

The Hidden Things of God - Part 1

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead explores the hidden wisdom of God as revealed through the Holy Spirit, contrasting it with worldly wisdom and historical influences on Christian thought.

Duration: 47:02

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 11:25, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 2:15-16

Topics: "Church History"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of focusing on the hidden things of God rather than the visible aspects of Christianity. He shares his astonishment at the emphasis on the visible and superficial aspects of faith in today's society. The preacher references 1 Corinthians chapter 2 as a basis for his message and expresses his intention to speak on the hidden things of God. He also mentions the sacrifices made by believers throughout history and highlights the significance of small group meetings for accountability and confession.

Transcript

Now I want you to turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 2. No attempt is being made to expound this, but during these several services, if the Lord continues to lead, as I have discerned His leading so far, I'm going to be speaking to you on the hidden things of God, because I believe it's extremely important for us to begin to think God's way. Now that is a very, very determined fly. I mean, I'm going to swallow him by and by if he gets that dangerously close again.

But so be it, I don't mind at all. Now, 1 Corinthians chapter 2 gives to us a basic premise. We're going to consider that premise in all of its applications.

Oh, thank you, thank you. I just recently saw again 1776, the musical on our little VCR with John Hancock smashing flies throughout those days in 1776. So I'll pretend I'm John Hancock.

Now, let me read. If you want to use this tape, you better cut out a lot of this when you first start. Or else explain that the flies were here because of protein deficiency on my part.

Thy brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nothing, but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery. Even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew.

For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, I have not seen nor heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

For what man, or literally, what part of a man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches.

Comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

But he that is spiritual perceiveth and judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ, the hidden things of God. We live in a day, in a time, when the whole focus of activity associated with the name of Christ is on the visible, the extremely visible, the very visible.

Last summer, during the early month of July, I made a trip with some others through the Southland to some of the great centers that you will see, have speakers on television in other ways. And I was astonished to see that it was highly visible. Then, on account of their sin and receiving Christ, the apostles were so convinced that this was the fulfillment of the Scriptures, that they were certain, now that they had proof that Christ was raised from the dead, that the leaders of the temple would welcome them to have their meetings in the temple area.

Because, you see, there was no building large enough in Jerusalem to accommodate 5,000 people except the court of the temple. There wasn't any building. And I'm certain that the apostles were quite clear in their own mind that from then on they were going to meet at other times than when the temple... But like some churches getting started use the Seventh-day Adventist church on Sundays because they're not using it.

Well, since the main day of Jewish worship was on Friday, to use it and there'd be gratitude on the part of the temple authorities. But such was not the case. They could not have anyone there saying that Jesus was alive from the dead.

Because if that were true, first, it would prove the Pharisees to be correct in saying there was resurrection. And the Sadducees wouldn't permit that. And the Pharisees wouldn't permit it because they were the ones that most loudly cried, Crucify Him! And this would evidence that he was of God.

And the result was that they were told they could not meet in the temple any longer. What did they do? I wondered if perhaps they didn't have a committee meeting. Gathered together, the Apostles and this

newly formed group called the Deacons who had to wait in an outside room because they weren't quite at the same level as of the Apostles.

And after a while, the Apostles came out to the assembled Deacons and said, We know now what we're going to do. We want you to constitute yourselves three committees. A legal committee, a real estate committee, and a program committee.

The legal committee is to go down to the courthouse and register us and immediately to apply for our tax-exempt status. And the real estate committee is to go down and find the most conspicuous corner in Jerusalem and make a down payment so that we can get there as soon as possible a building suitable for this new thing that God is doing. And the program committee will develop a program and immediately call for news conferences to allow the newspapers here in Jerusalem to know exactly what we're going to do.

Now, that sounds the way it should have been done had they done it the way we've been taught to do it. But apparently they had some little deficiency in communication. They hadn't been able to get copies of how to promote church growth to them in time to do this the way it might otherwise have been done.

And so, the only one they had to depend on was God. And they went to Him and said, Now look, what are you going to do? And God said, Well, it wasn't my idea to use the temple in the first place. If you'd asked me, it would have never been there.

That wasn't what I had in mind. It wasn't that at all. Now, you do what I tell you to do.

