

# Revelation Necessary to Build the Church

by Zac Poonen

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*Revelation is essential for building the church and understanding spiritual truths, and it requires humility and a willingness to seek the Holy Spirit's help.*

**Duration:** 57:35

**Scripture:** Psalm 25:14, Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 25:2, Matthew 16:18, John 16:13, 1 Corinthians 1:30

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Guidance"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking revelation from God to understand the mysteries of the kingdom, live a godly life, and build a new covenant church. It highlights the need for humility, reverence for God, and dependence on the Holy Spirit for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The message stresses the significance of acknowledging our limitations in understanding spiritual truths and trusting in God's guidance for a straight path.

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## Transcript

So this is the second in our series on the subject of building a new covenant church. For many Christians, the word church means a building or a denomination or a particular group. Now that is never found in the New Testament.

In the New Testament, which is the place where the very first time the word church was used by Jesus himself, it refers to a group of people who are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, who are disciples of Jesus. And that is the church we're talking about. So what do we mean by a new covenant church? The Israelites were brought under an agreement by God on the Mount of Sinai, Mount Sinai, which is called the old covenant.

There were certain principles and rules and regulations and liturgy and ceremonies and sacrifices connected with that. And that is not the new covenant. In the new covenant, Jesus has laid down certain standards and principles, which we read in the New Testament.

And a lot of churches are really following Old Testament practices or practices that were valid under the old covenant with Israel, but which are not valid under the new covenant, which is not really supposed to be the way God wanted to build the church. And that's why there are so many problems connected with the church. So let's turn, first of all, to Matthew chapter 16 and verse 18.

Matthew 16 and verse 18. Jesus said, I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.

Now, this is a verse which has caused a lot of controversy. Many people, without reading the context, take the verse and assume it means that Peter is the rock. But if you read the context of it, you read that in verse 16, you know, verse 15, Jesus asked, who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter answered saying, you are the Christ, the son of the living God.

And it was in answer to that, or in response to that, that Jesus said, you are Peter, and upon this rock, this confession that you have just made, I will build my church. So it's not Peter was the rock, it's that confession that he made based on a revelation that he got from the father. You know, because Jesus said to him in verse 17, blessed are you, Simon, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father in heaven.

So he used a word there, which is very rarely found in the Old Testament, the word reveal or revelation. How did Peter know what all the great scholars who were studying the Bible in his time did not know? That was by revelation, not by study. The Pharisees and scribes studied the word.

They were Bible scholars, exactly like people study the Bible today in Bible schools and colleges and seminaries. And they ended up as scribes and Pharisees with zero revelation, just like most people who go to Bible schools and colleges today. I mean, I've heard a lot of these people who go to Bible colleges and schools, their revelation is pretty close to zero.

Their knowledge of Greek and Hebrew and a lot of other useless stuff is a lot. But when it comes to revelation from the father, it's pretty close to zero. On what rock is the church built? On the Christ who is known by revelation, not by study.

The scribes and Pharisees crucified Christ. They studied the of those days, which was 39 books. And every book of the Bible in the Old Testament spoke about Jesus, right from Genesis to Malachi.

But when that Jesus came into their midst, they thought he was the prince of devils, Beelzebub. That's how blind you can be when you study the scriptures without revelation. Whereas someone who had not studied the scriptures at all, like the Roman centurion at the cross, he said, this is the son of God.

How did he say that? How did Peter, who was not at all a scholar, he was just a fisherman, they called him an illiterate man. How did he know? Jesus said, blessed are you because you did not understand this by your cleverness or by your study. It was a revelation that came to you from my father.

Now, where Christians do not give emphasis to revelation, to the revelation of the Holy Spirit, the revelation that God gives, you're not going to build the church. I know a lot of places, including this church and many of our churches, where I preached about the new covenant church for years, 35 years. And I can see clearly that lots and lots of people haven't seen it.

They hear it. They can probably explain it because they've got clever minds, but they haven't got revelation. It's like multitudes of Christians who know that Christ died for their sins, but they haven't got revelation.

You know what would happen? Let's take the matter of Christ dying for our sins. Every Christian in the world would say he believes that. But when do you know that you've got revelation on this truth, that Christ died for your sins? When you begin to hate your sin and you do everything in your power to be free from your sin, because you recognize by revelation, it was my sin that put Jesus on the cross and not the nails, which the Romans put into his hands.

