

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 23RD, 2022 // 1 CORINTHIANS 2

DEMONSTRATING POWER (1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-5)

"WHEN I CAME TO YOU"

Paul is asking the Corinthians to recount his arrival in how he preached the Gospel and sacrificed to not hinder the message.

- Acts 18 shows how he met Aquila and Priscilla, who were tentmakers by trade, and for the one and a half years he was in Corinth ministering, he supported himself by also making tents.
- Paul wanted them to remember how he taught and how he **"did not come with brilliance of speech or wisdom."**
- He did not come to try and give the Jews the display of power they sought, and he did not come to try and rival the Greek philosophers. **He came as a witness announcing the "mystery of God."**

"MYSTERY OF GOD"

Paul uses the word "mystery" 21 times in his letters. Throughout the NT, this phraseology is used to refer to something that at one time was hidden but is now revealed to God's people.

- The most encompassing meaning for the use of the phrase **"the mystery of God"** is to describe **God's plan for salvation through Jesus Christ.**

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

Paul could have used his education and his knowledge to debate and persuade people, but he "decided to know nothing...except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

- Paul was unwilling to cheapen the gospel and give in to what culture wanted, and he was not willing to rely on his own knowledge and weaken the gospel.

THE HUMAN CONDITION

Paul says he was with the Corinthians, "in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling," and it was not wrong of Paul to feel this way.

- **Paul's self-awareness kept him from being self reliant.** This means, by recognizing his own fears and limitations, **he would have to be fully reliant on God's strength and not his own.**

"...IN WEAKNESS..."

Paul asked God to remove "a thorn in the flesh" from him to which God responded, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness (2 Cor. 12:7-9)."

- **Christ's power is able to accomplish its purpose when his people are weak and dependent on Him for his strength.**

"IN FEAR, AND IN MUCH TREMBLING."

When the Bible says, "do not fear" or "God has not given you a spirit of fear" it is simply saying that we are not to allow anxiety or fear to rule our lives or take root in our hearts. We are supposed to be a people of faith, not panic.

- **Faith is not the absence of fear but trusting in God's goodness enough to act in the face of fear.**

RELiance ON THE SPIRIT, NOT HUMAN WISDOM

Preaching dependent on the wisdom of man, emotion, or entertainment may garner a response, but it **will not get results.**

- **It is not just about drawing people into church, but about drawing them close to Christ.** At the end of the day, **what we draw people in with, is what we will draw them to.**
- Someone who has faith in human wisdom and not the power of God has a misplaced faith that will not stand the test of trials and time.
- The reality is, if someone can be persuaded into the kingdom by human wisdom, then they could also be persuaded out of the kingdom by human wisdom.

HIDDEN WISDOM (1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-9)

"WE DO, HOWEVER SPEAK A WISDOM..."

Though Paul was not willing to cater to the Corinthian's love for human wisdom, it does not mean the message he brought lacked wisdom.

- He is again speaking to the difference between human wisdom and the wisdom of God, which is a vast wealth of wisdom reserved for the believer only.

"... A WISDOM AMONG THE MATURE..."

Paul is referring to the spiritual maturity of those who believe the gospel and recognize it as true wisdom.

- He shows that it is the "mature" that recognize God's wisdom while "the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing," fail to recognize it.

RULERS OF THE AGE

Paul is speaking about the political leaders and the powerful men of his time, who had rejected the wisdom of God.

- By rejecting the wisdom of God and relying on human wisdom they thought they had achieved all they desired, but all their accomplishments would be "brought to nothing" when Christ returns.
- In v.8, Paul points to evidence that "the rulers of this age" did not acknowledge the wisdom of God.
- He points out that if the powerful men of the world, like Pilate and Herod, understood true wisdom they would not have crucified "the Lord of Glory."

HIDDEN WISDOM

Paul says, "we speak God's hidden wisdom in a mystery." This means that God's plan for redemption that was once hidden has now been revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which Paul preaches.

- This redemptive plan that was once hidden was planned before the foundations of the world were laid "for our glory."

THE MIND OF CHRIST (1 CORINTHIANS 2:10-16) GOD HAS REVEALED THESE THINGS

Before the life and ministry of Jesus, God's people had an incomplete understanding of God's redemptive work and the depths of his love for his people.

- **Though the world cannot perceive the wisdom of God, he has revealed it through his spirit and the person Jesus Christ.**
- God's plan for redemption and his wisdom have been revealed through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- **This knowledge of God is unavailable to us through the world's wisdom or investigation, and only through revelation from the Holy Spirit.**

RELIABLE SOURCE

Paul tells us, **"the spirit searches everything, even the depths of God."**

- This shows that the Spirit shares the attributes of omniscience, and nothing is hidden from him, even "the depths of God." **These attributes make the Spirit a reliable source of the wisdom of God, knowing both parties intimately.**

ONLY THE SPIRIT KNOWS THE THINGS OF GOD

Paul is arguing his point from a Greek philosophical premise that you can only guess what someone is thinking unless they tell you.

- We can only guess and assume things pertaining to the mind of God unless he tells us, which he did, through the Spirit. The Spirit communicated the mind of God to men so that we have his thoughts on paper: **The Bible!**

UNDERSTANDING BECAUSE OF THE SPIRIT

Paul is saying we have the ability to "understand what was freely given to us by God" through "the Spirit who is from God" and not the world.

- Every believer has the ability, through the Spirit, to understand the basics of the Christian message, which is unattainable by human wisdom.

COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE SPIRIT

It is through the power and influence of the Spirit that Paul can explain "spiritual things to spiritual people."

- **When we go out and use spiritual words to communicate spiritual things with people, we are using words and concepts taught only by the Holy Spirit.**

THE NATURAL MAN VS. THE SPIRITUAL MAN

Paul says, "the person without the Spirit does not receive what comes from God's Spirit."

- The Greek word used to describe this person literally translates as **"natural man."** **This individual lives as if there were nothing beyond this physical life.**

THE NATURAL MAN

The natural man in unregenerate, unsaved man, who does not want the things of God because he views them as foolishness.

- He is unwilling and unable to understand the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. **We, as believers, act like the natural man when we are not spiritually discerning.**

THE SPIRITUAL MAN

The spiritual man is able to make proper judgements through the Spirit because they see things rightly.

- Though we need criticism when we fail to live consistently with the revelation of the Spirit, **the wisdom of the world is unable to criticize us in the things of God.**

THE MIND OF CHRIST

Paul uses Isaiah 40:13 to communicate just how far God's wisdom is beyond the world's wisdom.

- As believers, influenced by the Holy Spirit, we take on the mind of Christ. We think as He thinks. We view things as He sees them, and we no longer follow our own faulty reasoning.

HOLY SPIRIT

- **Do we know the person of the Holy Spirit?**

- John 16:7-8
- John 16:13-14
- Romans 8:26-27
- Galatians 5:16

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

- **Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control** (Gal 5:22)