I want you to go from house to house. I want you to go in fellowship, in studying the apostles' doctrine, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Well, who's going to organize them so they know which house to go to? Well, if you believe that I conquered death and am alive from the dead, don't you think I could arrange that? Would you allow me to have a little bit of say-so about whom meets with whom, where and when? But they did it.

And it continued to grow. And from that time on for the next 265 years, they never had a building erected for the worship of Christ. Did you know that the first building ever built for the worship of Jesus Christ was built, began in 313 A.D.? It was a gift from the mother of Constantine, she thought, to the Lord, as a thank-offering for the conversion of her son, young Emperor Constantine.

And it was the Church of the Nativity built in Bethlehem over the humble cave where the stable had been in which our Lord had been born. That's the first building built in Christendom. Never before was there a single building erected for the worship of Christ.

Now it's significant to understand this, because the Church was seduced into a voluntary captivity by its teachers, its leaders and its enemies. Back in the 2nd century and the early part of the 3rd century, that would be the last of the 100s and into the 200s, there was a man by the name of Manny, a Persian. Manny was a Gnostic dualist.

Manny was totally committed to Gnosticism. Now Gnosticism says, and it goes clear back to Plato, now Plato didn't ever have a thought of his own. Plato was a plagiarist.

Plato stole, never gave credit, like one of our senators from a nearby state to Washington, but never gave credit, he just stole. For instance, he made a trip to Sicily and he went from Sicily down to Alexandria and he spent nearly 26 months, 27 months in Alexandria listening to and studying with the Hindus out of India.

And that's where he got his concept that is the foundation of Gnosticism.

But he also studied with the Jews in exile and that's where he got his close association with Moses and Mosaic thinking. But it never was, he was never honest enough to come back and say where he'd studied and from whom he'd learned. But what would you think of a man who gave a verbatim account of what happened at the death of Socrates when he was five years old and never was anywhere near Socrates when he died.

But he tells every word that happened. Well, isn't it any wonder then that Plato was able to construct this philosophy which is half Hindu and half nonsense. It actually is this, that when God created, he created only spirit all just spirit.

But then when spirit, man's spirit sinned God had to get a prison for him. And so the prison was the body. And spirit was put into body and the body is evil because it's the prison of sinful man.

All material is evil according to Plato's philosophy. That's why you hear people talk about a platonic relationship between people. Look but don't touch because the body is bad.

And therefore what you have with Plato is the introduction of a concept that fit marvelously right into the strategy of Satan. Now we know that if Satan had known what was going to happen by the death and resurrection of Christ he said, it's said here he never would have slain the son of God. So from that point on he is trying to undo this terrible mistake.

And so he nourished, this has been nourished down through the centuries this concept that spirit is good and matter is bad. Well when we come to the time of Christ you find the Essenes one of the groups of the time that went out there they were like the some of the groups we had here where there was no marriage and so they were doomed to disappear when the existing members had all died. There was no marriage at all, no children.

And such was true of the Essenes. The body was banned. Now Paul is fighting this Gnostic heresy in the epistle to the Colossians.

The Colossians is a basically a refutation of Gnosticism and 1 John is a further refutation of Gnosticism. So at the time of the New Testament this Gnosticism appeared and it was dealt with by the writers of the inspired book. But this is now completed we're in the end of the 100s and in the beginning of the 200s and Manny this Persian philosopher this Persian Gnostic says the way to conquer Christianity is to give Christian terms to Gnosticism.

Are you with me? What we'll do is redefine Christianity by Gnostic definitions. And because the Christians don't have very good brain power anyway they're not very intellectual as long as they hear the word that they're familiar with they'll think it's what they've been taught and they'll embrace it. Now you don't think that happens but a friend of mine was one of the speakers at a holiness camp meeting out in Ohio.

Now he's a great Bible teacher but he just did not believe in Methodist view of holiness of entire sanctification being the eradication of the old nature. And so he was saying to some of the other young theologues that were there part of the pastoral community that was in the conference your people do not understand the doctrines that they're loyal to they only understand the terms they're familiar with. He said if I say certain words they're going to get angry and they won't let me finish the week.

If I say preach exactly the same thing I would without those terms and instead say just without any connection the terms they're accustomed to hearing they will approve, applaud and rejoice in what I'm giving. They said oh no our people aren't like that. He said well watch and see.

