

Proverbs

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [0 : 00] I will again depend on the Lord for help. Direct your thoughts to the 8th chapter of the book of Proverbs.
- And words found in the first verse. The 8th chapter of Proverbs, verse 1. Doth not wisdom cry?
- And understanding put forth her voice. This word is in the character of a question.
- And it is put in a negative way and manner. Doth not wisdom cry?
- And as we suggested this afternoon, it seems that it is the purpose of the Lord, the Spirit, the writer of this sacred word, to lay all the more emphasis upon the glorious truth that is here unfolded.
- [1 : 29] In the previous chapter we have that illustration of the degrading human character.
- And what a vast contrast we have here in this 8th of Proverbs. And what a glorious person we may trace in this sacred part of God's holy word.
- The title of wisdom is pregnant with all the striking realities that are attributable to none other than the Son of God.
- We therefore have and are in the present, as it were, in the very sacred presence in this chapter, of him who, as John says to us, whose eyes were as a flame of fire, whose countenance was as the sun shining in his strength, and who himself declared, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
- And the chapter begins with this striking, simple, yet fundamental question, which really is a declaration by God, concerning the cry of wisdom.
- [3 : 29] or to put it in New Testament language, the glorious message of the gospel, through Jesus Christ, by his gracious condescension, sacrifice, resurrection, ascension into glory, and intercession at the right hand of God.
- That is the center, force, and fount of this glorious message. Doth not wisdom cry?
- Seems also, almost as if it would, and indeed it does, isolate this from all things else. It stands apart.
- It stands on its own, supreme in every respect. Far above all things, of time, and even of eternity.
- the voice of eternal wisdom, doth not wisdom cry?
- [5 : 01] And then as we observe this afternoon, we felt, and that is only about the personal interpretation of it, one might, and feels to come very far short in these things, that looking into the chapter closely, but looking into the chapter closely, one felt it had warrant to interpret in this way, understanding, putting forth her voice, is the blessed bride of Christ, brought by divine and sovereign grace to use the language of precious faith.
- such sweet and wonderful language is ever heard, either in earth or in heaven.
- and again, the question is this, doth understanding put forth her voice?

We live in some very solemn days. We hear, but very little, perhaps, you may feel today, of gracious, spiritual utterance that spring from a true knowledge and understanding of the things of the Lord.

Well, the dear prophet of the Lord, Elijah, he was in the same place in his day. He thought he was the only one. He never thought there would be a single character who could talk to him about the things of God.

[7 : 00] He thought that he was who would ever find a strange language wherever he went. The Lord showed him that he was not the only one that had been touched by the mighty power of the Lord, that there were 7,000, a great number in those days, whose hearts had understanding in them, understanding so that they did not bow the knee to an idolatrous veil or worship with the great majority of worshippers in his, their day.

They had understanding that gave them enlightenment to know that there was one God, one God, and one God alone who was worthy of worship, of adoration, and of praise.

I have reserved, he says to me, 7,000 in Israel. You and I may feel that we are alone to a large extent in the knowledge of the Lord, but who can tell here and there we may well hear a voice, we may well feel something that strikes a chord within our hearts.

We may well see some sign that surely the Lord is in this place, doth not understanding put forth her voice.

So then, tonight, we will continue our meditation on those two lines because they're very significant. They're significant as a declaration of truth because, my friends, there's nothing else left in this world, you know, but the gospel.

[9 : 08] There's nothing at all, no remedy, nothing for man's need, nothing for man's ills, nothing for the nation's woes to put everything right in God's own way and in his, according to his own purpose and will, there's nothing but that one instrument that he has appointed and ordained and to which he calls poor instruments to proclaim to the end of the earth and that is the gospel, wisdom, eternal voice.

And the very character of that gospel is wisdom, the very character of it is. Men call it foolishness.

There's nothing, perhaps, in the world that is despised more by men than the gospel and yet it is the wisdom of God.

there's nothing that men will trample underfoot more easily than the gospel and yet it will be the gospel that they will finally have to face and which will be the charter of their final judgment.

the word that I have spoken unto you will judge you in the last day. These are solemn things and also it is the vital spark and reality and the experience of every true believer that wisdom's voice should be heard and the understanding be implanted and the consequence of that implantation of understanding heard in this voice, the voice of understanding.