How many people do you think have seen that? I would say very, very, very few, not even those who call themselves believers. Look at the number of believers who commit sin, who watch internet pornography, who commit adultery and who tell lies and do all types of things and call themselves believers. Do you think they have got revelation on the simple truth that Jesus Christ died for our sins? No, they know it in their heads like the devil knows it in his head, but their life is no different from the devil's because they haven't got revelation.

And if you don't have revelations on such a simple thing like that, how can we go on to other things? How many Christian husbands and wives do you think have got revelation on the fact that their married life is supposed to manifest to the world if they are Christians? I mean, if they're not Christians, forget it. But if they are Christians, their married life is supposed to manifest to the world the relationship between Jesus Christ and the church. I mean, if Christian husbands and wives would get revelation on that, it would completely change just the way they talk to each other at home.

But they haven't got revelation. They know it in their heads. I mean, they may have heard it in this church for 35 years, but they haven't got revelation because it doesn't change the way they talk to each other.

It doesn't change the way they live at home. They haven't got revelation. But have they got the Bible? Yes.

Have they studied Ephesians 5? Yes. They can probably even explain it. There are a lot of people who can explain the Greek meanings of Ephesians 5 who haven't got revelation.

So when it comes to the church, it's not something you can understand by study or by my explaining it to you. You can understand it. You think you've got it.

You haven't got it. If you get it, you'll never again be satisfied with being part of an old covenant system. That's what happened to me.

There are a lot of people who can explain these things who still seem to be very satisfied with churches that follow old covenant practices. Well, I'm not saying they're not believers. I'm just saying they've got zero revelation on the new covenant church.

So remember these words. Who do you say that I am? Jesus asked. And Peter said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God.

And Jesus said, you're blessed. You're blessed because you got revelation. I want to tell you this, my brothers and sisters.

When you get revelation on any truth in the New Testament, that's the time you really become blessed. Otherwise, God blesses a lot of people with material things. Jesus said that he makes the sun to rise on the good and the evil.

He makes the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous, meaning thereby that material blessings are given by God to all people. Your only qualification is you've got to be either good or evil. Do you qualify? You must be either righteous or unrighteous.

You qualify, then material blessings are yours. But revelation, that's different. You know, the New Testament uses another word which is closely connected with that called mysteries.

That's another word which is not found in the Old Testament. Let me show you Ephesians chapter five. Here it says about Christ and the church.

And it says here in Ephesians five and verse 31, Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. Is that referring to husband and wife? No. This mystery, notice that word, mystery.

This mystery is great. But I'm speaking with reference to Christ and the church. He's not talking about husband and wife.

In Genesis 2, 24, Genesis 2, it was speaking about husband and wife. But here, he's speaking about Christ and the church. Christ and the church being like one flesh, like husband and wife.

Have you understood that? Flesh is a word which is used in the New Testament to symbolize what we call my will. Jesus Christ came in the flesh. He's one flesh with the church.

This is a mystery. Verse 32, it's called a great mystery. Mystery, that's another thing which is not found in the Old Testament.

There are only two great mysteries mentioned in the New Testament. One is this, the church. The New Covenant church is a mystery.

You can hear about it for 100 years. You can keep on listening to this sermon again and again and again. You won't get it because it's a mystery.

I'll tell you how we can understand it. But let me go first of all to the other great mystery, 1 Timothy chapter 2. 1 Timothy, sorry, chapter 3 in verse 16. Here's another thing which is called a great mystery.

Verse 16, great is the mystery of godliness or the secret of living a godly life. That is a fantastic mystery because 90% of believers do not have victory over sin. What does it prove? The way to live a godly life is a mystery.

They haven't got it. They haven't understood it. They can hear 100 times about our old man being crucified with him.

They won't understand it. It's a mystery. It's got to come by revelation and not by study.

What is that mystery of godliness? That Jesus was revealed in the flesh. What is the other great mystery? That Jesus is one flesh with the church. Notice the word flesh in both places.

It's a great mystery. Who will find this mystery of living a godly life? Those who are so desperate and passionate about living a godly life that they're willing to pay any price in order to live a godly life. Now, there are very few Christians like that.

There are a lot of Christians who want a godly life, but they don't want to pay any price for it. They won't find it. They'll keep on searching, but they won't find it.

There are a lot of people who would like to understand the mystery of the church, the new covenant church. Are they willing to pay any price for it? Are they willing to offend everybody in the world? Are they willing to offend their parents and their pastors and their preachers and their friends and everybody in order to build a new covenant church? No, they'll never find it because God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. And if God finds, remember, Peter was somebody who had forsaken everything in order to follow Jesus.