So he started the next service and he taught exactly what I believed which was contrary to what that camp meeting believed but at the end he would say heart purity had no connection to what was there amen came from the pew. And then he would go down and make some other statement he'd say entire sanctification amen and then afterwards says we never would have believed it if we hadn't seen it with our own eyes. So it wasn't something unusual it's happening today even as it did then and Manning came along redefining Gnosticism with Christian terms and the church heard the terms and rejoiced but the definition was totally absolutely different than what the fathers had believed and taught and preached.

So this was the effort of Manning that he didn't succeed as strikingly as he wished. He still never got in he did it and it was there but he still was outside another stream coming down. In the middle of the 5th century about 442 or so Augustine began to make his influence felt when Augustine was converted he'd spent by the way 9 years studying Manichaeism.

Manning had died but he was under some of their successor teachers and so he now is there studying this young Augustine who is so immoral who is so sensual so absolutely contrary to everything decent and moral that when H.L. Mencken who shared much of the same character with Augustine read the confessions of Augustine they said, well Mr.

Mencken what did you think of the confessions of Augustine? and he went oh to have been Augustine wicked sensual old man now that was Augustine in his confessions he's telling about all of that now he's converted the first piece he writes is the refutation of Manichaeism and he uses most of the arguments of a man who was then very well known in the area called Pelagius but instead of continuing that way Augustine begins to ask a question the question he asks is this why was I such a rocker? why did I do such evil things? why was my life so wicked? now you know the correct answer, don't you? because he wanted to but that was too honest that made him responsible so Augustine hunts around to try to find a way by which he can escape from that onus by trying to find a way by which he can deal

with this and still come off scot-free and so what did I say? how, why was it? oh, oh he found that verse in David which says in sin did my mother so he said coitus is evil the body is bad the sinful nature is transferred in the act of coitus and he now has the philosophy that is going to bring the church into Babylonian captivity from that time until the present because he now has found a way by which he can totally contradict the word of God God said in Genesis when he had made man and gave to him a body and gave to him with that body appetite for food, for knowledge for security, for pleasure for sex, for position and authority he said of that man with these and propensities it is good and Augustine comes along and says it is bad and the church ever since has been saying it is bad God

said it's good I've often asked people in the garden of Eden you had two people they had drives for food the urge for food appetite for food, knowledge security, pleasure, status, sex and God said it was good and yet when Satan came why, what happened? what was the leverage he used to get 100% of all the people in the world to sin? they didn't have sinful natures what did they have? they had minds to think they had emotions to feel and they had volition to choose and they thought and they felt and they chose against God and they sinned 100% he said that was only two but still 100% everybody likes to talk about percentages 100% of them sinned and they didn't have fallen natures all they had was appetites and

urges brains to think emotions to feel and volitions to choose and the consequence

of this was now listen Augustine extended this now what's the next thing that happened since the body is bad since the fallen nature is communicated by coitus what does that mean? that means that the child born of godly parents well let me explain what Augustine wrote he said if twin children, two twins are born to godly parents and because there is evident weakness the priest now you've got somebody visibly there the priest takes the first infant and baptizes it and then after it's baptized the infant dies and the other child is born and dies before the priest can baptize it the one that was baptized will be forever in the bliss of heaven and the one that wasn't baptized will burn forever in the flames of hell that's baptismal regeneration as it came out of the pit and it brought the

church into captivity now the next thing you have is the celibate ministry the priesthood, the body is bad and so the sisters are married to the lord and the priests abstain are in celibacy visible, everything now becomes visible everything now gets up so it can be seen it's there, it's prominent beheld, all the rituals are all the activities are everything now has become visible and it continues that way for centuries we had a protestant reformation and oh it did everything but reform oh it was good but it just it didn't go far enough it didn't reform you see it dealt with some things truly, it dealt with some things but it didn't go to deal with others and the consequence of it was that we had all of the same things oh it's true that when John Wesley started his little missions

throughout England they didn't have the pulpit from which the preaching was given on one side and the lectern from which the scripture was read on the other with the altar in between no, they did as we do and put the pulpit here to give prominence to the word but still it was just a minor adjustment it was a minor adjustment oh Wesley did have one thing that we got to recognize the sheer genius and that was the little groups of twelve that he had the class meetings that would meet in a home and everyone that was converted was assigned to a class meeting where they met once a week and every person in that group and that was a select group nobody else could come and every person there would deal with what they had done during the past week they'd tell what sins they'd committed what

