

# Prophecy/Mystery Combined #1 - Moses & Paul: Reasons for Confusion

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[ 0 : 00 ] Get my mask caught in my hearing aid. Here, despite the circumstances, and I must admit, you look a whole lot better without your masks.

So we'll just have to get used to that anyway. And I don't know how, as I've said before, don't know how long this irritation is going to continue with this virus thing, but it seems to have revealed weaknesses to humanity across the globe that we knew not of, many of which we thought we had whipped a long time ago.

But some of these things have come upon us, and this one in particular, with a real vengeance, and it has affected the entire globe. It's quite remarkable. In a way, it can very well have a positive aspect to it as well because it reveals to us that we're not as competent or as capable or as smart as we would like to think.

We are beset by something that is so tiny, you have to have a microscope to see it, and yet it has brought the world to its knees, as it were.

And included in those is our own president and his wife and our other members of Congress and members in the government, state and local and federal that are really laid aside and struggling with this.

[ 1 : 33 ] And we can only pray for them, but we want to remind you that each time we pray, we are confessing our weakness and our ignorance, and we are also reminding ourselves that God is neither weak nor ignorant, but he's fully apprised of everything.

So let us pray, shall we? Our Father, once again, it is a privilege to be able to gather together, as many of us as there are, to simply remind ourselves that it is you who are in charge and not we ourselves.

And we happily relinquish that responsibility and that role to you. We could only wish that the whole world did be a better world in which to live if men realize that they are not the captain of their fate and they are not the one who shapes their destiny.

As we appeal to you this morning, we do so on behalf of those who are suffering, not only from this disease, but from many other maladies that come upon these human bodies because of their fallenness.

And we can only praise you and thank you once again that despite the reality of what we have to deal with and the weakness of these frames, you've already made more than ample provision for that part of our being that cannot be touched with a virus.

[ 2 : 58 ] How grateful we are for the redemption that we have in Christ Jesus. And our hearts and minds go out today and we know they do across this great nation on behalf of our president.

We thank you that you have raised him up and placed him in this position of responsibility. And we can only pray that in accordance with your good pleasure, he may be able to resume his activities shortly without undue complications.

For those who are attending him, we pray that they may be given the wisdom that is necessary to treat the situation and perhaps out of his illness, perhaps out of his illness, some other kind of breakthrough may be realized that could in turn help many more people.

We leave this entire matter to you, to your discretion and to your wisdom. And we are so thankful that you are the God who rules and reigns on high. For ourselves this morning, we pray for the intake of the word of God and the living it out and understanding it and its implications.

Thank you again for the privilege of gathering here. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen. Glad that you've ventured out this morning and chosen to be with us.

[ 4 : 14 ] There are folks who are not with us today because we are wearing masks and there were folks who were not with us earlier because we weren't wearing masks.

And we try to maintain this social distance thing which does not allow for our customary hugs and handshakes and that gets old in a hurry.

Not being able to make better contact with people as we've been accustomed. But we're glad that you are here and I have once again, and the only thing I know to do is to just reiterate this time after time and that is, if for any reason you are not comfortable being here, then we urge you to remain at home because if you sit here and are uncomfortable, you won't hear anything that's said anyway. You'll just be focusing on how uncomfortable you are. So you may as well stay home by the refrigerator where you can be uncomfortable in a more commodious kind of way.

And each of us has to take responsibility for ourselves and for our own family. And we are assuming that grace people are doing that and that that's why those who are here are here and that those who are not here are not here.

[ 5 : 35 ] And to his own master, a man stands or falls. So I do not fault anybody for any decision that they make to be here or to not be here. And I just want to make that clear. And no, you are not unfaithful to God because you aren't here.

And you aren't demonstrating a lack of trust because you are not here. You are just utilizing something for which God holds you accountable and that is your common sense.

So that's what you need to exercise. And something that you might keep in mind that just be careful because people are going crazy from being in lockdown.

Actually, I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster while drinking coffee and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

This is somebody who's going stir crazy. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything.

[ 6 : 36 ] And certainly not to the fridge as he is acting cold and distant. In the end, the iron straightened me out as she said, everything will be fine.

No situation is too pressing. The vacuum was very unsympathetic, told me to just suck it up. But the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over.

The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked its opinion and didn't say anything about the doorknob that told me to get a grip. The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me to, yes, you guessed it, pull myself together.

So we need a little humor like that and a little bit of laughter keeps you from crying, doesn't it?