That's why he got revelation. Most of us, we forsake almost nothing and we want revelation. We won't get it.

There are things on earth that may be more important to us than Jesus Christ. There may be things on earth which are more important to us than the kingdom of God. Things on earth that are more important to us than what God wants.

Our work being more important to us than God's work. Our house being more important to us than God's house. How in the world will God give revelation to such a man who's got other priorities? I want to tell you, my brothers and sisters, make God your number one priority in every area of your life and you'll get revelation upon revelation upon revelation.

It's amazing the things that God has shown me in his word by revelation. And you can have it. And not only have it, it'll change your life.

It'll change your family life and you'll build a new covenant church. So that word revelation and mystery is very, very important. Not found in the Old Testament because in the Old Testament, they did not have the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gave revelation to Peter, even though he didn't indwell him that Jesus Christ was the son of God. But once he indwelt the apostles on the day of Pentecost, everything changed. They got even more revelation on so many things that they did not know before.

You remember in John chapter 16, Jesus said these words. Listen to this, John 16 and verse 12, I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now or you won't be able to grasp them now. Was it because they were stupid or dull? Did they suddenly become more intelligent on the day of Pentecost? If Peter was very poor at mathematics, do you think on the day of Pentecost he suddenly became good at mathematics? No, their intelligence level remained the same.

But something happened in their heart on the day of Pentecost that changed them completely, that they could understand certain things that Jesus could not explain to them when he was on the earth. Now imagine this, forget me, I may be a very poor preacher. Imagine if Jesus was standing in this pulpit.

You'd think, oh, now I would understand everything. No, you wouldn't. He would say, I've got a lot of things to say to you, but you can't understand them until the Holy Spirit comes and fills your heart.

That's what he was saying. I have many things to say to you, you can't grasp them now. But when the Spirit of truth comes, verse 13, comes within you, he will show you all that truth.

So that's the other thing I want to say, that a man who does not honor the Holy Spirit's ministry in his life is never going to understand or get revelation. The devil has done a tremendous work in making people despise the Holy Spirit or be afraid of the Holy Spirit. How? By getting some Christians do some fanatic, stupid things, go to a fanatical extreme and do all types of stupid, ungodly things and say, these are manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

And any sensible man would say, I don't want it. I looked at that years ago when I was seeking for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And I went to some of these groups only a few times.

And I said, I don't want it. I don't want it. I'm thankful that I said to the Lord, I don't want it.

I said, Lord, I want what the apostles got on the day of Pentecost. And that's different. So don't get scared or turn away from the Holy Spirit's ministry because of some people who've gone to a fanatical extreme.

You know, the narrow way has got two cliffs on either side. Some people fall over the cliff one side and you can back away from that so much that you fall over the cliff the other side. And that's what happened to most Christians.

They're either falling over this side or that side in relation to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Now, how to keep ourselves in the middle so we don't fall over this cliff or that cliff. That's very simple.

The Bible says, let's run the race, looking unto Jesus. Hebrews 12, 2. The author and finisher of our faith. The one who said, follow me.

The one who was given to us as an example in whose footsteps we are to follow. And Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. There was no man who walked on this earth who was as filled with the Spirit or who had as much revelation of the Spirit as Jesus.

It says about Jesus in his earthly life, the Father gave him the Spirit without measure. He anointed him with the oil of gladness, the Spirit of joy, because he loved righteousness and hated sin. The more we love righteousness and hate sin in our life, the more God will anoint us with the Holy Spirit.

You understand the reason why that anointing hasn't come upon many people or why there's a lot of fake anointing. So looking unto Jesus, if you look at his example and when you see all these foolish things being done today in the name of the Holy Spirit, just ask yourself one question. Do I see Jesus doing that? Or can I imagine Jesus doing that? When I see somebody rolling on the floor and laughing, I can't imagine Jesus rolling on the floor and kicking his legs and laughing and saying this, I'm filled with the Holy Spirit.

I don't see Jesus falling down under the power of the Holy Spirit. I don't see him pushing anybody down under the power of the Holy Spirit. So Jesus is my example.

There's no greater example in the world. So I'm not fooled by all these things that happen around me or that are shown on Christian television. I don't care how great the preacher is.

I don't care how famous he is. Jesus is our example. If you keep that before you, you'll never go astray.

So that's what I want to say. There are many things that the Lord wants to say to us, but we won't understand that until the Holy Spirit comes in. We allow the Holy Spirit to fill us.

