

The Importance of Knowing God's Ways

by Zac Poonen

Understanding God's ways is essential for spiritual growth and maturity, and it requires us to seek His ways, respect Him, and renew our minds to think like Him.

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Scripture: Psalm 139:23

Topics: "Gods Ways", "Spiritual Guidance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's ways as highlighted in Isaiah 55:8. It discusses the contrast between man's ways and God's ways, urging listeners to seek God's thoughts and ways. The speaker warns against being influenced by worldly teachings, traditions, and political views, stressing the need to have a humble and childlike spirit to grasp God's ways. The sermon encourages a deeper understanding of Scripture and the Holy Spirit's guidance to discern God's ways in all aspects of life.

Transcript

Understanding God's ways. And so we look at the verse that you have up there on the banner, Isaiah 55 and verse 8. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. Why do we need to understand God's ways? Because our ways, the ways we have learned from our parents, from our friends in school, from newspaper advertisements, from television, from movies, are not God's ways.

The ways we have learned from all earthly literature and even some Christian literature, which is not according to the word of God, and there's a lot of that today, are not God's ways. A lot that we have learned, even from our old Christian traditions, in the churches we grew up in, there's a hangover of that. There's an effect of that in our lives.

See, all of us grew up in a certain denomination. It may be different, but whatever denomination you grew up in had certain teachings on Christianity. And you may think that now that you've come to the Lord you've got rid of it all.

You haven't. I'll tell you, I've seen it in so many cases, even after many, many years, those traditions are still there. Those traditions are like chains that hinder us from our progress.

They've already hindered you for many years. You could have been miles ahead in God's kingdom by today, but you haven't given up those traditions. Some of those traditions are very sacred for you.

You think they are right, but there's no foundation for it in Scripture. So I want to ask you to come with an open mind, my brothers and sisters. God desires the best for you.

Remember when Jesus was on earth, the thing that hindered the Pharisees from coming to him, even though they knew the Scriptures from beginning till end, was their traditions. Their traditions hindered them. They could not accept this something new that Jesus brought.

So it's not just sin, it's traditions, ways that we have learned, which we think are right. And then we've got a heart that the Bible says is absolutely deceitful. We've got lusts in our flesh, Ephesians 4 says are totally deceitful.

So we've got inside us a heart and a flesh. You know a heart, if it's really cleansed, then you're free from that deceit. But the flesh is still there.

Even if your heart is cleansed, your flesh is still deceitful. In the Old Testament it said, Jeremiah 17, that your heart is deceitful above all things. Now if you have truly been born again, truly, and I wonder sometimes whether a lot of people sitting in our churches are truly born again, but that they've really put off that old man, that mind to sin.

If you're really born again like that and the Spirit of God has come in, then the promise has been fulfilled in Ezekiel 36, that I will give you a new heart. And that new heart is not deceitful, like it says in Jeremiah 17. Then my heart is not deceitful, but I still have a flesh.

It says in Ephesians 4, and I think it's verse 22, which says the flesh has got deceitful lusts. That means desires that give you the impression that they are good, but they're not good. You remember in the story of King Saul, in the Old Testament, throughout the Old Testament, there are many pictures, like Egypt is a picture of the world, and the Lamb is a picture of Christ, and the Red Sea is a picture of baptism.

Jordan is a picture of death to self. In the same way, Amalek, one of the enemies of Israel, throughout the Old Testament is a picture of the flesh. Always fought with Israel, as soon as they came out of Egypt, and the rock was split, and the water is flowed, which is a picture of the Holy Spirit.

It says the very next verse, I don't have time to show it to you, read it in Exodus, then came Amalek to fight, and that's the time when Moses stood with Aaron and Hur, and lifted up his hands, so that Joshua would fight and destroy Amalek, and the Lord has always wanted the Israelites to destroy Amalek, a picture of the flesh, with all its lusts, and when King Saul was ruler, the Lord told him, go and kill all the Amalekites, and everything, and we read among the Amalekite cattle, there were good sheep and bad sheep, and Saul killed the bad sheep, thinking, he said later to Samuel, that I could give the good sheep to God. What is the lesson there for us? We all think that certain aspects of what we have received from Adam are good. The bad things we want to destroy, like the bad sheep, but there are certain things that are good, I can offer them to God, and so I don't crucify them.

I have not understood God's ways. God will not accept the good sheep of Amalek as a sacrifice. Let me give you an example.

Maybe you have intelligence, and you say, I can give my intelligence to God, he can use it for his kingdom. Do you think that you're more valuable to God just because you're intelligent? I've seen a lot of intelligent people in our churches who have no revelation of the Holy Spirit, and I've seen others whose intelligence level is very low, who got tremendous revelation of the Holy Spirit. Maybe you got musical ability.