Okay. I have a handout for you today and it is from the pen of Dr. Albert Moeller, well-respected theologian, seminary president from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He's authored a number of books and he rates very high on the scale for evangelicals and ministry. And this appeared in the most recent edition of Decision Magazine, which I know many of you get, but it's called What's at Stake in America's 2020 Election.

[ 8 : 02 ] And my response to that right off the bat is just about everything that matters. That's what's at stake. It's a three-page article.

You'll find copies inserted in the literature rack as you exit the back door. But just for starters, what's at stake in America's 2020 election?

Number one, abortion and the sanctity of life. Two, the family. Three, human sexuality and gender. Four, religious liberty.

And five, the courts. And an article addressing each of those issues is in that. So avail yourself of it, if you would, please. There's some really good content there.

November 3 will be here before you know it. And just in the event, I realize this probably isn't the case, but just in the event that someone is not registered to vote November 3, please be advised, tomorrow is your last opportunity to register to vote.

[ 9 : 09 ] If you are not registered and you do not register by tomorrow, you will be unable to vote come November 3. And it is our Christian responsibility to assume our role and our position of influence, whatever it might be, for the government, whether it is local, state, or federal, that we are accountable, we are responsible.

No one is in a position to cast a more intelligent vote than a biblically oriented believer. So I just recommend that it is implored that everyone who is eligible to vote, vote November 3.

And if you aren't registered, please do so no later than tomorrow. Also, the thing that everybody looks forward to every spring and fall is the gathering together for the Amish dinner up just north of Belfountain, Ohio.

We've been going up there for a number of years. And it is a sumptuous meal, as the Amish put it on. And we've enjoyed it. I don't know how many times we've been there, but never been disappointed.

Just wonderful atmosphere, great food. And I say all that to tell you that our outing up there for the fall is canceled. Sorry to have to tell you that, but they are simply unable to accommodate people in the way they have to with the social distancing and everything.

[10:47] And it just isn't possible for them to do that. So we are tentatively scheduled for next spring. And as the time draws near, we'll keep you apprised of exactly when that is.

And you can think of it. And maybe this nightmare that we are dealing with will be behind us then. We can certainly hope so. I want you to notice also, if you would, in your bulletin, the article that describes this morning's message.

And I want to advise you that it has been altered as of three o'clock this morning. Moses and Paul reasons for confusion.

And this is the first in this series. And the fact that confusion was so profound that it continues today. Now, one would think that something that made as great a splash as it did in the first century despite the fact that it had brand new elements to it would have been sufficiently understood and appreciated after 2,000 years.

But no, that is not the case. And we will be explaining why to the best of our ability. The morning prophecy slash mystery comparison we began the first of the year has necessarily been altered due to the temporary halting of the nine o'clock session.

[12:18] We began by treating issues relating to prophecy at nine. Then we followed with a contrasting study of prophecy at 1015. But the arrival of the coronavirus changed that.

So with the 9 a.m. teaching temporarily halted, we now resort to combining the two, or at least attempting to, during the one hour at 1015.

So this also necessitates a change in the numbering. Today's session will be number one. And I want to begin with a few propositions, and then we will go right to the scriptures and see what is there for us today.

And I just want to make some statements that I would appreciate you keeping in mind. Let those things germinate even while we're speaking. And yes, you can do that. I know you can. And we will get into our subject.

First thing I want you to consider, and this is nothing new about this, I've been talking about this for a long time, and I want you to get it so fixed in your mind, not simply that you will remember it, but so you will not be able to forget it.

[13:24] And there's a difference. And the first premise right off is a fallen intellect with which we are all cursed as part of the fall.

As we have explained in the past, when Adam fell, you know, the old McGuffey reader, well, actually, believe it or not, the old McGuffey reader was even before my time.

That's saying something. But in it, they taught the kids the alphabet, and they would take them through Scripture. Yes, this was in public school. Take them through Scripture.

And they started with A, the alphabet. A, and A stands for, A is for Adam.

We all fell in Adam. Isn't that incredible? Starting the alphabet, you're teaching children that something is wrong with the human race right from the get-go.

[14:31] And they get that thought and that idea in their mind, and it only expands and grows. And well, it should, too. So, because of our fallenness, our bodies are subject to disease, debilitation, and ultimately death, as it is appointed unto man once to die, after this the judgment.