He brings light and then we begin to understand. Let me show you that again in 2 Corinthians in chapter 3. This is so important because I believe that many of us who come here are seeking to increase in knowledge, but have not understood the importance of revelation. Revelation is so fundamentally important.

In 2 Corinthians 3, it speaks here about reading the Old Testament. Verse 14 is speaking about the people under the Old Covenant. Their minds were hardened.

It's like a hard rock which God cannot speak anything into. Until this very day, at the reading of the Old Covenant, and you can read the New Testament books in the spirit of the Old Covenant, and so it applies to you too. I hope all of us read the Bible.

The question is, how do you read it? Do you read it with the spirit of the Old Covenant? Then this is a very important passage for you. When they read the Old Covenant, there's a veil, but it remains unlifted. You know, like you've often heard me say, if I put a handkerchief over the Bible, a really thick one, I can't read it.

I can't understand. Faintly, I can see some letters there. It says that is how you're reading the Bible will be without the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

To this day, when Moses is read, there's this veil over their heart as they read the Bible. Between their heart and the Bible, there's a veil. Their mind is okay because they're very clever.

They're smart guys, but between their heart and the Bible, there's a thick veil. But if a person turns to the Lord, and that Lord is the Holy Spirit, it says in the next verse, that Lord is the Holy Spirit. When a person turns to the Holy Spirit, that veil is removed.

Hey, I can understand this now. That's how we must read the Bible. That's how I've studied the Bible.

I think God's given me a good brain for earthly things, but when I come to the Bible, I'll tell you how I come. Lord, I'm as dumb as a newborn baby. I'm as stupid as a donkey when it comes to understanding spiritual things, because my mind has been corrupted by sin.

My life has been defiled by pride and selfishness. I can understand chemistry and mathematics and physics and the news and so many other things on the earth, but when it comes to spiritual things, I am blind. Unless you give me your Holy Spirit and revelation, I will go totally astray reading this book, like the Pharisees went totally astray reading this book and thinking Christ was the devil and killing him.

I'm capable of the same thing. I want to ask you, my brothers and sisters, do you read the Bible with that type of humble approach, acknowledging that all your cleverness is useless when it comes to studying the Bible? You'll get revelation. The Holy Spirit will show you things.

It says here in verse 18 that the Holy Spirit shows us the glory of the Lord in the Scriptures. And to me, this has been the most wonderful thing in my study of the Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, is that everywhere I see, not a doctrine, I see my Savior. I see Jesus.

And as I see Jesus, it excites me more than any doctrinal understanding. A lot of people are studying doctrine. I'll tell you something, when you stand before the Lord, He's not going to give you a doctrinal questionnaire and see how many marks you get.

He's going to ask you, did you know me? He's going to tell some people, I never knew you. Depart from me, I never knew you. He didn't say you got your doctrines wrong.

He said about the Pharisees, all that they teach is right. Matthew 23, verse two and three. But they couldn't understand Jesus.

You can have all your doctrines right, like the Pharisees, and not understand Jesus properly. But a simple man like Peter could understand because he got revelation. And he says, on this rock of revelation, I will build the church.

You see why so many places, the church is not built? How do we know it's not the true church? Because Jesus said concerning the true church in Matthew 16, 18, I will build my church and the gates of hell, the powers of spiritual darkness, will never be able to overcome it. But look around and see almost every church overcome by the powers of darkness. Elders fighting with each other, strife, quarreling, pastors falling into adultery, all types of sin permitted in the congregation.

People who are carnal and sinful being given positions of responsibility just because they are rich businessmen. Somebody who's a rich businessman, as soon as he joins the church, he's made a member of the board, not in this church. We look for those who are God-fearing and humble.

You see how Christendom has gone astray. We've exalted the human mind above the Holy Spirit. We need to humble ourselves.

Otherwise we can spend our earthly days building something God doesn't approve of. You remember Abraham produced Ishmael and one day he said to God, Oh God, please let Ishmael live before you. I'm your servant.

I produced it. God said, nothing good. I know you are my servant.

He even called Abraham his prophet. He said, send Ishmael away. I never want to see him again.

You'll never see him again. That's it. And one day God is going to say to many people who may be saved that your entire life's work is burnt up because it's all wood, hay and straw.

Because you were used your cleverness to do my work. You didn't humble yourself and come like a babe to ask me, which way Lord shall I do your work? Let me show you also Isaiah 55 verse 8 and 9, which is very important in this connection. This is why revelation is so important.

Isaiah 55 and verse 8 and 9. My thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways, my ways. You got it? I can be the cleverest man in the world, but God says, my thoughts are not his thoughts.