A lot of people, Christians, believers, who got musical ability and think, boy, I can use this for God. You cannot use it until it's crucified. The good sheep of Amalek, a lot of people are offering to God the good things in our flesh.

Do you even understand what I'm talking about? The flesh must be totally crucified. The flesh is deceitful. It doesn't tell you that adultery is good.

That lust is also in the flesh, but it can't deceive you with adultery. It can't tell you that idolatry is good. It can't tell you that murder is good, but the good things in the world, in order to get a job, we have to show ourselves as self-confident and smart, and we think you can offer that to God.

I've seen a lot of people who get up into the pulpit, preachers, song leaders, who use their human ability to, they think they can manifest leadership with those human abilities. They're mistaken. There are people who use their emotional power.

It's a soulish thing. In our flesh, there is this soulish element which looks nice, which we think we can offer to God, and that's why we miss the kingdom. You know what happened to King Saul when he, you read about it in 1 Samuel 15? He didn't kill all the good sheep, and when he came to Samuel and said, I've kept the Lord's commandment, Samuel said, if so, what is all this bleating of the sheep that I hear? And a discerning prophet today will tell you the same thing.

You think you've surrendered everything to God, but I hear some bleating of some good sheep in your life, uncrucified self in some areas, which indicates you have not understood the ways of God. Saul lost the kingdom because of that. It's a small thing, you think.

It's a very big thing, and many Christians have missed out on the kingdom because of that. So need to understand this, when God says, my ways are not your ways. And earlier on, you know, whenever you hear, see, read a sentence like Isaiah 55, it says, for, for means because.

You go back to what it says previously. Seek the Lord, verse 6, while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. See, that teaches me that in order to understand God's ways, I must have a tremendous respect for God.

I must wait for God, not make God wait for me. If I'm, if I haven't been given the opportunity to have a five-minute interview with the Prime Minister of India, I won't make him wait for me. If he tells me to meet him at 10 o'clock, I'll be there at least at 9:30.

I won't go at 10:30, make him wait for me. I will wait for him. How is it with you and God? Do you treat God with more respect than you would the Prime Minister of India? Would you wait for him? Or do you make him wait for you? That you do things at your convenience.

Seek the Lord while he may be found. He's not always going to be found. And if you keep expecting him to wait on you, a time will come you won't find him.

Call upon him when he is near. There are times when he's not near because he waited, and you were too busy doing something else. I've experienced that in my life.

There are times when I'm doing something, not, I'm doing, maybe even writing a Christian article, and the Lord says, stop. Leave that. Talk to me a little.

And I say, hang on Lord, just a minute, let me finish this. I'll be finished in five minutes. And I make him wait.

Imagine telling the Prime Minister, wait, I'm doing something important, just wait five minutes. I'm sorry to say, I'm ashamed to say, I've made God wait like that. And I said, I'll just finish this and then do what you say.

Five minutes later after I finished my article, I seek God in prayer, and I can't find him. And that has happened to me more than once, and I've learned a lesson. That when God says, I want to talk to you, drop everything.

Even if you're in the middle of your most busy work, if you get a phone call from the Prime Minister of India saying, I want to talk to you right now, would you drop everything? Dear brothers and sisters, I feel there's a big problem in our churches, and among our young people. We do not respect God enough. We have young people growing up in our churches who don't respect their parents, or older people enough.

And that is an indication that they don't respect God enough. In the Old Testament, Leviticus 19, the Lord taught the Israelites to respect God enough, and that is an indication that they don't respect God enough. In the Old Testament, Leviticus 19, the Lord taught the Israelites to respect God enough, and that is an indication that they don't respect God enough.

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Respect older people. You read that in Leviticus 19. That's how you show that you fear me.

Respect an older person. We are living in a day when that's gone. The first sin in the universe was when the head of the angels didn't respect God.

He said, No, I will go higher than him. That disrespect which started with that highest angel, which people call Lucifer, has come down, and if you're infected with that, my brother, sister, however much you may think you're a believer, speaking in tongues, spirit-filled and all that, you've got a little bit of Lucifer's devilish spirit in you. If you don't know how to respect God, and don't know how to respect older people, don't know how to respect godly people, respect those who have gone ahead of you for years, who were walking with God before you were born.

Respect is a very important thing. The Bible says if you can't love a human being, you can't love God. If you can't respect those who are your leaders, you cannot respect God.

Seek the Lord when he can be found. Don't think he's available anytime. In the past, many times, you've made God wait.

I know early in my Christian life, when I was born again, and God spoke to me about baptism, I studied the scriptures, and I knew I had to be baptized, and I made him wait for one and a half years, because I thought I would offend the people in my orthodox church, and be offended if I took baptism. But I finally, every time I knelt down, I felt God was saying, why should I listen to you when you don't listen to me? I finally got so fed up, I said, I don't care which church throws me out, I'm going to obey God in baptism. It was a small thing, but from that time I began to grow, and I decided, if God tells me something, I'm going to do it.

