

23-0604a - Detailed Summary

23-0604a - 1 Corinthians 2, The Strong Gospel, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Mike Mathis and Kevin Woosley

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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1 Corinthians 2, The Strong Gospel

Summary of Transcript (0:03 - 51:39)

Scripture Readings:

(0:03 - 2:23) First Scripture Reading

1st Scripture Reading Mike Mathis

1 Corinthians 1:10,18-21,

The transcript begins with a reading of two passages from 1 Corinthians. The first, from chapter 1, verse 10, urges the brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ, to be united, speaking the same thing without divisions, and to be perfectly joined in mind and judgment. The second part, from verses 18 to 21, contrasts the message of the cross, deemed foolishness by those who are perishing, with its significance as the power of God to those being saved. It emphasizes that God will confound the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the prudent, questioning the whereabouts of the wise, scribes, and disputers of the age, and asserting that God has made worldly wisdom foolish.

(1:34 - 2:23) Second Scripture Reading

2nd Scripture Reading (1:34 - 2:23), Kevin Woosley

1 Corinthians 2:1-5,

The second scripture, from 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, recounts Paul's approach to the Corinthians, where he avoided eloquent speech or human wisdom, focusing solely on Jesus Christ and His crucifixion. He describes his presence among them as one of weakness, fear, and trembling, relying not on persuasive words but on the demonstration of the Spirit and power, so their faith would rest in God's power rather than human wisdom.

Summary

Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(2:28 - 5:09) Introduction to the Series and Divisions in Corinth

Douglas Hamilton's series on 1 Corinthians is introduced, focusing initially on the divisions within

the Corinthian church as discussed in chapter 1. The speaker notes that the Corinthians were factionalized and disunited, a situation severe enough to be reported to Paul, prompting his letter. Hamilton labels this section “the strong division,” reflecting Paul’s plea in 1:10 for unity and agreement among the brethren. The discussion then shifts to what Hamilton calls “the strong wisdom of God,” starting with 1:18, where the message of the cross is again highlighted as foolishness to the perishing but the power of God to the saved. The speaker draws a historical parallel to the Garden of Eden, illustrating a conflict between God’s wisdom—warning against eating the forbidden fruit—and the serpent’s contradictory wisdom, which introduced doubt and denied the consequence of death, setting a precedent for opposing divine and worldly wisdom.

(5:09 - 7:17) Contrasting Wisdom and Modern Examples

This section elaborates on the Eden narrative, where the serpent’s lie—“You shall not surely die”—directly opposes God’s warning, presenting a clear dichotomy with no middle ground. The speaker applies this to contemporary issues, suggesting that the world’s views often invert biblical teachings. For example, while the Bible states God created the world in seven days, the world posits millions or billions of years, illustrating a vast conceptual divide. Returning to 1 Corinthians 1:18, the speaker reiterates that the cross’s message is foolishness to those perishing but God’s saving power to believers, emphasizing that God’s word underpins salvation.

(7:18 - 8:04) God’s Rejection of Worldly Wisdom

Quoting from Isaiah via 1 Corinthians 1:19, the speaker underscores God’s intention to destroy the wisdom of the wise and dismiss the cleverness of the clever. This is framed as a divine rejection of arrogant, worldly arguments against faith, exemplified by the dismissive attitudes of some modern intellectuals toward religion. God’s promise to set aside such cleverness reinforces the supremacy of His wisdom over human constructs.

(8:05 - 10:26) Paul’s Approach After Athens

Paul’s experience in Athens, the intellectual hub of the first century, is contrasted with his approach in Corinth. In Athens, his use of superior speech and wisdom failed to persuade, leading to his dismissal. In Corinth, as stated in 2:1-5, he deliberately avoids such tactics, focusing solely on Christ crucified and the resurrection—topics that halted his discourse in Athens. He admits to arriving in weakness, fear, and trembling, relying on the Spirit’s power rather than eloquent words, aiming to ground the Corinthians’ faith in God’s power, not human rhetoric, a shift influenced by his Athenian experience.

(10:27 - 12:05) Transition to the Strong Gospel

Paul adapts his preaching post-Athens, emphasizing Christ crucified as he begins in Corinth, a theme Hamilton labels “the strong gospel.” In 2:6-8, Paul speaks of a wisdom for the mature, distinct from the transient wisdom of this age’s rulers, who, in ignorance, crucified Christ. This hidden, predestined wisdom of God, mysterious and glorious, was unknown to these rulers, for had they understood it, they would not have acted against the Lord of glory. The passage concludes with a reference to Isaiah, hinting at the unimaginable things God has prepared for those who love Him.