My ways are not his ways. The difference between his ways and my ways is not just slight. It says in verse 9, as the heaven is higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways.

There's a verse in Proverbs 14, which says, there is a way that seems right to a man, but it ends in death and spiritual death. So if I want to do things God's way, the first thing I've got to recognize is that my clever mind is the biggest hindrance to understanding God's mind. How many Christians have understood that? I wish in every Bible college and seminary on the face of the earth, that would be the first thing they teach.

Dear brothers and sisters, the biggest hindrance to your studying the Bible is your clever mind. You can use it like a servant. Don't let it determine you.

If the mind is a servant, great. It's like money. Keep it as a servant.

Fire is a good servant, but a very bad master. You burn up the house. Money is a good servant, but a bad master.

Your mind is an excellent servant, but the moment you make it your master, that is going to determine what the Bible means you've gone astray. It's like people who made money their master. Now what should be our master? The Holy Spirit who instructs our mind.

It's like a husband and wife. The mind should be like the wife under the headship of the Holy Spirit, the husband. Then it's okay.

You don't have to get rid of your mind. Like some Christians, they don't use your mind. That's like they shoot your wife.

Rubbish. A wife is very useful in the home, but don't let her become the head of the home, because that's what happened in the Garden of Eden. So all the confusion came because of that.

What's the solution? Some people have made the wife the head of the home. The others get rid of her. That's not the solution.

Keep a woman in her proper place in the home, subject to the husband who's the head. Keep the mind in the proper place subject to the Holy Spirit. The mind is very useful, but subject to the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

So that's the balance. We don't go to this extreme or the other extreme. The other verse I want to show you is Matthew chapter 13.

I hope you're getting some revelation on some truths which teach the importance of revelation. Matthew chapter 13, the disciples came to Jesus and said, why do you speak to these people in parables? And Jesus said, Matthew 13 and verse 11, to you disciples, he's speaking to the disciples, the disciples were those who had forsaken everything to follow Jesus. And even today there are people who have forsaken everything to follow Jesus.

By forsaken everything, I don't mean you've given up your jobs. A lot of people have given up their jobs to serve as pastors. They haven't forsaken everything.

More than 90% of the Christian workers I've met in India have never had a calling from God. They just got into Christian work, which is a good way of earning a living. Latch onto some American organization and make money more than they would have earned if they're in a secular job.

That's not what I'm talking about. You know, these people that forsaken all means say that detached from their attachment to the world, you can be in a secular job and be completely detached from your attachment to the world. To them, he said, to you, to you folks who have placed me as number one in your life.

And that applies even today, more important than your home, more important than your job, more important than everything else. Lord Jesus says, you placed me as number one in your life. You felt I was worth forsaking everything on earth for to you.

It has been granted. It's not a reward. It's a gift.

It has been granted to know, again that word, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Do you think Jesus could say that to you, my brother, sister? Do you think Jesus could look at you and say to you, it has been granted to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven. But to these other folk, it has not been granted.

Why? Is it because they were not clever? No, those tribes were cleverer than Peter. Is it because they didn't study the Bible enough? No, they studied the Bible more than Peter. But Peter was a wholehearted disciple of Jesus.

They were not. They exalted their minds. Peter exalted Jesus Christ.

To you, it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. To them, it has not been granted. And there's a principle which is very different from the principle of communism and socialism.

Verse 12. Try and understand this. Whoever has, to him more will be given.

That's exactly the opposite of socialism and communism. And he'll have an abundance. And if someone doesn't have even what literally he has, he'll be taken away from him.

A lot of people say Jesus was a Marxist or a communist. Rubbish. Read that verse.

But he's not talking about earthly riches. In the context, what he's saying is, if I give you revelation on something and you make use of it, you'll get more. And you make use of that, incorporate it into your life, you'll get more.

And you'll keep on getting more and more till you have such an abundance of revelation. Praise the Lord. I want to live this life all my days.

I remember years ago meeting a person who was one of the godliest men I met on the face of the earth. He was in his eighties. And he said, I get revelation every day.

I can believe it's not that he hadn't read the Bible. He read the Bible many times, but he got revelation. Imagine a man who had known the Lord for 60 years was getting new revelation all the time.

That's the goal I long for, to have revelation all the time, every day. It says here, but to him who does not have even that which he has, thinks he has, will be taken away. That means when we don't use the revelation God gives us, because we say, if I follow this, I'll offend so-and-so.