That's a new thing, according to creation, because Adam and Eve were not created to die, they were created to live. But this dynamic thing that happened, called the fall, changed everything. And when Adam and Eve fell, you need to understand, this is very important, you need to understand, everything about them fell, including their intellect, their ability to reason, and assess information, and reach conclusions, is damaged.

How else do you think we get so many different harebrained ideas that human beings come up with? They get them from that damaged intellect.

So, a fallen intellect produces a skewed logic. a warped assessment.

[ 15 : 55 ] assessment. Because once we get information from any source, it doesn't make any difference what it is, whether it's your next door neighbor or your mate or the radio or the TV.

When you get information, you automatically begin assessing that information. You start to process it. You're thinking about it. And your thinking will lead you to a conclusion.

That's not too difficult. And that warped assessment produces a wrong conclusion.

and a wrong conclusion produces a wrong action. You see, people's behavior, good or bad, is all tied to their thinking process and the way they reason and the way they think and the way they assess information, the conclusion they come up with, the values that they establish as a result of that, that's what drives their actions.

that's what causes them to produce what they produce. As a man thinks in his heart, so is he. And so does he. That's just the way it works.

[ 17 : 12 ] And it has worked that way ever since Genesis 3. And nobody is exempt from it. And that means not even the Einsteins are exempt from that and the Rembrandts and the, well, you can name a long list of people who have enormous IQs, great talents and ability.

They're all fallen. And you know what? Most of them are dead now because that too was part and parcel of their humanity. So it has nothing to do with human brilliance or intelligence.

In fact, some of the most intelligent people in the world are atheists. Yeah. And they reach their atheism through that fallen intellect.

Also, some of the most intelligent people in the world are committed believers to Jesus Christ because they're using different information that they assess that brings them to a different conclusion and so on.

We'll be talking about that later. I want you to turn, if you would, just for a moment to Proverbs chapter 14. Back in the Old Testament, there's just a principle established here and this is a good verse that I would really urge everybody to memorize.

[ 18 : 27 ] It's Proverbs chapter 14 and verse 12 and it expressly states precisely what we've been talking about. Verse 12 says, there is a way which seems right to a man but its end is the way of death.

seems right, seems logical, seems reasonable. Why not go that way? And a lot of people do because they are using their own intelligence as the sole criteria for the conclusion that they reach and most are quite comfortable with that and quite proud of that and matter of fact, this seems to me to be so important.

I think it is one of few Proverbs that is actually repeated and maybe it's because it is so important. Come over just another page if you would to chapter 16 and verse 25.

There is a way which seems right to a man but its end is the way that, well Solomon, you just said that. And by the way, do you think that this applies to Solomon?

He who was dubbed probably the most intelligent, brilliant man who ever lived? And he was. I mean, Solomon had smarts to sell and some left over.

[ 19 : 59 ] He was very intelligent but do you know he had his blind spots too because that's what a skewed intellect does. It produces blind spots that the owner can't see.

And Solomon's blind spot was beautiful women. How about that? Well, I guess if you have to go that's probably one of the better ways to go.

But Solomon with all of his brilliance and intelligence and skills and everything he could, he was a sucker for a pretty face. And he collected to himself a group of alluring women from other faiths and other countries and who knows how many wives he had and concubines and they led him astray.

Can you imagine that? The smartest man in the world being led astray by women or women. So guys, just keep in mind in many respects you're no, you're no match for, you're no match for her. there's that Samson and Delilah effect you know, where Samson was the strongest man and look at what happened to him. And I've, over the years I've pretty much come to the conviction that what is commonly referred to as the weaker sex may be the stronger sex because of the weakness of the stronger for the weaker or somehow that works, you know.

[ 21 : 35 ] It's amazing that the boy meets girl thing it just, everything gets topsy-turvy and you know it's just and part of it is this, is this reasoning, this logic.

My dear first wife Barbara, God bless her soul, she's the main reason that I came to faith in Christ but she was using her feminine skewed logic and it extended to me she was going to marry that

soldier boy from Ohio because she had prayed about it and God told her it was okay and besides she will see to it that he comes to Christ after they're married so it's okay for her to go ahead and you see this skewed logic thing you just being a Christian does not exempt you from rationalization and it ought to be a scary thing to keep in mind that Christians are capable of rationalizing almost anything.