failures they'd made and only once in 45 years was the secrecy of a class meeting ever violated but you see John Wesley took literally that scripture verse that says confess your faults one for another and pray one for another that you may be healed and so the class meeting was a time when every person expressed what had happened to them but it was quiet and hidden but the rest of it was all very visible they'd been 84 years trying to complete the great cathedral on the hill in Washington the Anglican cathedral the national cathedral because remember most of our founding fathers were all practicing Anglicans and so way back then it was decided that there would be a national cathedral well they're just now within a year or two they started it in 1905 and now in a year or two they're going

to be completing it oh it's magnificent I think it's one of the most magnificent buildings on the North American continent I can admire its magnificence I don't think it has anything to do with the Lord but I think it's a magnificent structure and this great poetry and marble I enjoy it, I enjoy seeing it, it's something to look up and see it there but it has nothing to do with the word and nothing to do with the Lord but ever since the time of Augustine this is the way we've moved and now today we don't have temples built or cathedrals built like that our Johnny come Lately's will put them up overnight so it seems they'll build these massive buildings to seat ten, fifteen, twenty thousand people very very quickly and put gold glass on them so they glisten like the new Jerusalem when you

see them from twenty miles away and you wonder what is this?

Has the city come down from above? No, it's just a monument to someone's success and his chosen business it's there now that's visible but in all the midst of this has there been anything that God has done? Yes yes when our missionaries went to China two hundred years ago they did as missionaries have ever done they took the church structures with them it's a little surprising to see pictures of missions in China and see a church built by the Baptists that resembles the First Baptist Church of Keatuck, Iowa you know the lowans knew what kind of a building they wanted but they built the same thing in China they didn't allow the Chinese people to build something that would be characteristically theirs we showed them how what a church should be we got them up there and after nearly a hundred and seventy years of ministry we had about three and a half million converts and all of them associated with these magnificent structures transplanted from Britain, Europe and America and so when the Communists came in led by Mao it was very easy for them to capture the work of a hundred and seventy years because they were all so visible and so what happened was the people in Keatuck, Iowa that sacrificed to build that church out there in China now found that the church they had built was turned into a recreation center for Communist youth that's what happened to most of the churches hundreds of them several thousand of them throughout China well a few were kept for religious worship because it was necessary for the Chinese government to showcase some kind of religious activity and so a few were kept but most of them went away and killed in 1969 when Nixon was getting ready to go to China the Washington Post carried an article now I wish I had saved it if you want I'll go back to the Washington Post archives and dig it up for you but I didn't save it because I just thought I didn't save it that's all but it was in the second section which is world and I think it would be about 16 pages from the front and it said this Chinese Communist Chinese government reports on the first 20 years the article was about that long one column see Washington Post didn't want to do anything to disturb this beautiful new thing that was going to happen between Mr.

Nixon and the Chinese so they had to put it in because the Chinese had announced it very early don't put it on the headlines it said during the first 20 years the Communist government of China has found it necessary to deprive of existence isn't that a nice way to talk about killing to deprive of existence 30 million people plus I don't know how big the plus was but they only admitted to 30 million they said half of these were deprived of existence because they had steadfastly adhered to economic principles contrary to the regime that is they didn't like to have their goods stolen from them so they were killed that's a good way to cure them of economic malady kill them and the other half 15 million were deprived of existence for stubborn adherence to religions imported from the

imperialist west generally that means the United States and Europe but in this case because it was religions that could be from Burma with Buddhism and India with Hinduism and Saudi Arabia with Islam and Europe and America with Christianity so let's assume that Christians are a little more ready to die for Christ than Muslims are that half of these people that half of 15 million died out of their love for Christ it's an assumption, I'm pulling it off the ceiling, I admit that but there were a lot of evidence that this was a very serious problem for instance, did you know that for the first 10 or 12 years of the communist regime children that reported that their parents were practicing Christians were given medals the parents were arrested they were brought there in groups wooden crosses

of just boards nailed together were laid on the ground the little child with his medal would stand at the base and the parents had to stand at the head of the cross and the statement was read by the soldiers and the officials that if these renegade people will walk on that cross to their son or daughter we will let them live but if they don't we'll shoot them where they stand and thousands of parents stood there while the

