiritual and eternal has been revealed to your heart. Because God has in his pulpit a man with a cry.

There are even professing Christians here tonight who have never had it or are losing the passion for the work of God. And that's what makes the Scripture in James so precious to me. Where James said, if any man lacks wisdom, let him ask.

Let him ask in faith. And God says, I won't withhold from him. I'll give it to him.

And wisdom not being just knowledge of how to build a better business. But the wisdom that is a cry that comes from the heart of God for people he has created. If you lack wisdom tonight, ask.

I'm asking God. I'm asking God to renew my cry. I'm asking God that I don't get bored or sidetracked.

With the true work that he has implanted into my life because of success or because of all of the wonderful things that go on around me. That I don't lose the passion for the work of God. And that this church doesn't lose that passion.

We must never lose it, beloved. If you're lost, Jesus will save you. If you're backslidden, he'll set you free.

If you're losing your passion, he'll give it back to you. Tonight, I'd like to give an altar call for every person in this sanctuary who'd say, Pastor, I've heard something in my heart. And I'm not leaving here without wisdom's cry.

I'm not leaving this house without asking God for an inner passion. Just an inner passion. And it's something God has to do.

You cannot work this in the flesh. An inner passion that will cause me to care and speak to people who need to hear about the love of God. Would you stand, please, with me? The Holy Spirit has spoken to you tonight.

You want to meet me at this altar? Would you slip out of where you are, please? Make your way down. Balcony, you can go to either exit. Education annex, we'll wait for you tonight.

There's about 100 people there. We'll wait for you. Make your way here.

Wisdom's cry. I want wisdom's cry with all my heart. God will give it to you.

James says, ask. And that's what we're going to do tonight. We're going to ask.

If you lack wisdom, ask. And he'll give it to you. And it's going to come with a cry.

Hallelujah. Proverbs 9, 1 to 3 says, Wisdom has built her house. She has hewn out her seven pillars.

She has killed her beasts. She has mangled her wine. She has also furnished her table.

She has sent forth her maidens. She cries upon the highest places of the city. Wisdom sends forth messengers.

And you are the messengers that represent the wisdom of God. God's wisdom is foolishness to men, Paul says. But it's through the preaching of the cross.

It's through the sharing of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The simple truth that another man paid the price for the sin that people without God live in. Because he delights in the souls of men.

And he's not willing that any should perish, but all should come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is the message. It isn't complicated.

But it doesn't really have any effect when it's presented as a formula. Or when you present it as a cry. When it comes from that which is the heart of God.

When it represents what truly is Christ. A man came to my office one day. And he was an intellectual.

And he had a book in his hand. And he opened it up. And he had about four or five questions.

And he said, Pastor, answer these questions and I will give my life to Christ. And there were these theological chicken and the egg questions. You know where you just go around the racetrack forever.

You can't really answer them. So I looked at him and I said, I don't know the answer to your questions. But I know this thing.

I feel the love of God in my heart for you. And it's time for you to give your life to Christ. Are you ready? And he closed his book and he said, I'm ready.

Something beyond just words. It's a genuine love. It's Christ's love.

It's not my love. My love is conditional. Christ's love is not.

So there has to be an exchange. And this is where God says, you ask me, I'll give it to you. All you have to do is ask for this wisdom.

But ask in faith. Believe that I give it to you and I will give it to you. And you begin to exercise that faith during your day.

Just a spoken word. And when you make a mistake, just draw back. Say, well, no, that was that was like machine gun scripture.

You know, you ever run into a Christian who tries to witness to you like that? God's love the world. He gave his only begotten son. Whoever believes in him shall not perish.

Whatever. And it's just like, what was that? You know, instead of saying, you know, God loves you and I feel God's love for you. And he doesn't want you to die in your sin.

And it's it's just not religious. It's God. There's a there's a there's a real big difference in this.

I would listen. There's some street preachers I would never listen to if I was unsaved. They just literally they feel like nails on a blackboard when you pass by them on the street because they're just machine guns with scripture.

There's no cry. I very rarely hear a street preacher with a cry. If I did, I would stop.

I have heard some, but it's rare. But if I did, it would stop me in my tracks because it would be like something like a father crying to his son. Don't play on the highway.

You're going to get killed. And I would feel that cry because that's what comes from the heart of God. Let's pray together tonight.

Jesus, plant within me your wisdom. Put a love for people in my heart. Help me to see men, women and children the way you see them.

You spoke about Jesus. You said he would see with other eyes and he would hear with other ears. He would have a heart for the poor and the captivated.

God, let that be my heart. Everywhere I go, everyone I speak to, let wisdom be in my life. I come to you on the authority of your promises to me.

You said if anyone lacks wisdom, that we should ask. Ask in faith and you will give it to us. You said you wouldn't withhold it.

So I lift my heart to you tonight. I declare my need. And I say, Jesus, fill me with the wisdom of God.

Let this wisdom of God's plan, God's heart, God's purpose, God's ways. Let it produce a cry in my heart. The cry that's in your heart.

And make me a soul winner. All the days of my life. Because you said, he that wins souls is wise.

Oh God, may you be able to look at me. And say he is wise. Or she is wise.

Thank you, Lord. I believe this very moment. That just as the blood is flowing in my veins.

That you are releasing wisdom into my heart. And into my life. Because you promised to give it to me.

God, thank you. That you're producing something. Supernatural.

In my heart. You're going to send me. To the highest places of the city.

With a cry. Turn. And you will receive.

Eternal life. The spirit of God. And God's word.

Will be open to your heart. Now I give you thanks. And I give you praise.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God.

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