I'm not going to consult father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or anybody else. I'm going to do it. And I've sought to live like that for more than 48 years now, and it's gone really well.

Now I would urge you, call upon him when he is near, if you want to understand his ways. Don't make God wait upon you and say, well, I'll come and find out your ways whenever I feel like. No, put him first.

Put him first in every area. Follow those first four words of scripture, Genesis 1.1. In the beginning, God. Make that your motto in your life.

In the beginning, God. In the beginning of the day, God. In the beginning of everything, God.

In the beginning of your family life, God. That's how it must be. That's how we respect him.

And if you're not like that, the Bible calls you wicked. Did you ever think that you could be wicked? See the next verse. Let the wicked forsake his way.

Those are those who don't call upon him when he is near. They are big kings and maharajas who decide to make God wait for them. Let the wicked forsake his way.

And let the unrighteous man, his thoughts. We have ways and thoughts which are unrighteous and wicked. It doesn't look like that.

Because our human reason says, there's nothing wrong with this, there's nothing wrong with that. I have been in numerous question-answer sessions. Where I get questions saying, oh brother Zach, is it wrong to do this and is it wrong to do that? You know, they're not asking, what can I do to please God? Their question is, how close can I go to the edge of the cliff without falling into the world and becoming worldly? It's like these children who stand on railway platforms and have a competition.

How close can you stand to the edge of the platform when the train is coming by? Who has that type of competition? Not adults. Sensible adults stay away from the edge of the platform, stay away from the edge of the cliff. But these questions, can I do this? Is it wrong to do this? Is it wrong to watch this type of movie? And what about this, what about this television program? See, their question is not, what can I do to please God? How much can I do of the world without losing my salvation? I'll give you a word for such people.

Let the wicked forsake his way. And the unrighteous man, his thoughts. You've got a way of thinking which is unrighteous.

You've got a way which the Bible calls wicked. Because you've not understood God's ways. And I want to encourage you these days, as you come to the end of this year, if you have not taken your Christian life seriously, take it now.

Consider that even though some of those things which you think are okay, this whole attitude of how close can I get to the world without falling into it? How much can I pursue after money without becoming worldly? I have a word for you. Let the wicked forsake his way. And the unrighteous man, his thoughts.

I'm not saying you should not earn a good salary. By all means. I've always encouraged people in our church, in India anyway, you've got to study as much as you can to get a good job, so that you're free, so that you don't become unemployed and become dependent on gifts from other people in the church.

You don't want to be a parasite on the church. So I tell people, work hard, get a good degree and earn a good job. Certainly you need to do that in India.

And I say certainly take the best job you can get, with the highest salary provided. You don't sacrifice your soul for the pursuit of that. But don't make that your goal in life.

Let him return to the Lord. Middle of verse 7. And the Lord will have compassion on you for all those worldly ways in which you lived. He will pardon you.

Some of us don't think that we need pardon for having chosen those ways which our reason, Thor said was good. And then he says the reason why you need to come back is because verse 8, my thoughts are not your thoughts. My way of thinking, God says is not your way of thinking.

You know that wonderful verse in Romans 12.2 which says be renewed in your mind, be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove the perfect will of God. Why is it in many situations you have found it very difficult to find the perfect will of God? The answer is in Romans 12.2. You have not allowed your mind to be renewed to think like God thinks. To look at things from heaven's standpoint.

To look at things from God's viewpoint. To look at people from God's viewpoint. Many of our problems are solved when it's like that.

When you men look at a pretty woman and you are tempted to lust. Say to yourself, that's a soul for whom Jesus died. I'm serious.

That's a soul for whom Jesus died. That's not just a pretty woman. That's a soul for whom Jesus died.

And Lord I pray that she will be saved and be holy. It will be very difficult to lust after her, after you say that. And all these pornographic pictures that are on the internet, which I thank God in my life I've never been to a pornographic site on the internet till today.

And I don't plan to go either. I know it's very easy to avoid it if you want to. You know that that's suspicious.

You don't go there. That's all. Keep your mind pure.

Keep your mind sharp. The edge of it sharp. So that your life can be effective for God.

So that your words will be like God's words. Sharper than a two-edged sword. These pornographic pictures, whatever they are.

Who are these women standing there? They are women who are selling their bodies to the devil. Very often because of poverty. Sometimes they are forced by people who threaten to kill them if they don't expose their bodies there.

Are you going to support that type of stuff? Supposing it was your daughter who was kidnapped by somebody. And that happens. And forced to stand naked for some pornographic movie.