I will not get an opening in this place. I'll lose this position. They'll chuck me out of this church.

And they're worried about all these things. That's the end of revelation. God says, you don't deserve any more.

You'll even lose what you have. I've seen that happen. God shows them some truths, but they begin to think if I follow this, if I preach this, if I do this, what will happen? I remember a brother was a leader of a church in Bangalore, a church that did not believe in the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but he would constantly

come and borrow my tapes and my books in order to preach them in his church.

And he asked me to pray for him, that he would be baptized in the Holy Spirit. I asked him a question. I said, if God anoints you with the Holy Spirit, will you preach that in your church? He didn't want to do that.

He wanted an anointing so that he'd be a great preacher. God never gave it to him. All he could spend his life was preaching my messages, listening to them on tapes.

That's not the same as anointing. You can imitate anybody's sermons. It's not the same as the anointing.

It would only be like a picture of chicken biryani, and nobody's hunger is going to be satisfied with that. Nice chicken curry. Here's a picture.

It's not the same. To whom does God give revelation? Let's turn to what Jesus said in Matthew 11, verse 25. Now you'll understand things I've been saying so far.

Jesus himself says that. You know, he was speaking here in verse 20. He denounced Matthew 11, 20.

He denounced the cities in which most of his miracles were done because they did not repent. Jesus never denounced sinners. He denounced hypocrites, and he denounced those who did not repent after he had revealed himself to them.

He never denounced a woman caught in adultery or a thief hanging on the cross. He always appreciated repentance, but if people didn't repent or they were hypocrites trying to live a double life, he really exposed them and denounced them. And he said, woe to you, Chorazin, Bethsaida.

These are places where he did miracles. He says, those godless cities of Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had seen the things that are done in your city. And Capernaum, verse 23, you think you're such a great spiritual city? You will be brought down to hell because if the miracles done there were done in Sodom, Sodom would not have been destroyed.

Sodom would have repented. Imagine Jesus saying Sodom would have repented, but Capernaum did not repent. And he says in the day of judgment, it'll be more tolerable for Sodom than for you.

That's why you've often heard me say, it's a dangerous thing to come to this church. It's a dangerous thing to come to this church if you don't plan to obey what you hear. If you just come here just to listen to a good sermon, I can tell you in Jesus' name, dear brother, sister, find another church for your own safety.

Because the more you get, the more God will demand of you. God will ask you in the day of judgment, didn't you hear that that Sunday morning? Those other fellows didn't hear it. Yeah, I won't blame them, but not you.

You went there and you heard it. It'll be more tolerable for them than for you. Imagine Jesus saying he's going to be more tolerable for Sodom, who had all types of sexual sin.

Imagine God saying to Bible scholars in Capernaum, it'll be more tolerable for those people who lived in perverted sexual sin than for you fellows who study the Bible. I don't want to hear that. To whom more is given, more is required.

And then he said, Father, he prayed, Father, I praise you that this wonderful truth of repentance and many other truths like that, you've hidden them from the clever and the intelligent. Did you read that? Is it in your Bible? Is it in your Bible that Jesus said, I praise you, Father, that these wonderful truths, the context is repentance, of true repentance and many other truths like that, you have hidden it. Imagine praising the Father for hiding something.

One would have thought that Jesus is longing that everybody should see it and he should praise the Father. Oh, Father, I praise you. You revealed this to somebody.

Yes, he revealed it to Peter. Father, I praise you that you revealed this to Peter that I am the Christ. And Father, I also praise you that you've hidden the same thing from clever, intelligent people.

What does God have against clever, intelligent people? And you revealed them. Again, that word revelation. You've given revelation to babes.

Now, babes means one-month-old. What can a one-month-old understand which clever and intelligent people can't understand? Anything. First of all, what does a one-month-old have that clever and intelligent people don't have? First of all, a pure heart.

A newborn baby has got the purest heart in the whole world. He's got a pure heart. It's another thing that a baby has.

Jesus said that. He took a baby and said this baby is the greatest in God's kingdom because it's humble. Humble means that baby knows I'm dependent on my dad and mom for everything.

I don't know millions of things in the world. When I don't know anything, I go to mommy or daddy and say, what does that mean, dad? What does that mean, mom? That's a baby. But clever, intelligent people, they are ashamed to acknowledge their ignorance because of pride.

God is not against clever and intelligent people. He's against proud people. And it is the pride in our cleverness and intelligence that blinds us to the truth of God.

