

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 22ND - 23RD, 2022 // 1 CORINTHIANS 2

RHETORIC (1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-5)

NOT FROM THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD

Paul reminds the church again that the "mystery of God" he delivered wasn't with "brilliance of speech or wisdom."

- This simply means Paul let the Word of God do the talking. He didn't need to add his opinions or deliver it in a way that conformed to the culture of the world. **God's Word doesn't need our editing or help.**

MAKING IT ABOUT JESUS

Paul avoided persuasive speech and rhetoric because people could easily be sold on Paul more than the truth and beauty of God and His Word.

- We've made the mistake of teaching that Christianity is about us when in reality, it's about God. **We must learn to be less while magnifying God in our lives.**

WE OFTEN OVERCOMPLICATE A SIMPLE TRUTH

The simple truth of the Bible is that God loves us so much He sent His Son to die as a sacrifice for our sin and rebellion. **We rob the "cross of its effect" (1:17) when we use tactics that elevate us instead of Jesus.**

- There are complex theological discussions to be had, but salvation and a relationship with our Savior is quite simple.

"THE SPIRIT'S POWER"

Human wisdom always implodes on itself, but the practical and powerful teachings of the Word stand as evidence of God's power.

- The Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5) will be a "demonstration of the Spirit's power" in our lives. **We don't have to use persuasive rhetoric to "win" others; we must simply live out the fruit of our salvation.**

HIDDEN? (1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-12)

"A WISDOM AMONG THE MATURE"

Paul is referring to people who want to know the truth of Who God is and who we are as His creation. Paul says this wisdom is not a "wisdom of this age" that "rulers" seek.

- **We seek one of two things: our desires and manufactured "truths," or the will of our Creator, and the actual truth set forth by Him.**

WORLDLY WISDOM COMES TO AN ABRUPT END

"Rulers" can be anyone that has influence, affluence, or power. This can be politicians, greedy CEOs, social media influencers, or just selfish people seeking their desire above all else.

- **The Bible makes it clear multiple times that the "success" of the world will come to an end when Christ returns.** It is temporary.

"ON THE CONTRARY..."

Paul says, "We speak God's hidden wisdom in a mystery... God predestined before the ages."

- The "hidden wisdom" is the example and teachings of Christ Who is the "mystery" of God. **God gave us His Son to show us the perfect example of how to live in a way that honors God.** This way looks completely contrary to the ways of the world.

HOW DO WE FIND THE "HIDDEN" MYSTERY?

The knowledge of truth and God is only revealed to those humble enough to look for it and accept it. When Paul says, "None of the rulers of this age knew this wisdom," it means they had no desire to know the truth.

- **Jesus and the Word are a revelation of truth, not a concealment of it, but we must be humble enough to search!**

NATURAL MEANS CAN'T FIND THE SUPERNATURAL

Paul quotes Isaiah 64 when he tells the Corinthians that eyes, ears, and even emotions can't conceive of the things of God.

- **We must have a desire to go on a spiritual journey. We must also posture ourselves, even in a state of questioning/unbelief, to allow God to reveal Himself to us through the Spirit.**

NOTHING IS HIDDEN FROM THE SPIRIT (V10)

The Holy Spirit (1/3 of the Trinity) not only knows everything about us, but He searches the deep things of God to give us insight.

- God sees all, so **we are incapable of hiding from Him.** Also, **He reveals truth, gives guidance and counsel, provides the Fruit of the Spirit, and administers the Gifts of the Spirit** (12-14).

THIS IS ALL FREELY GIVEN BY GOD, IF...

Salvation and the wisdom from the Spirit of God is "freely given" to us **if we are humble and willing to submit** to the Creator God.

- **Humility comes from understanding that we're incapable on our own. His ways are better than ours, He loves us, and He wants us to live our best lives here and for eternity.**

DESIRE (1 CORINTHIANS 2:13-16)

"TAUGHT BY THE SPIRIT"

The wisdom of God and His Word are only available to people that have a desire to pursue God. Truth cannot be discovered by "human wisdom," but only "taught by the Spirit," Who explains "spiritual things to spiritual people."

- Simply put, we must choose to be spiritual people in order to know the wisdom of God.

WITHOUT THE SPIRIT WE ARE INCAPABLE

V14 makes it clear that the Word and ways of God are not received and understood by people that refuse to pursue truth.

- **If we have open hearts and a desire for the truth, God and His Word will be illuminated for us.** This is how we are saved and able to receive the teachings and commands of the Bible.

THERE ARE SOME UNDERSTANDABLE TRUTHS

There are truths in the Bible that non-believers can understand and support (Rm. 2:14-15), but the deeper things of God are misunderstood because their lives are contrary to the expectations of God.

- **Only through the Spirit are we able to discern and have Godly wisdom.** These are gifts freely given to believers.

EVALUATE EVERYTHING?

Paul says, "The spiritual person...can evaluate everything, and yet [they] cannot be evaluated by anyone."

This means **we have the knowledge, wisdom, and standards of the Word that establish what's right and wrong.**

- **Because we submit to a higher wisdom than the world, we cannot be evaluated by its broken standards.**

THIS ALSO MEANS WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION

Because we are knowledgeable of the standards and wisdom of God, we must live in a way that honors that standard.

- **If one calls themselves a Christian, they're held into account to live in the ways of Christ. We must understand we deserve judgment for possessing divine knowledge but failing to live by it.**

"BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST"

Paul invokes Isaiah 40 when he asks a rhetorical question, "Who has known the Lord's mind, that He may instruct him?"

- **Who knows the Lord's mind? Those of us that desire to read His Word, pray, and listen to the Spirit's direction!** We will not be perfect in this life, but we can live by the wisdom of God if we desire to!

BY WHAT WISDOM ARE WE LIVING?

- Not only does the Bible point out that the "wisdom" of the world is broken and destined to fail, the fruit of our culture also proves that it is unsustainable.
- **Have we gotten sidetracked by the rhetoric of our society and culture?** If so, is it producing contentment, peace, and security in our lives? **Is it honoring God?**

ARE WE SEEKING?

- The deep wisdom and knowledge of God is available to those that desire to know and live by it. **If we're humble, the Spirit will give us guidance through discernment and wisdom.**
- Do we have a hunger for the truth? Do we strive to know our Creator more intimately? **Are we asking, reading, and listening?**

ARE WE LIVING OUT OUR KNOWLEDGE?

- Though we will not be perfect until the life to come, if we claim to be followers of Christ, our lives will reflect the teachings and principles of Jesus.
- Are we living out our God-enabled potential? **Do we have the "mind of Christ"? Are we leaning on Him to empower us to be what He wants us to be?**