And it is your daughter. And you pay to see that? Would you encourage anybody to pay or even see it free? We pray for these poor souls. Many people who are in prostitution and pornography are forced into it.

They haven't gone into it voluntarily. They were kidnapped, forced into it, threatened with death and things like that. Or say, we'll kill your family if you don't do this.

And they are scared and they do it. We need to have compassion. And if we think like God thinks about these people, we'll be saved from even being tempted to go there.

When you think, Lord, what is behind all this? My ways are not your ways. And he goes on to say in verse 9, If you want to know the difference between my ways and your ways, the difference is not very slight. The difference is as great as heavens above the earth.

That's not millions of miles. It's not even billions or trillions of miles. It's immense.

It's infinite. The heavens are beyond these trillions of miles in space. And God says, your ways are not just slightly different from my ways, it's totally different as heavens are from the earth.

So you see what a great need there is to understand God's ways. And I want to tell you, you cannot become a spiritual person if you don't understand God's ways. If you make it the pursuit of your life to understand God's ways, it'll go well with you.

You'll become a spiritual person. There are a lot of good Christians who are not spiritual. They are soulishly good.

They've learned to behave in a nice way. Maybe they've even overcome anger. Buddha overcame anger 1,000 years before Christ.

Or whenever he lived. He once told somebody who came to him, he said, you can't make me angry anymore. Ten years ago you could, but I've overcome it.

You don't need the power of Jesus Christ to overcome anger. And it's an absolute shame when Christians cannot overcome anger when some Buddhist says he has overcome it with yoga. There are Hindus who overcome anger.

Who overcome even sexual desire with yoga. Is that more powerful than the Holy Spirit? Don't you think it's an absolute shame that Christians are defeated by anger and sexual lust when there are people in the world who have got no connection with the Holy Spirit who say they've overcome it. Some of them are liars, but some of them are true.

By mind control. Soul power is so strong that you can do many things. Dear brothers and sisters, that's not the way of God.

The way of God is way above that. As high as the heaven is above the earth. And think of how, what a disgrace it is when Christians do not live by those standards.

In any area, in the financial area, there's a lot of sin in this whole financial area. There's a book written in, it's not part of the Bible. It's like we read good Christian books.

There's a good book written by a Jewish man some years before Christ. His name was Joshua, the son of Sirach. And he says, as a nail sticks between two stones, so there is sin.

A lot of sin in buying and selling, in business. There's a lot of sin of unrighteousness, of salesmen who present products which they know don't work so perfectly, but pretending to, that it'll work perfectly. The desire for money is like a nail stuck between two stones.

It's there, it's stuck there. There's a lot of sin. And I've often thought about that.

Is there any sin in my financial dealings? When I look at, when I understand God's ways, there will be no unrighteousness in money matters in me. Do you know, for example, and you probably won't hear anybody preach it but me, that if you're in debt, I don't mean a mortgage where you've got a house or a car loan where you've got a car, but if you're in debt to somebody, do you know that God doesn't want you to give any money to Him? When you have to give money to man and money to God, who should come first? The whole Christian world will say God. But you read in Matthew 22, Jesus said, give to Caesar first what belongs to him, and then give to God what belongs to God.

God comes second because He doesn't want Caesar's money. He doesn't want you to borrow money from somebody and give to God. He doesn't want.

He says, that's not your money. That's that fellow's money. You borrowed it from him.

Go and return it to him. I don't want his money. If you give money to me, it must be your money.

First of all, why in the world are you in debt to this man? The borrower is slave to the lender. Why have you become a slave to a man when you should be a slave to Jesus Christ? It's because you wanted to satisfy a certain desire in you to buy something which you could not afford. Now I'm not talking about emergencies.

God understands emergencies. I'm just telling you there are so many areas where people think they even are spiritual Christians and they just follow the ways of the world. And that's why the mighty anointing of God is not upon their life.

That's why rivers of living water which should have been flowing out of every single one of us is not flowing out of us. Why do we find rivers of living water flowing out of just a few believers? When Jesus said, if anyone believes in me, John 7, 37-39, rivers of living water will flow out from him. Don't you say that you believe in Jesus Christ? You certainly do.

Then why are rivers of living water not flowing from you? I'll tell you why. Because you have not understood God's ways. You've been influenced by a third rate, watered down Christianity by traditions you've inherited.

Some of you have come from other churches and you've not given up your old traditions. And that's why your Christian life is stunted. It's like children who don't grow.

They remain that two and a half feet height even though they are 20 years old. It's not meant to be like that. The word of God is a liberating word.

As the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways above your ways. That's the first thing we need to recognize. Lord, I want to humbly recognize that your ways are higher than mine.