once you depart from the authority of scripture and you come up with the yes but and I've talked to couples right here in my office over the last 50 years I know I know what the Bible says but I've prayed about this and God said it's alright and they are just so committed and so deceived by their own logic because fallenness will do that to us and I don't care how intelligent or how mature you are spiritually you are still subject to rationalization because you know why it's because we want what we want we want what we want and we can rationalize and find a way of making it okay that too is part of our fallenness so now let's come to the New Testament if we may and I'm looking at 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and we're talking about this subject of grace and we've already spent some time in previous sessions dealing with the works issue and how that is just natural to our fallenness to want to work our way into God's favor it is a very futile pursuit but that doesn't keep people from pursuing it there is no way through human effort that anyone can make themselves acceptable to

Jesus Christ through to God through Jesus Christ if it doesn't come through him then God isn't on the receiving end and he will not accept whatever it is you offer because he is a God who is absolutely holy and absolutely righteous and the only kind of righteousness that he will accept is a perfect righteousness and you don't have that to give and neither do I but Jesus does and Jesus will give it to anyone who asks for it confessing and admitting their own need for it and their own lack of it and belief and trust in him and he will bestow upon you a perfect righteousness that God will accept this is the message that became clear through the apostle Paul 2,000 years ago it was gladly received by a minority it was poorly received by a majority and nothing has changed the gospel of the grace of God is today gladly received by a minority but it is poorly received by the majority and that too is linked to this warped assessment that we've been talking about 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse let's begin

I'm just going to jump in here verse 17 Christ did not send me to baptize now that's a study in itself but we're not going to go there but to preach the gospel to preach the good news not in cleverness of speech now that means that Paul is not counting on his speaking ability or his way with words we will see very shortly the apostle Paul was not a spellbinding speaker now if you want somebody who can really deliver a message with all of the enthusiasm and the punch and the ups and the downs and the drama and all the rest then you don't want Paul the apostle that's not what he was about Paul was all about content nothing mattered to him but content and you know something he wasn't all that great at delivering it by his own admission now if you want a spellbinder you want [ 26 : 51 ] Apollos Apollos was the guy that could hold the audience right in the palm of his hand and people could come away after listening to him speak for 90 minutes and say it seemed like he spoke for 10 minutes I could listen to that guy all day long that's not Paul oh no that's not Paul and people let him know they didn't appreciate his speaking but he was all about content in fact this word in verse 17 says Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel not in cleverness of speech that the cross of Christ should not be made void what that means boiled down simply is this I want to present the gospel in such a way that people get the message of the gospel they don't get the message about how I delivered it the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing you've heard that said and that was the gospel and I suspect that might be a principal reason why God never gave Paul the apostle the ability of a great orator deliver flowery expressions and spellbinding stories and all the rest he was all about down to earth plain old meat and potatoes content that you couldn't miss the message never mind the messenger the messenger doesn't count would be wonderful if we had a way of convincing all of the messengers of that to lose yourself in the message and for the people in the audience listening to focus on not how it was said or how cleverly it was put but what is the essence of the message the message is everything that's the good news good news isn't in the messenger that's beautiful because what that means is just anybody who has the information can deliver the message and people say things like well I'm not gifted I'm not a good speaker I can't this I can't Paul is the perfect example that proves that's not what God was after God was after someone who would be faithful in delivering the content boy I love that that means that's great not in cleverness of speech so that the cross of Christ should not