(12:10 - 15:21) Speaker's Perspective and Questions

The speaker clarifies that while they typically relay Hamilton's messages with minor edits, from 2:6 onward, the interpretation diverges into their own sermon. Hamilton views this section as evangelistic, but the speaker disagrees, seeking Paul's true intent. They highlight 2:6-16 as a favorite passage addressing two questions: why God hides His wisdom in mystery, and how believers can discern God's thoughts. In 2:6, Paul speaks wisdom to the mature in Christ, not outsiders or new converts (babes in Christ), as he later clarifies in chapter 3. This wisdom contrasts with the perishable wisdom of worldly rulers, reinforcing its exclusivity to mature believers.

(15:23 - 17:31) Wisdom for the Mature

Expanding on 2:6-7, the speaker explains that God's wisdom, unlike the world's, is for the mature in Christ, not outsiders or novices, referencing Hebrews 5:11-6:3, which distinguishes milk (elementary teachings) from solid food (deeper truths). Paul's message in Corinth initially offered milk, but now he presents solid food—God's hidden wisdom, predestined for believers' glory. This wisdom, mysterious and opposed to worldly elites' understanding, continues the contrast from chapter 1, where God's foolishness surpasses human wisdom, destined to outlast the transient rulers of the age.

(17:31 - 21:06) The Hidden Wisdom and Its Purpose

This section delves into the nature of God's hidden wisdom as described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:7-8. The speaker emphasizes that this wisdom was intentionally concealed by God before time began, predestined for the glory and benefit of believers. Quoting Proverbs 25:2, they suggest God hides things to prompt a search for understanding, which He reveals selectively. Verse 8 explains why this wisdom was hidden: the rulers of the age, including Satan, lacked understanding of it, proven by their crucifixion of Jesus, the Lord of glory. Had they grasped God's plan, they would not have killed Him. Thus, the speaker posits that God hid His wisdom to ensure Jesus' crucifixion, a pivotal act in His redemptive plan, answering why Adam and Eve were not immediately killed for their sin—God's solution was tied to Christ's death.

(21:07 - 22:26) The Perplexity of God's Mercy

Here, the speaker explores the implications of God sparing Adam and Eve despite His warning of death in Genesis, suggesting this leniency puzzled celestial beings. Referencing Psalm 33:9, which asserts God's word always comes to pass, they argue that Satan could have accused God of inconsistency when Adam and Eve survived their disobedience. This apparent contradiction sets the stage for the hidden wisdom—Jesus' crucifixion—as the solution that reconciles God's justice and mercy, a plan concealed from both Satan and humanity at that moment.

(22:27 - 24:31) Satan's Unintended Role in Salvation

The speaker imagines Satan's shock post-crucifixion, realizing his manipulation of humanity to kill Jesus backfired. Citing Satan's scriptural knowledge from his temptations of Eve and Jesus, they argue God's wisdom remained hidden from him. During the three days after the crucifixion, Satan discovered that Jesus' death enabled His resurrection, defeating death's power, as Hebrews 2:14-15 states. Jesus, sharing in flesh and blood, died to destroy the devil's dominion over death and free

humanity from its fear, turning Satan's scheme into his own defeat.

(24:33 - 25:18) Noah and the Flood as Hidden Wisdom

God's hidden wisdom is further illustrated through Noah's salvation in the flood. The speaker explains that the flood destroyed a world corrupted by evil imaginations (Genesis 6), saving Noah and seven others to begin anew. This act, they argue, prefigures a greater reality—baptism—whereby God uses water to eliminate sin and death, preserving the righteous, revealing a pattern of salvation embedded in His mysterious plan.

(25:21 - 28:02) Abraham, Isaac, and the Ultimate Sacrifice

The narrative shifts to Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac, addressing critics who decry it as perverse while noting their irony in supporting modern abortion. The speaker asserts this event in Genesis foreshadows God's plan to offer Jesus as the singular human sacrifice for sin, unlike repetitive, ineffective animal sacrifices (Hebrews 8-10). Baptism ties into this, as Romans 6:1-8 describes believers being crucified with Christ and raised to new life, echoing Isaac's symbolic death and reprieve. This hidden wisdom, woven into the Bible's first book, physically represents God's redemptive sacrifice, distinguishing Christianity by its one efficacious human sacrifice—Jesus.