machine guns mowed them down because they would not step on the cross and walk to their children, so we know this was a very costly thing and we only left 3.5 million and now I'm saying 7.5 million people have died for Christ what does this mean, let me understand by it if 7.5 million people died and we only left 3.5 wouldn't that indicate that there had been 100%

increase in the number, would to me but if there was 100% they probably didn't capture all of that 100% so there was a seed left because he said the blood of the martyrs be the seed of the church well now God has a chance to do another thing his way all the buildings have been converted to recreational centers all of the organized clergy have been killed and all they've got some people, new converts that have fallen in love with Christ and found a few pages of the scripture what are they going to do well apparently what they did was to say Lord how do you want us to arrange this thing, do you want us to build a building and get shot and Lord you know that wasn't my idea I never really had that as my main plan anyway what do you want us to do, well why don't you do what they did in Acts

why don't you hide I know where you are and don't take a place of meeting and don't take a time of meeting because if you have a set place and a set time, they're going to catch you and they're going to kill you so why don't you just meet, and I'll give you apostles and prophets and pastors and evangelists but you don't need to put a band bandage on them or a badge on them you don't know who they are and I know who they are and you don't need a preacher anyway in any kind of situation you aren't going to have to be able to sing because if they find you singing they're going to run out and get the church get the police well what's happened since 1969 according to what we now know we know there are at least 25 million people in something we call they don't the house church movement they

don't have a name for it but we have created of course a lot of problems as our tourists have gone into China and yet communist guides one of the first questions they ask if they're baptists from Teocuch, Iowa they say where is he, could you take us to an underground church oh there's no such thing as an underground oh yes our preacher is there so all of a sudden the intelligence is now beginning to scratch through China to find where this underground church is two months ago they arrested eight men and they said you're part of the underground church and we never heard of it you're some of those Christians oh yes we're Christians we never heard of underground church well take us to it like they were like Herod so we can worship take us to it they said we don't know where to take you we

don't know because how does it work they don't have any set place and they don't have any set time but the family will be in prayer and the Lord will speak to them saying go over and see Tom and Jane so they go over to the Chinese equivalent of Tom and Jane and when they get there two other families felt glad of the Lord to come and see Tom and Jane now they all love the Lord and they have ways of getting that known so they have a service but they never meet again that group but they always meet and Ruth Graham when Stan Cottrell started his run his China run from one northwest down to Shanghai when he made the run across China Ruth Graham sent him a cable saying that she was born in China and she's had some of the Chinese communicate with him and she said Stan there are 150 million of us

Chinese believers praying for you and the government can't find them and if we just keep the tourists away maybe they can continue to grow you say well why do you talk like that recently a man I know was in Russia he had learned Russian, he was Russian background and he was interpreting for a group of Christians tourists in Russia and because he was the interpreter he met them and they talked to him and the prophets in the Baptists and Pentecostal churches in Russia are saying this God is saying to us that persecution is going to break out in America far worse than anything that's ever happened in Russia are

you hearing that in your churches in America wherever we have prophets this is what we're hearing in Russia and they're saying to the church in America prepare prepare prepare for

persecution is going to break out and like worse than anything that ever happened you said you think so well I want you to know this I hope not but I've carried automobile insurance for 50 years paid a lot of money for it and I just because I'm not disappointed because I haven't had to use it do you understand fire insurance paid a lot of money for fire insurance and I'm not sad because I didn't get my money's worth never had to use it are you what are you saying I'm saying this I hope it doesn't come to America but I can't find one good reason why it shouldn't I can't find one thing to say to almighty God well because of this we ought not to have what they've had in Russia and worse with the number of babies that are being killed every year with our open abortion my goodness if God

doesn't judge America he's going to have to apologize for what he did to them he said well these are very serious words well these are very serious times and I think it behooves us to understand that God has hidden things hidden blessings and he wants to have a hidden people listen as I read you a few verses from Psalm 83 and listen particularly for the one word that you're going to hear keep not thy silence O God hold not thy peace and be not still O God for lo thine enemies make a tumult and they that hate thee have lifted up their head they have taken crafty counsel against thy people and consulted against thy hidden ones

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