be made boy in other words the flowery expression the elocution the choice of words the drama and everything can be so dramatic and so powerful what what was the message what was he saying I don't know but he sure said it nice nonsense that's worthless that's worthless the gospel has to be paramount so that because if it isn't if it isn't the cross of Christ should be made of void made of none effect doesn't get through doesn't penetrate because the messenger is all wrapped up the message is all wrapped up in the messenger and people are focusing on wasn't it divine wasn't it wonderful the way he said that the expressions of blah blah blah blah and everybody's talking about the man what about the message man doesn't save anybody it's the message if I could use the word it's the magic the message that has the magic and I use that word magic advisedly because we know doesn't comport with the typical expression of magic but it is miraculous what is in that gospel the power to revolutionize a life and change an eternal destiny just absolutely incredible well we must move on look at the word of the cross verse 17 verse 18 the word of the cross the message of the cross is to those who are perishing and in the Greek it gives the expression the meaning those who are as we speak in the very process of perishing they are on their way and they don't even know it that's a remarkable thing it is to those who are in the process of perishing foolishness and as we pointed out to you in times past the word in the Greek for foolishness is moronic it's moronic you've got to be a moron to believe that gospel stuff that's the world's estimation they regard it as moronic but conjunction of contrast but to us who are being saved that is we are in the process of being saved and we shall be saved in the same way that we have been sanctified we are being sanctified and we shall be sanctified all of these are true and we are in the process of being saved and we shall be saved because it is an ongoing process but it has a completion and a finality it is the power of God and this is why Paul could say I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ why how in the world could anybody be ashamed of the gospel when it is the very power of God same power that created the heavens and the earth is resident in this gospel for it is written I will destroy the wisdom of the wise of the cleverness of the clever I will set aside where is the wise man in other words he's saying there actually isn't any where is the scribe where is the debater of this age has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world I love this verse 21 for since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God and why not why not why is it that the world in its wisdom did not and could not come to know God and the answer is fallen intellect fallen intellect fallen thinking processes skewed logic they can't you cannot you cannot reason your way to [ 33 : 41 ] God fallen man cannot reason his way to God this is why God has to be self revealing this is a marvelous thing about the gospel you don't have to figure God out you don't have to figure out the plan of salvation you don't have to figure out how to become acceptable to God it's already made available to you and it's all by revelation and that's what brings us back to this marvelous book and the fact that we see creation the things that are clearly made Paul said in Romans 1 they are clearly seen so that man is without excuse the heavens declare the glory of God the firmament shows his handiwork day into day it utters knowledge and all of this we can look about us we can see the mountains and the trees and the lakes and the rivers where did this come from who created all of this I know one thing I can't make a lake

I can't make a tree I can't make a mountain somebody bigger than I did well that's that's one reason that we have all of these so we can through revelation begin processing the information that comes with revelation and ask the questions why is there anything rather than nothing what is life all about where are we going is there life after this life and questions like that they can be known only by revelation not by meditation not by scientific discovery only by revelation and God has been pleased to reveal through creation that's referred to as general revelation and he is a self revealing God through the word that he has given us in which he expresses his will and his intent and all the rest and he has given us a living revelation in the person of his son who is the word of God the essence of communication to us so the issue then becomes how do you process that information about the word about the

Lord Jesus just marvelous marvelous stuff for he says in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God God was well pleased through the foolishness and that's word that Paul uses because he's playing on words here and he's saying this foolishness is the way man regards the gospel and what man calls foolishness God calls profound wisdom and this is just one more example where man's thinking and God's thinking is always at loggerheads my thoughts are not your thoughts saith the Lord neither are my ways your ways as the heavens are higher than the

earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts beautiful God was well pleased oh this is precious

God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe it's amazing how many people think that this old gospel of Christ dying for our sins is intellectually beneath them they are capable of much higher thoughts than that and some liberals have called slaughterhouse religion who can abide that God says it is through the foolishness of the message preached to save those that believe and then he goes into the Greeks and the Jews and the different opinions and ideas they have and his conclusion he says the foolishness of God well of course there's nothing foolishness about God but there there are a lot of things that are foolish about God from man's perspective because man is looking at God with his skewed intellect and he would charge God foolishly about a whole bunch of things but what would be considered the foolishness of God is wiser than men the weakness of God is stronger than men that's beautiful and while we're right next door look if you would at chapter 2 of 1st Corinthians chapter 2 and let's just kind of jump in at verse 9 well yeah we must do that but verse 9 just as it is written things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and has not entered into the heart of man all that God has prepared for those who love it let me just inject one thing here if I may about this verse this doesn't have anything to do with heaven don't plug heaven in here while it is certainly true that there are all kinds of things I think awaiting us in heaven that we've never seen or never dreamed of or never imagined and I've often said

I don't know a whole lot about heaven but I'm sure of two things and one is there will be no disappointments and there will be no goodbyes apart from that I'm not too sure what it's going to be but I know that heaven is going to be as grand and as wonderful as God can make it and that's pretty good that's pretty good but this verse isn't talking about heaven at all look at the context the things which have entered into the heart of man all that God has prepared for those who love them for to us God revealed them he's a self-revealing God and he's led us in on the things that he has prepared for those who love him and the spirit searches all things even the deep things of God for who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the spirit of God now we and when he says we he is talking about himself and his colleagues in ministry and the

[ 40 : 16 ] Corinthians to whom he's writing this is a Christian constituency here he's talking about not the world in general this is believers we have received not the spirit of the world but the spirit who is from God so that we might know the things freely given to us by God what did they cost you didn't cost you a plug nickel what did they cost God to provide them everything everything you realize the only thing that meant anything to God was his son with whom he had perfect fellowship with the spirit before there was anything before there was a universe before there was anything nothing created no angels no humans no anything there was this being this incredible eternal infinite being subsisting in three persons of father son and holy spirit and these three enjoyed a union of intimacy and fellowship the likes of which we cannot even begin to imagine and when that triad that eternal infinite triad was somehow in a way that we cannot begin to understand was injured was separated you see