Keep that in mind throughout these days as we consider more and more of God's ways. How much is different? As different between heaven and earth. Now, even though Isaiah said that, if you read Isaiah, you find there are two sections in Isaiah.

Like the two sections of the Bible. You know the two sections of the Bible have got 39 books and 27 books. Isaiah's got 39 chapters and then 27 chapters.

The first 39 chapters are a lot of Old Testament stuff. The next 27 chapters, from chapter 40 to 66, a lot of it is like New Covenant promises. Things that would take place in the New Covenant.

It's one of the finest sections in the Old Testament. Like a few chapters in Ezekiel. New Covenant.

And this is something that could only be fulfilled in the New Covenant. Understanding God's ways, knowing His ways, knowing His thoughts. It's only when God reveals His thoughts to us that I can understand His ways.

Now let me turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 2. In 1 Corinthians chapter 2, we read verse 9. I has not seen, nor ye have heard, nor has entered into the heart of man, the wonderful things God has prepared for those who love Him. What is this amazing thing God has prepared for those who love Him? Is it a better house? A better car? A better job? No! God's ways are not my ways. Those are not the third-rate things which I'm going to give you.

I'm going to give you something wonderful. You know, what would you think of a father who gave his 25-year-old son a little toy car as a gift? The son would say, what am I going to do with this little toy car? I'm 25 years old. I'm not 2 years old.

And if you think that Almighty God is going to give you a better house and a better car, that's like a father giving a toy car to a 25-year-old son. It's an insult. There's something much more wonderful that God wants to give you, which your eye has not seen, your ear has not heard.

It has not entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared. And you know what it is? It says further down. We have received, verse 12, the Holy Spirit.

That's not a toy car. And when we receive the Holy Spirit, we begin to know something. We begin to know the things that God has given us freely.

And just like, verse 11, no one can know the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man. The thoughts of God, no one knows except the spirit of God. And that's why He gives us the Holy Spirit.

I'll tell you this, He doesn't give us the Holy Spirit, first of all, that we might speak in tongues, though I thank God for that wonderful gift. But much more than that, to know the thoughts of God. Praise God.

I, an ordinary human being, can know the thoughts of Almighty God. And it's freely. It's given to us freely.

These are the things which never entered into the heart of man. Eye cannot see it. Ear cannot hear.

The thoughts of God. I praise God that God has been able to work in my life and I'm sure in some of your lives to show us what God thinks about many things on earth. Take the matter of money.

Have you got God's thoughts about money? Or have you got the world's thoughts about money? It's a very important area. Have you got God's thoughts about pretty women? Or man's thoughts about pretty women? I tell you they're poles apart. Have you got God's thoughts about a girl who's got a meek and a quiet spirit? World's thoughts or God's thoughts? You know how the world looks at people.

Men and women. God looks at them in an entirely different way. The passion of my life for many years has been to know the thoughts of God so that I can understand the ways of God.

Because I know one thing and I learned it long ago. That the most useful life I can live on this earth is one where I live understanding God's ways. When building the church for example.

There's man's way of building the church and God's way of building the church. I decided years ago I want to do it God's way. You know with man's way you can get bigger results, better results.

Humanly speaking, impressive. Piles of wood, hay and straw. Huge structures.

In the day when God tests it all with fire, you'll discover it was done in man's way. But right now it looks very impressive. You can paint wood to look like gold.

You can paint straw to look like silver. You can paint ordinary stones in the world to make it look like precious stones. But it's not.

We have only one life. And if you don't understand God's thoughts and God's ways, I can tell you in Jesus name, you will waste your life. And probably many of you have wasted many years of your life already.

Because you've allowed your mind to be tremendously influenced by the ways and thoughts of the world. Some of you when you first came to Christ, you were radical. You were wholehearted.

You decided that you really want to live for God. But then as time went on, you started watching R-rated movies. Some of these Hindi movies and Malayalam movies and serials which excite you and stimulate you and you don't realize the whole purpose of media in the world is to make you think in a certain way.

Even newspapers. Even the editorials is to influence people to think in a certain way. And if you're honest, you will see that you've been influenced even concerning your political leanings.

You're influenced by information, lot of which is false that is fed to you from the internet and from newspapers. I know good Christians who've gone astray looking for sermons on the internet. Exciting sermons preached by clever people who are interested in your money and interested to get a following but who are not interested in your soul.

I personally know people in our churches who've gone astray because they just listen to any Tom, Dick and Harry on the internet preaching some Christian sermon who doesn't know the ways of God. And there's a little sentence the Lord gave me some time ago which said a person who doesn't study the Bible deserves to be deceived by today's preachers. Television preachers or internet preachers.

One who does not value the scriptures deserves to be deceived. Don't listen to a man who does not point you to God's word. Don't listen to a man who just begins a sermon with one verse and then closes the Bible and gives you his own thoughts for the next 45 minutes.