[11 : 25] I want us to look at that perhaps especially tonight. Doth not wisdom cry? Oh, how wondrous our God is, how condescending that he who made all things by the word of his power and into his fair creation entered the awful tragedy of sin that ruined and cursed and called brought down the curse of God upon everything that that God should be pleased to send forth the messages of wisdom and this message of wisdom is the message that embraces all the glories of the

Godhead and the purposes of God. It's that which embraces all the wonderful ingredients of the gospel.

Mercy is here in this wisdom. Grace is here in this wisdom. wisdom. The love of God is here in all its perfection and beauty and power combined in this wonderful person and in this word the word of our text wisdom the voice of eternal wisdom is the voice of God in all his fullness willingness condescending and long and it cries voice goes out to the ends of the earth and where it cries to whom it is spoken it is a word of power word of life word of salvation.

If we had any doubt I think we can scarcely entertain it that this title of wisdom does not refer to the Lord Jesus just let us look for a moment into the chapter itself he says by me kings reign and princes decree justice but then there is something later on in the chapter that I must bring your minds to in this he says this the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old I was set up from everlasting from the beginning forever the earth was when there were no depths I was brought forth when there were no fountains abounding with water before the mountains were settled before the hills was

I brought forth while as yet he had not made the earth nor the fields nor the highest part of the dust of the world when he prepared the heavens I was there when he set a compass upon the face of the depths when he established the clouds above when he strengthened the fountains of the deep when he gave to the sea his decree that the water should not pass his commandment when he appointed the foundations of the earth then I was by him as one brought up with him and I was daily his delight rejoicing always before him my dear friends could we ever trace another than the dear redeemer in these words

[15 : 56] I was by him God's eternal co-equal son of his love the one who is the messenger of the covenant the one who came as the prophet of God to his people who said when he was here I speak what my father hath given me to speak and he also says to his own people my sheep hear my voice and they follow me does not wisdom cry and all the glorious cries of the gospel all the power that God puts forth in it is is the reference of our text here tonight when the

Lord was here on earth he cried off times and on one occasion he cried with a loud voice he said this if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink that was the voice of wisdom there's no one else my dear friends and if I'm speaking to any careless sinner tonight who may think that there are many avenues along which many things may be obtained let me say very clearly there's nothing to be found of a saving lasting satisfying reality unless it is found in Jesus Christ oh how true this is and yet how seemingly vain it is to the minds of a great majority of our fellow men it's it's a wonderful thing to feel that we can say this now none but

Christ can satisfy no other name but his but it's only wisdom put forth wisdom cry heard in the heart and conscience the power of it felt in the soul with all its effect that brings sinners to realize that Christ alone can impart those riches that are unfading and durable riches and righteousness there was a great cry also when the Lord was here on earth that was at the cross of Calvary that was a tremendous cry there seems to be a great significance resting upon that cry

I believe the original word though I'm not an original scholar I believe the original word would have us believe or know that there was a tremendous emphasis in that cry of the Lord when he said it is finished cried with a loud voice it is finished that cry seemed to embrace all times it went back right to the very beginning in the conceptions of God in the eternal purposes of the covenant and it went right down to the very end of time till the last redeemed vessel of mercy shall have been brought in and safely landed in the bonds of that everlasting covenant it is finished finished doth not wisdom cry for what words they are how full how glorious the words of that dear suffering son of

God who paid the very last might that was of the tremendous sum that was needed was required of his people's debts and performed the great work that he had come to undertake a work of a magnitude that no man can comprehend and then when he had come to the end of it he says it is finished wisdom for the blessedness of it and then all the great councils of the gospel all the great declarations of the gospel they are the councils and the declarations of wisdom heavenly wisdom unfailing wisdom a depth that can never be fathomed is here and a supremacy that can never be over well is here in this word wisdom does not wisdom cry well then