God is all about relationships he's not about stuff he's only about relationships and there was that perfect relationship in father son and spirit and he allowed that to somehow be I don't even have a term for it undergo some kind of rupture alteration that caused one of those to cry out my God my God why have you forsaken me in his humanity we can't go there we just can't get into that our knowledge of that is so superficial but it is so everything to God because we place so much value on things and stuff and God could create all of the stuff and all of the worlds and all of the universe he wanted to but this was one thing he could not do the father could not create a son because the son is eternal with the father and with the spirit and we don't get that either but the scriptures assert it and we believe it as

Christians and we don't know what all is involved in that but we know that the only thing that meant anything in that relationship he was willing to relinquish and saddle with humanity and let it come down to this earth and walk among men and die an ignominious death on a cruel cross for the likes of those who didn't deserve anything that is amazing that is amazing God gave God gave the only thing that meant anything to him for us remarkable just more than remarkable and then he goes on to say in verse 14 a natural man who is a natural man that's a man just as he comes out of the womb the natural man this is a man who has not undergone spiritual regeneration this is man just

the way he was born in this fallen state this fallen condition the natural man does not accept the things of the spirit of

God they're foolishness to him they're on a different plane than what he is they are on a plane of absolute perfection and absolute reality but man lives on a plane of imperfection and a lot of phoniness so that when he assesses the claims that the Christian has regarding the gospel and the grace of God and all the rest away with that bunk foolishness moronic who could believe that stuff anyway it's just religion and they are foolishness to them and he cannot he can't that means he can't even if he wants to he can study and he can make some kind of an effort and they do this all the time in liberal seminaries and places where they delve into the Bible and spiritual things but their fallenness causes them to reach wrong conclusions to produce wrong actions and it largely has to do with denial and rejection and

Moses didn't write this and Matthew didn't write that and all the rest of it that's their skewed logic and that's the conclusions that they come to their foolishness to him they cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised and that means that means when you receive Jesus Christ as your personal savior that immaterial part of your being which is your human spirit that is the part of you that is made new that's the part of you that is regenerated that's the part of you that enables you to perceive things on God's wavelength because now you are on the same wavelength that he is and you are eligible to receive that information that before would just right over your head didn't make any sense at all just didn't get it didn't compute and now some of those things that seem so weird you Christians believe what some of the stuff seems so weird becomes so precious and so powerful and so life-changing but it is only for the initiated unbelievers cannot drink from this well it's foreign to them it's like it's like trying to pick up an FM radio station with an

[ 47 : 31 ] AM radio you're not going to get it it's on a different band a different wavelength than you are and you can fiddle with the knobs all day long and you can take that radio apart and put it back together again but that's not going to enable you to get the message you just can't do it and the difference between an unbeliever and God is far greater than that that's minor what we're talking about here this is just this is just amazing absolutely amazing natural man does not receive the things of the spirit of God they're foolishness to him he cannot understand them because he doesn't have the equipment to interpret it or to understand it they are spiritually appraised but he who is spiritual that's the believer appraises all things that means he is able to assess everything accurately because he has a different norm he has a different north star by which to evaluate everything and it says yet he himself is appraised by no man and boy a lot of people have found that to be true especially in the workplace when word gets around that somebody came to faith in

Christ and they sidle up to him and they say hey tell me it isn't true what's that somebody there's a nasty rumor going around somebody says you went to that Billy Graham meeting and got religion and that's about the only way they know to put it they don't they just they don't understand the dynamic of the gospel or the person of Christ and they don't understand Christians don't expect them to understand and appreciate where you're coming from they don't have the ability it's just foreign to them don't fault them for it pray for them and as I've often said they are not your enemy they are captives of the enemy just like you were before you came to faith in Christ and don't expect them to understand where you're coming from or how you feel or what your convictions are what your priorities are what your standards are don't expect them to understand them they can't they don't have the ability to do it and you didn't either before you came to faith in