You won't understand God's ways. There's only one book in the whole world that reveals God's thoughts to us and God's ways and that's the Bible. And if you study it without the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, you'll still get it wrong.

Like the Pharisees. You will think that the son of God is Beelzebul. You'll think what is of the devil is of God and what is of God is of the devil.

See that's the mistake the Pharisees made. The son of God came, they thought it was the devil. And a lot of other things from the devil they thought it was from God.

And that's happened to a lot of Christians. Because they go according to the letter of the law. This thing, that thing, that thing.

They don't have the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. God has given us his spirit so that we can understand his thoughts. In the early days of Christianity nobody had a Bible.

In fact, for 1400 years there was no printed Bible. How did people know the thoughts of God for 1400 years? I'm not saying we should despise the Bible. But I do say that if you only have the Bible without the Holy Spirit you can go completely astray like the scribes and the Pharisees and like a lot of Christians today.

You need to be humble when you come to the scriptures and say Lord my human intelligence, the good sheep in my flesh won't help me to understand this book. See what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 11? Matthew chapter 11 Jesus said these words in verse 25 It's not just a statement. Jesus thanked God for something.

You want to be like Jesus? We all say yes. You want to be like Jesus? Thank God for what Jesus thanked God for. I thank God for this.

Many times I have thanked God for what Jesus thanked God for. Father I thank you, I praise you that you have hidden these things from the clever and intelligent people on this earth and revealed them to little babies. I have praised God with all my heart.

Many times I you know in discussing scripture and theological matters with people who disagree with me. Very clever people. I don't argue with them.

Because argument is my intelligence versus their intelligence. And that will only prove who is more intelligent. Who is cleverer.

It's like two lawyers arguing in the court. It doesn't prove who is right. It just proves who is the clever lawyer.

You know all the, so many criminals escape in the world today because they got a good lawyer. Not because what they have done is right. It's like that when Christians discuss theology.

It's an argument. It's saying who is more clever. And I don't want to show I'm cleverer than anybody.

I've discussed with so many people and when I find it is cleverness versus cleverness. I know I can show scripture after scripture after scripture and beat him down but I don't do it. Because I say the guy is not interested in revelation.

He's not interested in a godly life. He's just interested in proving that he's right. Let him think he's right.

Let him think I'm wrong. I say brother I don't want to discuss it. Sorry.

You know how Jesus would sometimes when the Pharisees came up with a question he'd say well I'm not going to answer that. I'll ask you another question. Answer that.

And they wouldn't answer it. He says I'm also not going to tell you what. And you say Lord you didn't want to explain to them.

No. Proverbs 27 says don't answer a fool according to his folly. So it's not by wisdom and intelligence that we understand scripture but when you come with the spirit of a little baby learn something from babies.

There are two people on earth from whom I've tried to meditate and learn. One is babies. I try to imagine what a baby is thinking of when it's lying in the cradle.

I see little children how they come to their father so simple, trusting, believing their father. I say even though they can't understand you know if a father explains that the sun doesn't go around the earth, the earth is rotating on its own axis, you think that five year old child can understand what rotating on its own axis is? It doesn't even know the meaning of axis. But it says I trust my daddy.

I know he's right. I can't understand it but he says right. What he says is right.

See that's the way to come to scripture. You remember that time in John chapter 6 where Jesus said you've got to eat my flesh and drink my blood if you want to have life in you. It says some of his disciples John 6 got offended and left.

Not the Pharisees. Some of his disciples who were following him up till then. And they said boy this is the limit.

I mean Moses told us never to drink even animal blood and this guy is telling us to drink human blood on top of that to eat human flesh. This is cannibalism. And they got offended and they left.

But Peter and a few others didn't go. They stuck with him. And I've often thought if some of those fellows who left later on met Peter in his house and say hey Peter how come you didn't leave this man? Can you explain to me Peter what does it mean to drink his flesh and eat his flesh and drink his blood? Peter didn't have the Holy Spirit then.

He said brother I'm not so clever. I can't explain it. But I said I know this man.

He's a godly man. And I trust him. Even though I can't understand.

Maybe one day I'll understand. But right now I trust him because of the godliness of his life. Do you trust a man because he's godly? Or do you trust a person because he's a clever preacher? Because he's an emotional preacher.

That's the way to go astray. Peter trusted Jesus not because he understood everything that Jesus said. But he saw the man's life and he says there was an integrity and a purity and a humility in his life which he had never seen in any other preacher in Israel.

And he said I trust him. I can't explain why he does certain things. I can't explain why he took a whip and chased out all the money changers.

I mean Peter would have said if I were there I would have done it more gently. I would say you gentlemen will you please move out from here. This is not the place.