[22 : 09] I want to come to the more experimental side of this and of course we may all acknowledge that these things are true that I've been trying to set forth in regard to the great messenger of the covenant and the messages of the gospel the truths the everlasting truths of God they are unshakable truths you may be brought up to believe them and you can say well I hold these very closely firmly my fathers believe them and I believe them and I see no reason to deny them whatsoever but we may have all that and yet we've never really known what it is to hear the voice of wisdom to have in other words to have the Lord speak the word to us commanding humbling subduing convicting words whereby our soul shall be brought to know wisdom and to possess understanding that's the great thing isn't it the great purpose of the ministry of the gospel

God has ordained that by the foolishness of preaching men shall be saved sinners shall be called by grace and we read in the 27th of Isaiah that a great trumpet shall be blown and they shall come that we're ready to perish from the land of Assyria from Egypt from the most impossible places in the world from heathen lands idolatrous lands lands of the enemy as far as Israel is concerned but when this gospel trumpet or this trumpet shall be sounded they shall come from there one by one and they shall come and fall down before the Lord in Jerusalem and worship one God Israel's triune

God how wonderful an illustration that is of the gospel and the ministry of it all from Assyria some of them from Assyria some from Egypt my dear friends it's not just strict Baptists that are brought into the kingdom of heaven you know there's some outstanding and outlandish cases sometimes and it's a wonderful mercy that it is so and it's to the glory of God that it is so who would have thought the dying thief would ever be found in heaven around the throne of God who would have thought that Mary Magdalene this poor cursed soul so dark so held in bondage should be found sitting at the feet of her saviour the Lord

Jesus and pouring out her heart in love to him by tears and even by her silence who would have thought that the woman of Samaria who met the Lord by the well of Sychar who had as the Lord said five husbands and was living in sin at that very moment should come to see him as the Messiah and say to others come see a man that told me all that ever I did is not this the Christ they shall come doth not wisdom cry these are the cases which prove the truth wonderful truth of our case and how wonderful if you and I are the subject of the wisdom's cry recipients of the cry of wisdom some of you can look back perhaps tonight although you may need even now many a confirmation and a reasserting of your interest in the

Lord and his interest in you but you look back perhaps tonight to the time when you feel you can say this I heard I heard the cry of wisdom the Lord spake to me his truth entered into my soul I came to see myself as a poor guilty sinner I knew then that I was on the way to destruction unless the Lord had mercy for me I knew that I was undone and that there was no more help in self no more possibility of self recovery reformation I knew that unless Jesus came and lifted me out of the mire and set my feet upon a rock I should go to everlasting destruction what an understanding that is you know the world thing knows it not and never can know it but when once the spirit of truth enters into the heart then the sinner knows that all is lost except for

[28 : 25] Christ and the only way to hope and heaven is through the rent veil of the saviour's flesh and blood does not wisdom cry and understanding put forth a voice understanding is really faith isn't it it's faith in its sweet simplicity putting forth the voice and faith always will do this faith indeed is in evidence we might almost say only in evidence when it has a voice and that voice is being put forth unto the Lord the language of faith is a very wonderful language when God came and saw the condition the wickedness the arrogance of the people in the days of Nimrod he confounded the tongues of the men of those days and scattered them throughout the whole world with a medley of tongues and language when on the day of Pentecost the Holy

Ghost was poured out from heaven in tongues of fire upon the believing church they all spake one language there's one tongue and one speech and one faith and one God and this language is the language first of all of need a child a natural child's language at the beginning is only the language of need he cannot say anything else but the parent knows well the meaning of the language far better than that eloquence that may come later on in life they know the cry of the bay what it means what is needed some of the best things in life naturally speaking are the cries of the newborn bay the infant cry and what is sweeter in heaven than the cry of the poor seeking believer who cries for mercy for help one of the secular poets puts it in this way

I don't often use the secular poets but it's a good word what am I he says an infant crying in the night an infant crying for the light and with no language but a cry well that's a very wonderful cry indeed if that's the only language you've got as a language of an infant crying for the light my dear friends the Lord will come the day will come when you will not only have the language of need but you'll have the language of praise the language of assurance you tell the Lord in that day how great his mercies are to you and how good he is and the time will come when you will tell him how your soul like the church is he said you know