Christ so he himself is appraised of no man I want to get to this passage in time is already gone but let me just well chapter four while we're at least in the neighborhood all right come to chapter four of of second Corinthians we're close by chapter four of second Corinthians and it just reinforces a little bit what we've been talking about and this adds to the fallenness of the intellect when Paul says in verse three even if our gospel is veiled that means you have a veil over it so it's obscured it is veiled to those who are perishing actually it isn't the gospel that is veiled the gospel is free and open but it has the appearance of being veiled because they can't penetrate it their intellect will not allow them to do so and he goes on to explain that and he says in whose case that is those who are perishing and this is the same crowd he was talking to talking about in first

Corinthians chapter one the gospel is to those who are in the process of perishing in whose case the God of this world and that is none other than Satan and by the way I heartily heartily recommend everyone commit this verse to memory it's such a key verse be a wonderful verse to memorize the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving now wait a minute these

people already have a fallen intellect now you're telling me that they have a supernaturally blinded mind on top of it yep and what does that mean that means that an unbeliever has two strikes against him one is his own intellect works against him with processing information and reaching wrong conclusions and the other is the adversary Satan how he does this I don't know but his ways are ingenious he blinds the minds now notice he doesn't say he blinds the eyes he blinds the minds he somehow contributes to obscure wrong thinking and I don't know how that works I don't know how he does that I've just got a theory and I think he does it through his minions but and I'll just throw this out but I'm not going to spend any I think he blinds the minds through the human eye and ear through what we see and what we hear because what we see is think of this Paul said I would not have known coveting except the law said thou shalt not covet don't don't you think it'd be kind of difficult for somebody to covet anything if they couldn't see if they didn't have any real idea of what they were missing it'd be hard to covet something when you wouldn't even know what you were coveting but I I wish I could tell you how this works because I don't know but I just believe that it does that through the things that we see and hear including fake news fake news fake information about an erroneous information about anything causes us to reach wrong conclusions and wrong conclusions produce wrong actions so all of this is tied in together that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of

[ 54 : 11 ] Christ who is the image of God think of that wow that is really something so when the Christian goes out armed with the gospel he's talking to somebody who has two strikes against him and you have any idea what kind of power it takes for the gospel to overcome that and sometimes it takes repeated hearings who was it wasn't a Bill Fay that calculated he was Bill Fay was a former unbeliever former ringmaster and and leader of a whole series of prostitution houses all across the United States I mean he had the industry sewed up and when he came to faith in Christ it was just night and day and many of you along with me heard him speak a few years ago right down the road here Donald's Creek Church of the Brethren they had him in and we heard Bill

Fay speak and he talked about it's been estimated that someone has to hear the gospel something like 7.2 times before it ever actually begins to register with and I don't know how they arrived at those statistics but people today have the ability to do all kinds of phenomenal things with statistics and equations and all the rest of it and we all know we all know and understand through through the world of merchandising how valuable repetition is to those entities that are trying to sell a product how valuable repetition is to somebody who's running for office what do they say one of the most valuable things is name recognition got to get your name out there so they put it on yard signs and they put it in the newspaper and they put it on bumper stickers and everything because that's that's the way you get information and then you process it and you act on that and it becomes familiar and that's just the way this thing works so there has to be repeated hearings

I don't think anybody is going to put a commercial on television and runs one time well you might do that for the Super Bowl because you're going to pay two million dollars for it but you know what I'm saying repetition is the key is there anybody here that doesn't know about my pillow I get so tired of that commercial I could almost gag when it comes on and there are some others too like a whole host of pharmaceutical products and half of them you can't even pronounce and they too and then right after this wonderful new drug has been discovered and ask your doctor if it's right for you then it comes on a commercial right after it with a lawyer so and so and so and so and if you've been injured by this drug call me you may be entitled to it's all about repetition you know what the gospel the gospel deserves all of the exposure that we can give it but our big problem is this and it's a big problem we want to be able to present the gospel so people will respond by saying really oh boy that's just what I've been looking for that's wonderful of course

I want to receive Christ as my savior you can't do that gospel doesn't work that way the most logical humanly logical fallen humanly logical response to the gospel upon first hearing is really is that so well if that's what you found I'm happy for you that you found something that means something to you but it's not for me that's very frequently the first response thanks but no thanks it's not for me and it's only through repeated hearings and sometimes sometimes God in his grace issues a wake up call like I'm sorry to tell you this but it is malignant and it's in the fourth stage and maybe three months maybe six months