So in the context here, when you compare scripture with scripture, Jesus took a baby and said, he's got humility. Revealed, we can say, I thank you that you revealed them to humble people, to infants. You revealed them to humble people because that's what Jesus said, characterized a baby in Matthew 18.

So you can read it like this. I thank you, father, that you have hidden these things from clever, intelligent people and revealed them to humble people. So what do the clever and intelligent people have? Pride.

And that's true. Most clever, intelligent people that I have met are pretty proud of their cleverness and their intelligence. Most Bible scholars are pretty proud of their Bible knowledge and their knowledge of Greek and Hebrew and so many other things like that in there.

I mean, look at the degrees they put out for their name to show that I'm no ordinary guy, by the way. I got this degree from this seminary and this degree from the other seminary. And I even got an honorary doctorate from some third-rate useless seminary as well.

Jesus called me doctor. I thank you, father, that you have hidden these things from all these fellows who gloat in their human abilities and you reveal them to people like babes who've got nothing to boast about. God gives his grace to the humble.

So that's a very important qualification. You know, I've been telling you, God rewards those who diligently seek him, those who acknowledge that they know nothing of his ways, his ways are higher than heaven and the earth, those who honor the Holy Spirit, those who come like little babes in humility. Let me turn you to Psalm 25.

Even though the word mystery is not found in the Old Testament, secret, it's the same thing, is found. Secret. Psalm 25, it speaks about the secret of the Lord in verse 14.

Do you know that how to live a godly life is a secret? I've had numerous people ask me, write emails to me, brother Jack, how can I get victory over sin? How can I get victory over my addiction to internet pornography? How can I get victory over dirty thoughts? And how can I get victory over my bitterness and my anger? I'm a slave to anger. Brother, it's a mystery. The way to live a godly life is a mystery.

It's a secret. But Psalm 25, 14, the secret of the Lord is for those who fear him, learn to reverence God. Fear means not scared of God, not that way.

All false religions teach us to be scared of God Almighty. We don't have to be scared. Like someone said, there are two types of fear of God.

One is the fear that he might hurt me. That's not Christian. The other is the fear that I might hurt him.

A good child will always have a fear, oh, I may hurt my dad and mom if I do this. Wouldn't you love to have a child like that? Who's always scared that he may do something to hurt you or make you sad? That's the type of fear of God I must have. The fear that I might hurt him.

Reverence for him. Respect. Respect is disappearing from the face of the earth.

There's very little respect for man, very little respect for God and Jesus Christ on the earth, even among Christians. The secret of the Lord is with those who fear him. The fear of the Lord is to hate sin, to reverence God.

If you reverence him, hate sin, God will whisper secrets into your ears. If you've got a secret, you don't sort of blow a trumpet on it in every corner. You don't even shout it loudly in the house.

You whisper it into your wife's ear or your friend's ear. It's a secret. Don't tell anyone.

You know that the Lord has secrets. There are some things he says, tell everybody. There are some things he says, that's a secret.

Between you and me, like a husband and wife. Don't husbands and wives, good loving husbands and wives have secrets between them, between themselves, which they don't want everybody to know? Well, Jesus has some secrets too. The secret of the Lord is with those who reverence him.

There are amazing things written in scripture, but it's a revelation. It's so important to understand this. Let me show you another verse, Proverbs in chapter 25.

Proverbs 25. Why does God conceal these things in scripture? Why doesn't he just keep it out in the open? It's like asking, why do we find only grass and mud on the surface of the earth? Why can't we find gold and diamonds on the surface of the earth? Why do you have to dig 10,000 feet inside the ground to get gold and diamonds and worthless grass and mud is found in plenty on the surface? That's God's way.

The most valuable things are pretty deep in the earth too.

You got to dig to find them. It's the same with scripture. Proverbs 25 verse 2. It is the glory of God to conceal a matter.

There are things in the Bible that are not concealed. For example, how to have your sins forgiven. That's right on top of the surface.

Christ died for our sins. You can get it. Even baptism in the Holy Spirit is open.

You can receive the Holy Spirit. But there are other things. How to live a really godly life and become more and more like Christ every day.

That's a secret. How to have a godly home where a husband and wife will never raise their voice at each other or be angry with each other and have a loving relationship. That's a secret.

How to build a church which is not just doctrinally right, but where they love one another. Where the presence of Jesus is there every time the word of God is preached. How to have an anointing and a fire in our life that never decreases even after 20, 30, 40 years.

That's a secret. How to conceal these things. But it's the glory of kings.

We're the kings, you and me. We're kings and queens in Christ. It's the glory of kings to search out these things.