(28:03 - 29:16) The Mosaic Law and Revealed Mystery

The Mosaic Law is presented as another layer of God's hidden wisdom, a physical shadow of spiritual realities later fulfilled in Christ, per Hebrews. The speaker argues that all pre-resurrection scriptures use a mysterious language to obscure God's plan, ensuring Jesus' death as the saving sacrifice. Post-resurrection, this mystery becomes revelation, fully disclosed, shifting from concealed intent to clear understanding of God's redemptive acts through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

(29:17 - 31:00) Unimaginable Blessings

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 2:9, quotes Isaiah 64:4 to highlight the incomprehensible nature of what God prepares for those who love Him—beyond sight, sound, or imagination. The speaker notes Paul adapts Isaiah's wording from a focus on God's uniqueness to emphasize the blessings for believers. They explore a textual variant where "a God" is omitted in some translations, potentially making it Messianic, aligning with Jesus' claim in John 6:46 that only He, from God, has seen the Father. This underscores the mystery's depth, accessible only through divine revelation.

(31:01 - 35:11) Knowing God's Mind Through the Spirit

Addressing how believers discern God's thoughts, the speaker introduces 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, where Paul explains that God reveals His mysteries through the Spirit, which searches even God's depths. Human analogy illustrates this: only one's spirit knows their thoughts, and likewise, only God's Spirit knows His. Believers receive this Spirit—not the world's—to understand God's freely given gifts, rejecting presumptions about God's will based on human reasoning. The Spirit's teaching, not human wisdom, combines spiritual thoughts and words, inaccessible to the natural man who finds them foolish, while the spiritual discern all things, possessing the mind of Christ.

(35:11 - 38:20) The Spirit's Role in Revelation

Continuing from verse 11, the speaker reinforces that only God's Spirit comprehends His deep thoughts, paralleling how a person's spirit knows their own mind (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Believers receive God's Spirit at baptism (Acts 2:38), not the world's, enabling them to grasp divine gifts. This contrasts with worldly wisdom, deemed foolish by God, and refutes claims that God is a human invention. The Spirit conveys God's truths through inspired words, not human constructs, ensuring believers access the revealed wisdom post-Christ's resurrection, fulfilling the purpose of understanding God's redemptive plan.

(38:24 - 44:16) The Spirit's Instruction and the Natural Man's Limitation

This section focuses on how the Holy Spirit instructs believers using spiritual words, not human wisdom, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 2:13-16. The speaker asserts that God is not a human invention, and His thoughts are conveyed through the Bible, His word, which the Spirit uses to express divine meaning. In verse 14, the natural man—lacking spiritual discernment—rejects God's truths as foolishness and cannot understand them due to an inherent inability, not mere unwillingness. The speaker ties this to Romans 1:18 and following, suggesting God designed it so that rejecting Him prevents understanding, only overcome by a desire for truth. Verse 15 contrasts this with the spiritual person, who judges all things using God's standards, not personal discernment, and is not subject to accurate judgment by the natural man, per the NIV's rendering. The Bible, they argue, addresses every human life aspect—relationships, government, ethics, science, and more—urging believers to consult its spiritual words to align with God's views, rather than worldly perspectives.

(44:16 - 48:50) The Mind of Christ and Contemporary Reflection

Quoting Isaiah 40:13 in 1 Corinthians 2:16, the speaker highlights that only the Holy Spirit knows God's mind, not humans offering counsel to Him. Yet, believers possess the mind of Christ through the indwelling Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), enabling transformation by renewing their minds (Romans 12:2) to discern God's perfect will. The speaker challenges the audience to apply this to current events—bathroom laws, pronoun disputes, and a Canadian father jailed for misgendering his daughter—asking if they judge these using spiritual words from scripture or worldly conformity. Without aligning with God's word, they question whether one is truly spiritual or merely natural. They introduce a closing scripture from 1 Peter 1:3-12, partially read at a memorial, tying it to the "strong gospel" theme, emphasizing God's mercy and the living hope through Christ's resurrection.

(48:51 - 50:08) Living Hope and Tested Faith

Reading from 1 Peter 1:3-7, the speaker connects Paul's focus on Jesus Christ crucified to Peter's praise of God for granting believers a living hope through Christ's resurrection. This hope leads to an imperishable, undefiled inheritance in heaven, guarded by God's power through faith for a future-revealed salvation. Despite trials, believers rejoice, as these refine their faith—more precious than gold—resulting in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus returns. The passage underscores the resilience of faith amidst adversity, aligning with the transcript's broader theme of God's wisdom sustaining believers.

(50:08 - 51:39) Joyful Faith and Prophetic Service

Continuing with 1 Peter 1:8-12, the speaker describes believers' inexpressible, glory-filled joy in loving and believing in Christ, despite not seeing Him, with the outcome being soul salvation. This salvation, they note, was the focus of prophets who, guided by the Spirit of Christ, inquired about the timing and person of the Messiah's sufferings and glories. Revealed to serve future generations—not themselves—these prophecies are now fulfilled and preached through the gospel by the Holy Spirit, a mystery even angels yearn to understand. The section concludes with an invitation to respond, signaling the end of the sermon as the congregation prepares to stand and sing.