

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

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

A SECRET AND HIDDEN WISDOM (1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-10A)

Part of the issue behind the **division in the Corinthian church** was the lack of spiritual maturity.

- The toxic irony behind spiritual immaturity is that **immature people often think they're more mature than they actually are.**
- **"Maturity"** to the Corinthians meant having impressive skills in **rhetoric and speech and being spiritually gifted.**

Giftedness (whether natural giftings or spiritual giftings) **is not the same thing** as maturity.

- Focusing simply on the miraculous gifts of the Spirit and then **idolizing those who manifest them leads us to neglect the primary ministries** of the Holy Spirit.
- When we **neglect the basic ministries of the Spirit, we neglect the Father and the Son**, and our focus becomes on all the wrong things.

The wisdom that Paul taught ("**Christ crucified**", vs. 2) was received as wisdom by those who were truly spiritually mature (vs. 6).

- The message of the Gospel is not "wisdom of this age"- perhaps this is **why the Corinthians weren't all that impressed by it** and were more interested in idolizing teachers, valuing talent, and chasing after signs/wonders.
- Maturity looks like discerning between **what's spiritually healthy and what's spiritual junk food.**

God's plan of salvation through Christ crucified that **Paul taught was a wisdom that had been secret and hidden**, but it's been revealed (vs. 7).

- It was the plan that "God decreed before the ages", but it's **one that no one could have ever guessed** or seen coming.
- This "secret, hidden wisdom" from God is eternal and **brings glory to those who believe**- unlike the earthly wisdom of man that's doomed to pass away and leads to destruction.

"None of the rulers of this age understood this..." (vs. 8)- are the rulers of this age the **powerful men** of the time or, are they **demonic powers?** (Rom. 8:38, Col. 2:15, Eph. 6:12)

- One could say that **the human rulers of the age committed the ultimate folly** by crucifying "the Lord of glory" in their ignorance and pride.
- Or, one could also say that **the demonic powers were ignorant** of what would result from the crucifixion of Jesus that they influenced (Col. 2:15).

Paul paraphrases **Isaiah 64:4** to remind us that God's wisdom and plan aren't able to be fully **comprehended by the human senses** (eyes, ears, heart's imagination).

- This passage certainly could be about the **greatness of heaven**, but in the context, it's probably more about the glorious plan of God for salvation that has already been revealed by the **Spirit of God through the Gospel** (vs. 10a).

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD (1 CORINTHIANS 2:10B-12)

You might be able to **guess what I'm thinking** because you observe my activity, but you can never truly know my thoughts like I can (vs. 11a).

- In fact, **you can only know what I'm thinking** if I tell you what I'm thinking.
- In the same way, the only way we can know the "thoughts of God" is to have **His Spirit indwell us and give us an understanding** of the "depths of God" (vs. 10b).

There are **MASSIVE theological implications** about the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer in this text!

1.The Holy Spirit indwells all believers (vs. 12).

- The moment you trust Christ, the Spirit of God enters your body and **makes it His temple** (1 Cor. 6:19-20), **regenerating you** (John 3:6).
- **You are baptized in the Spirit** (1 Cor. 12:13) and **sealed by the Spirit** (Eph. 1:13-14).

2.The Holy Spirit reveals to believers the thoughts of God, guidance from God, and wisdom from God (vs. 10-11).

- Until the **Holy Spirit indwells our hearts, we might be moderately interested in the concept of God**, but we can't truly know God and have a relationship with Him.
- Through the Holy Spirit, **we become a sharer in the very life of God.**
- The "depths of God" is another description for what Paul refers to vs. 9- **the blessings of His grace and gospel** that He wants for us today.

3.The Holy Spirit brings understanding (vs. 12).

- The Holy Spirit enables us to **comprehend the magnitude of God's gift** to us through Christ- you can't understand or appreciate the Gospel until the Holy Spirit reveals to you your need for it and how amazing **God's forgiveness** truly is.
- You can't truly understand God's Word until the **Holy Spirit makes it come alive** and gives you understanding of it.

The world's wisdom cannot understand or grasp **the magnitude**, beauty, and awe of the Gospel.

- But when we receive the Holy Spirit, **our eyes and hearts are opened to the thoughts** and depths of God and His great love for us.
- Even though this church used the language of the Holy Spirit, **they still seemed to think that God gave the Spirit** to the most "wise" and talented as a reward for their awesomeness.