I tell ye daughters of Jerusalem that if ye meet my beloved that ye tell him that I am sick of love love sickness spiritually considered is a wonderful a wonderful condition do you feel you can tell the Lord that you love him love has a way with it of being interpreted in a multitude of tangible practical things it's not always and only the language of the lips that expresses love there's more love in an action sometimes than there ever can be in words but doth not understanding put forth her voice

I like the way this text is couched doth not understanding put forth the voice not only speak it but put it forth as if there was an action entailed here in this this putting forth as if there was a going out after the object of love as if there was a pursuing upon the ground of understanding testing of the ground of understanding there was a putting forth of the voice the voice of the soul and my dear friends all this is entailed in a multitude of things and I want just in conclusion to touch upon a few this evening do you understand the

[35 : 17] Lord's wondrous way you say ah but like Thomas I have to say Lord how can I know the way but you have this much you've got this understanding that you need you cannot find the way yourself and you have no wisdom of your own to direct your feet and therefore you know that the Lord must and you believe he will take your poor soul and bring you step by step into that way that leads to heaven you say to yourself perhaps sometimes yes I do believe this but oh I am so fearful lest I should be one of those that divert and go back and prove to be a bastard and have no real enduring grace well you understand then the danger of these things and you understand that the remedy for these things is to be found close to the

Lord united to him anchored upon his grace and therefore you'll put forth a voice of appeal to the Lord and say Lord keep me hold me up let me not fall or prove to be a prey to all manner of evil things keep me Lord create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me as David prays does not understanding put forth a voice where there is real things there must be and will be a voice a voice of need a voice of Christing and there will be a voice of worship all to adore sweet is the language of the soul that honors the name of the

Lord what is worship worship is that spirit that bows with all reverential awe before the majesty of heaven and views Christ as the one mediator and therefore prayer is worship but how can we pray without the understanding and perhaps you come to the Lord's throne of grace and one of the first things you say to the Lord is Lord do give me an understanding heart that I may pray a right and then perhaps some of you feel you can't even use words in prayer and yet you know there's something in your heart that putteth forth the voice the upward glancing of an eye when none but

God is there is often some of the very sweetest prayers it rises from an understanding heart a heart that knows its own bitterness a heart that knows something of the depth the real depth of woe and the heart that knows by the teaching of the spirit that there's one glorious remedy and one way and one lord and one friend and one blessing to be obtained and the understanding heart the voice of prayer is put forth therein and that is worship and it's worship you know to come and tell what the lord has done for your soul don't let us lose sight of this aspect of real worship it's not gossip you know it's something sweet immeasurably so in the real discourse between souls concerning the work and experience and experience of the gracious spirit and what the lord has done in unloading the guilt from the heart and in sealing home to the conscience sweetly and softly the effects of jesus precious blood to tell of that and to say of how it affected your soul is a wonderful presence understanding put it forth this voice there's a great deal of religious jargon of course we could well do without it may the lord give us a deaf ear when we hear it but all to have in here the bleatings and the precious cries and sounds that spring out from a heavenly tuned soul of a sinner and the music of which is sublime and supreme worship of a triune god when we lean on jesus merit then we worship god and this understanding does that you know it leans on jesus you pray sometimes lord teach me not to lean on my own understanding you've tried it you've found that it let you down so woefully again and again you've abandoned it and yet you've returned to it and now you have to come and say lord let me not lean on my own understanding do give me that wisdom the fear of the lord in my heart that leans not on my understanding but on thine that's the voice of understanding and then the understanding put forth her voice in final praise and glorification of god of all his wisdom of all the grace and power

and mercy and love that he puts forth in his word spoken to the heart and conscience wherein this sinner has been called by divine grace with a heavenly calling and prepared for a heavenly place oh what transcending glory there will be in the voice of understanding them it will not be like the five foolish virgins you know whose great solemn day of understanding came too late when the door was shut oh may the lord give you and me my friends an understanding now simple it may seem to you and to me quite inadequate but oh how rich and how lasting it is and how blessed to have an understanding that

[44 : 19] Jesus is our one thing needful Jesus is the way to God Jesus is the friend of sinners and his blood can cure the worst disease that ever may appear and Jesus is the lord of all that's for the understanding that I want doth not wisdom cry an understanding put forth her voice the lord add his blessing amen