I wouldn't have chased all the sheep and doves away. But he did it another way. I can't understand it but I believe his way is right.

How? Because I see the man as a godly man. It says in 1 Corinthians 2 that only a spiritual person can understand another spiritual person. If you're not spiritual you will not understand the way another spiritual person does some things.

But when the more we understand God's ways and I've discovered that through the years. Many things in the gospels I couldn't understand in the beginning. The way Jesus did certain things.

Have you ever wondered why he spat and put his spit on somebody's eyes? He could have healed without that. Isn't that pretty insulting? To put your spit on somebody's eyes. Well I don't want to explain to you but if you walk with God you'll understand the reason behind every single thing that Jesus ever did.

Everything. I thank you that you've hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent. If you want to understand God's ways you have to come with the spirit of a child trusting even when you can't understand.

If you believe your senses you'll go astray. You heard me say the story of those two boys, the 10 year old and the 5 year old standing outside and the 10 year old saying hey the sun has moved from east to west. And the little 5 year old says no it hasn't moved.

You remember what daddy told us? That it appears to move. It's the earth that's moving under our feet. And the 10 year old said I didn't feel the earth moving under my feet.

I believe what I see. I believe what I feel. Like many of us say.

The little 5 year old said I believe daddy. Who was right? Dear brothers and sisters, don't trust your senses. I believe that God has allowed the sun to move in the sky like that to tell us you can be fooled.

Your eyes can fool you. And for more than 5000 years, human beings were fooled thinking that the sun and the stars were going around the earth. Today we know it doesn't.

But if a person hasn't studied geography and science, he will really believe. And if you hadn't studied geography and science, you would believe that the sun goes around the earth. You wouldn't believe that the earth is rotating under your feet at 1000 kilometers per hour.

Is it? You don't feel it. You feel the earth right now underneath our feet is rotating at 1000 kilometers per hour. Don't trust what you feel.

It is. But you don't feel it. There are sounds that your ear cannot hear.

Which dogs can hear. They've got better hearing. There's a thing called a dog whistle.

You blow that whistle, you won't hear a sound, but the dog picks it up immediately. So don't think that you know everything. There are sounds you cannot hear.

There are things your eyes see which deceive you. And that's why it says about Jesus in Isaiah 11 that he would never judge by what his eyes saw. And he would never judge by what his ears heard.

You know from the time we were born all the information we've got in our mind has mostly come through our eyes and ears. What we have read, what we have seen, what we have heard. A little bit through touch and smell also and taste.

But most of the things by which we take our decisions are based on information that we've got in our mind. The ways of the world by what we have understood, what we've been taught in school and college by unconverted people. I mean what they teach you about science and all is okay, but the ways of the world are there.

I mean you can see that for example medical science is a wonderful gift of God to help heal the sick. How many doctors have you met in the world who use their medical profession not to make money but to heal the sick? I can't even count on ten fingers people I've met like that. There are millions of doctors in the world.

Medical science is 100% under the control of the devil. It is meant to be under the control of God. Even Christian doctors, what do they live for? Have you understood the ways of God? In every area, education, science, the world has come and influenced Christians.

Christians have their opinions on politics. It's very interesting to see the contrast between the way man looks at things and God looks at things. Turn to the book of Daniel.

I'll just show you this contrast, the way man looks and the way God looks. In the book of Daniel we read about God giving Nebuchadnezzar a vision which is a statue, a huge statue which represented four different kingdoms starting with himself, Babylon and then Medo-Persia and then Greece and then Rome and finally the kingdom in the last days, the feet. So it starts with you see in Daniel chapter 2 Daniel says that there was this statue which is made of gold.

The first part was gold and then the second part was, you turn to chapter 2 verse 32 the head in the statue was made of fine gold and breast and arms of silver and the belly and thighs of bronze and the legs of iron.

These are decreasing in value of gold, silver, bronze, iron and then you come to the feet the fifth part, iron and clay verse 33 and he said these are different kingdoms the first kingdom is you O king that's the first one, last part of verse 38, you are the head of gold and after you will arise another kingdom which is Medo-Persia inferior to you, that's silver and then a third kingdom, that's Greece, bronze and then a fourth kingdom, verse 40 that's Rome, like iron crushes and shatters all things and then finally, in the last days will be a mixture of iron and clay, iron is a picture of dictatorship clay is a picture of democracy there will be a mixture of dictatorship and democracy in the last days and which cannot join together so these are, this is the way man looks at it, gold,