I'm sorry but there's nothing else we can do and that can be a wake-up call that can cause a person to think on a different wavelength and give some serious thought to that question is there life after this life and where and what and how and all the rest of it and God in his grace sometimes allows us

to have those but not always not always we didn't get to Paul's deficiencies and that is coming up a little bit later in 2nd Corinthians 10 where he admits it's kind of interesting because Paul admits what his critics say about him is true and he doesn't deny it and they say Paul well his speech is contemptible and actually he's even a mess to look at we don't know what

[60:01] Paul's thorn in the flesh was but it may very well have been running eyes that exuded exuded pus and made him very unattractive and unappealing and he didn't really have a way with words and that's so difficult for me to conceive of because I remember all the way through I went to Cedarville College and I was married and I was one of the guys that crammed four years into five and I spent five years there and if there was anything that I knew for sure it was this the Apostle Paul undoubtedly had to be the greatest orator that ever lived wrong wrong Paul was not a good speaker at all poor old Eutychus young man sitting on the window ledge and Paul was speaking late at night and fell asleep you imagine

Paul the Apostle putting somebody to sleep no matter how tired you are you wouldn't go to sleep on Paul would you well maybe he just droned on and on I don't know I don't know but they said his speech was contemptible he didn't have a way with words but he had the message he had the message and you know a lot of people rejected the message because they didn't like the way it was packaged I'll close with this illustration I remember Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse making this years ago when he had his program on WEC Dr. Barnhouse in the Bible one of my favorite speakers never heard anybody never heard anybody express the English language like Donald Gray Barnhouse he was pastor of 10th Prez in Philadelphia very historic church went back 17 and they had in their congregation a young man who was severely charged challenged mentally we would call him mentally retarded challenged whatever and I'm very familiar with that term and the reality of it as you know and a very prominent person had heard about

Donald Gray Barnhouse and his speaking and even though he didn't have any interest in spiritual things he was intrigued by what he heard about the man so he thought it would just be something different I'll just go give it a hearing I probably won't believe anything he says but anyway he was sitting there in the pew and the message had been dismissed and the man was getting his coat and preparing to leave and this mentally retarded boy about 16 17 years old walked over to him put out his hand shake my hand mister shake my hand you know and the guy was kind of irritated but he shook his hands and the boy looked at him and said do you know my Jesus the man was embarrassed he didn't know what to say and he just just kind of looked away and pretended that he didn't hear him and he said well do you want my Jesus and finally as the people were leaving and milling around he said no no

I don't want your Jesus thank you and he says well you're going to hell then he turned around and walked off and left the man there what kind of people do they have here in this church anyway you know and yet God used that of all things and it got to him and the next morning he was compelled to call the church office and ask to speak to Dr.

Barnhouse and he went in Donald Gray Barnhouse led him to Christ wasn't the messenger it was the message well you're you're going to hell then just said it just matter of fact and that guy couldn't couldn't get that thought out of his mind and couldn't think of a reason why he wasn't going to hell and see God uses the message and Paul says it's powerful and it's adequate I am not ashamed I'm not embarrassed by the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God whether you believe it or not it's the power of God through faith unto salvation wow I've done it again I've taken your time I'm sorry Marie it's your fault you should have given me this

[65:10] I didn't tell you to did I huh yeah yeah you know it she has been she has been mumbling for months until I got these hearing aids and she stopped mumbling it's wonderful the way they work I didn't think they would affect you that way that's great that they did well we'll just stand we'll be dismissed and I promise you I'll tell you what we'll return to the text next week and I'll promise you a Q&A; maybe we'll even open with it all right father father father father we are once again just so enamored with the gospel of the grace of god even though we've been in this gospel and this gospel has been in us lo these many years we still find it so difficult to see how it can be spurned by anyone and then we are reminded that that fallen intellect is in action and the gospel may appear foolish nonsensical illogical undesirable and all the rest that the unregenerate labeled it but we who have drunk from that well of salvation know that there's nothing like it in the world thank you for the glorious liberty and freedom into which we come through that gospel of the grace of god and our prayer this morning is for anyone who may be here or listening via the medium of the internet that

they may see themselves as you see them as undone without hope without god in this present world and then see that glorious gospel as your panacea for the human race and may they out of their sense of need embrace the lord

Jesus Christ as that one who died to take their sin upon him it's just too wonderful for words and we who have appropriated that gospel are the only ones who can really understand and know how wonderful it is but we would wish that for everybody to that end we commit this message and like messages that will be delivered this morning all throughout this country to hungry hearts may they see the truth of Christ believe and live in his name we pray amen you are dismissed Amin