THE NATURAL VS. THE SPIRITUAL (1 CORINTHIANS 2:13-16)

This message of the depths of God and the thoughts of God wasn't imparted to this church by "human wisdom", but by the **Holy Spirit**.

- And the Holy Spirit interprets **spiritual truths to those who are spiritual** (vs. 13)- those who are born again and have the Holy Spirit.
- God's Spirit is the interpreter of God's wisdom, but if someone doesn't have God's spirit, God's wisdom will **seem like foolishness** (vs. 14).

Paul calls this person the "**natural man**".

- Natural, "**psuchikos**", describes the materialist, or someone who lives as if **there were nothing beyond the physical life** (sometimes this word is used to describe animals).
- God isn't displeased when we deal with the material world (eating, sleeping, working), but life lived simply for the material is unable to deal in **spiritual realities** (vs. 14b).

The "**natural man**" asks, "Why waste your time on **spiritual** things when you could be out making money or having fun or pursuing pleasure?"

- The natural man **doesn't even WANT the things of God** because he sees them as foolish.
- Even if he wanted to, he can't understand the things of God because those things are **spiritually discerned** (vs. 14b), not materially discerned.

The **wisdom of the world** and "natural" people will call Christians foolish for pursuing spiritual matters, but they can't truly judge us rightly because **they don't understand spiritual matters**.

- "*Who can understand the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him?*" (Isa. 40:13)
- Only those who have **received the mind of Christ through the Holy Spirit!** (vs. 16).

The **bigger picture**.

- Being a Christian means we are to **think and behave in accordance with our true identity**- we have been saved, regenerated, and given **access to spiritual understanding** and a relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.
- We don't live by **the world's wisdom and focus all of our time on the material and natural**- we are **more than the physical!**

The **gospel of grace can't be watered down**

- The gospel will always seem **foolish and unattractive to a secular, material person** that only thinks of what is materially and personally beneficial in the physical world.
- It's only **when God opens spiritual eyes and brings conviction** through the Holy Spirit that the Gospel and **someone's need for it makes any sense** (Eph. 2:1).

We can't allow ourselves to be seduced by spiritual junk food- the Gospel is what we need.

- There are plenty of "salesmen" that will tell you whatever you want to hear in order to make the sale- **that doesn't make them truthful.**
- Spiritually immature people lack the discernment to know what is spiritually healthy and true because they're not adept yet in understanding the difference between **God's wisdom and the world's fleshly wisdom.**
- A good spiritual litmus test- **who does it glorify?**

Spiritual maturity is not the same as giftedness.

- Someone is not spiritually mature just because they've had **certain spiritual experiences**. Christian maturity is shown through displaying, "**the mind of Christ**"-when our whole perspective in life is guided by **the message of the cross** so that our attitude and actions are changed by it.
- When we're walking by the Spirit, **the primary evidence of that is character** (Gal. 5:22-23), not supernatural manifestations.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WANTS CONTROL OVER YOUR LIFE

- **Three kinds of people in 1 Cor. 2-3**

1. **Spiritual** (saved, regenerated, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, discerns the things of God and displays "the mind of Christ")
 2. **Natural** (unsaved, unregenerated, and clueless to spiritual things because they're spiritually dead).
 3. **Carnal/fleshly** (saved and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but still controlled by the desires, urges, and mindsets of the flesh, 1 Cor. 3:2-3)
- The Holy Spirit is **not a mystical force, an impersonal power, an "inner strength"**, or an instrument you get to be used or **coerced for selfish gain** or your own glory.
 - The **Holy Spirit is God**, the third person of the trinity, and a divine being with a mind, emotions, and will.
 - If you are a "**natural person**", spiritually dead and completely disinterested in the things of God, the Holy Spirit wants to **make you alive** and open your eyes to the **reality of the Gospel** and the Spiritual world (John 6:63).
 - If you're **carnal/fleshly**, the Holy Spirit wants you to **stop living in accordance to those old, fleshly desires** and surrender to **His work of putting those things to death** (Rom. 8:13).
 - If you're **spiritual**, the Holy Spirit wants to **fill you, empower you, and reveal to you a greater understanding of God's love and amazing grace towards you in Christ** (Eph. 5:18, 1 Cor. 2:9-10).
 - **Will you let Him have complete, total, and absolute control?**