silver it's all precious, bronze is precious, iron is precious but, when God gives Daniel a vision of the same four kingdoms see how he describes it this is how Nebuchadnezzar, a worldly man sees these kingdoms, but Daniel is given a vision of the same four, five kingdoms and see in Daniel chapter 7 he says in Daniel 7 I saw a dream this is after Nebuchadnezzar died and Belshazzar was the king now and in that dream, I saw verse 3, four great beasts a lion with the wings of an eagle that was Nebuchadnezzar and the second one verse 5, a bear, that was Medo-Persia and the third one, Greece, verse 6, was like a leopard which had the four wings of a bird and then the fourth beast, a dreadful, terrifying extremely strong, verse 7 that was Rome and then, as I was thinking about it some horns

came up a little one, that's a picture of the Antichrist in the last days, verse 8 so what I want to show you, I don't want to go into those details is that, man looked at the kingdoms of the earth as something valuable precious, gold, silver, but God looks at all of them as beasts beasts who got the values of animals that's why I don't get involved in politics that's why I don't support this party versus that party should I support the lion or the bear or this other hideous beast they're all corrupt which party have you found political party which is free from corruption which has got the spirit of Christ if you find one, vote for that, I haven't found one that's why I don't vote it's a choice between this beast and that beast, it's not a choice between gold and silver gold and silver

you can make a choice and when men look at these things ah, gold is better than silver so I'll choose gold I say no, for me that's the human way of looking at it from God's viewpoint, I see this as one type of beast, another type of beast they're all at the animal level corrupt seeking their own, what is the fundamental principle of animals they seek their own that means what can I gain from this, if I become a minister what can I gain, I'm just giving you an example how in the old testament also God shows you the way he looks at things is very different from the way man looks at things and that applies so much more in God's kingdom the way the Pharisees looked at the scriptures was very different from the way Jesus looked at the scriptures he interpreted it differently from the way they

interpreted it, that's why they couldn't recognize him, now these Pharisees their doctrines were all according to the letter all correct let me show you Matthew 23 do you know that with all the criticism that Jesus made of the Pharisees there were two things that he praised the Pharisees for, two things not he praised but two things he said the Pharisees were right they were not wrong in everything first of all verse two and three, Matthew 23 the scribes and Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses whatever they tell you to do, do do you think Jesus would say that about other groups whatever these people say do, tell you to do, do, whatever that religion tells you to say do, do would you say that, whatever that religion tells you to do, do imagine Jesus giving a certificate

to a certain group, he wouldn't say that about the Sadducees, because the Sadducees didn't believe in miracles, didn't believe in resurrection didn't believe in the spirits or in the heavenly things he wouldn't say whatever the Sadducees tell you to do, do but whatever the Pharisees tell you to do, do, because that doctrine is right, the only thing is they don't practice it, they say things but they don't do them that's the first thing which is good about them the second thing that he said good about them was in verse 25 you Pharisees you clean the outside of the cup is it a good thing to clean the outside of the cup is it good to have a clean external life, free from adultery, free from stealing, free from murder, definitely that's a good thing, he didn't say you're filthy on the outside

and inside he says you're filthy on the inside, but your outside life is good, so what are the two good things in the Pharisees their doctrines were all correct their external life was correct and if your doctrine is all

correct and your external life is good, you could still be a Pharisee of the Pharisees, that's what I want to say one who rejects Christ in your spirit, because you have not understood God's ways, it's possible to have our doctrines right and our external life right and have no clue about God's ways or God's thoughts that is why I say anybody who glories in the fact, oh my doctrines are all right, my external life is right, you may not even realize that in God's eyes you're just a Pharisee you have not understood God's ways and that's why there's so much of shallowness in

so much of ministry nowadays, of the word, I've listened to so many sermons I'll tell you 99% of the sermons I hear in my life are dead there's no life in them, there's no anointing, there's no Holy Spirit's power there, even among those who say they are filled with the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues and all that there's nothing wrong with their doctrine they haven't understood the ways of God, they haven't understood the thoughts of God so don't be satisfied with a good external life or with having the right doctrine let's pray that these days our mind will be open to understand God's ways let's bow our heads before God I hope you have a sense of need in your life at the end of what you have heard because that is the fallow ground into which God can put some good seed if God has been

able to succeed in plowing up your mind and getting rid of your pride in your understanding and succeeded in humbling your cleverness and intelligence and showing you that it's worth nothing when it concerns the things of God and given you the heart of a babe and brought you a sense of need, you are ready to understand the ways of God it will change your whole life it will change your life, your ministry, everything I pray God will give you a passion to understand His ways and His thoughts Heavenly Father we want to know you better because Lord Jesus you said this is eternal life that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent we want to know God, thank you in Jesus name Amen ok, before we go in for the announcements churches that God has planted in

different places and you will be able to see a little glimpse of what the Lord has done so that we can give thanks to God intelligently you know the early churches when Paul wrote he wrote about the saints in some other places were told to pray for one another

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