So what God has concealed, He expects you and me to search out. And you won't get it by reading it on the surface. You won't get it just by reading.

You know people say, I've got to spend my 15 minutes today to finish the Bible and get on with my other work. Brother, maybe you'll get forgiveness of sins at the most, or perhaps the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nothing beyond that.

You won't get revelation. You won't come to the deep truths of God. You'll be 50 years and you'll still be yelling at your wife just like you did when you were first converted.

You'll be lusting after women even when you're 80 years old. No, you won't get victory over these things. You will never be a part of a new covenant church.

You can go and sit in church meetings, but you won't know what it is to be a part of a body, a functioning body, because these are mysteries. So when Jesus said, I will build my church on this rock, remember the importance of revelation. And I hope you've understood something of the importance of that this day, my brothers and sisters.

I want to show you one more verse. I mean, if you've heard me, you know that I constantly quote scripture for one reason, so that your faith will not rest on my cleverness, but on the word of God. Look at this verse and see what you understand from it.

1 Corinthians chapter 1. 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 30, it says, by God's doing, I mean, the preface to that is verse 29, nobody should boast before God. That's the point. God is going to do his work in such a way that nobody will be able to boast before him and say, boy, I understood this, or I got this, or I did

that.

No, those are people who don't know God. And by God's doing, are we in Christ Jesus? It's God who has put us in Christ. We can't take any credit for that.

And what is now, this is the person I want, this is the part of the verse I want you to see. What has Christ become to me? Wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, redemption. Okay, let's leave the wisdom part out for the time being.

Righteousness. Righteousness means I come before God and saying, Lord, I have no righteousness that can make me acceptable before you. My righteousness is like filthy rags.

I think all of us acknowledge that. So who is my righteousness? Christ is my righteousness. Sanctification, that means becoming more and more and more and more like Jesus Christ.

Partaking of God's nature. Do you think you can produce God's nature by yourself? You can imitate Christ in external things. You can wash somebody's feet and things like that.

But to partake of God's nature, God has to do it. You have to say, Lord, I cannot, no matter if I try all my life, I cannot produce the divine nature. You got to do it.

Sanctification has to be from you. Christ is my sanctification. Redemption, that speaks of the final act when the Lord takes us up and redeems our body and soul and spirit.

We are completely like Christ. You think I'm going to jump up and be taken up in the rapture? No, the whole God is to lift me up. Whether it's the beginning of righteousness, justification, or progressive sanctification, or final redemption, it's all not by human ability.

We respond to God and God does it all so that no one can boast before God. Now we can come to the first statement, wisdom. On the same basis, I have to come before God and say, when it comes to spiritual things, my wisdom is as useless as my righteousness.

My clever mind is as useless as my righteousness when it comes to understanding God's wisdom. Very few Christians have said that. All born again Christians will honestly and readily acknowledge my righteousness is like filthy rags, but they will not acknowledge their wisdom also is like filthy rags.

Christ must become their wisdom, just like Christ must become their righteousness. One last verse before we close, Proverbs chapter 3 and verse 5 and 6. It's speaking about real faith. I often think Proverbs is one of those rare new covenant books, as it were, in the middle of the old covenant.

It's the closest to the new covenant in all the Old Testament books. The next is perhaps Isaiah chapter 40 to 66. And then Ezekiel chapter 40 onwards.

But Proverbs chapter 3 verse 5, trust in the Lord with all your heart. Again, not mind, heart, heart. Try to understand the difference between heart and mind.

And don't lean on your own mind or understanding. It doesn't say kill it. Don't depend on it.

Don't make it head in your home. Don't lean upon it. Use it.

Keep it as a servant. Don't depend on it and make it the Lord of your life. Trust with your heart and don't depend on your mind.

In all your ways, acknowledge him. And today we would say, acknowledge the Holy Spirit and his revelation. God will make your thoughts absolutely straight.

There won't be any crookedness. The crooked things will be made straight. The things that are confusing about the Bible and about God will become straight.

It's wonderful. I hope that what you have heard today and the Holy Spirit's been able to humble our pride. Because if so, he can give us grace.

He can give us revelation. He can lead us to a godly life, to a godly family and a godly church. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we humbly ask you to teach us that which we do not know. Bring down the pride of man. Help us to know that our ways are not your ways.

Help us to honor the Holy Spirit, to obey what you revealed to us in your word so that we can build a church, a new covenant church, the type of home that you want to have, the type of home that we want to live in all our days. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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