

1 CORINTHIANS 2 Christ Crucified; Spiritual Wisdom

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

1 CORINTHIANS 2 Christ Crucified;

1Co 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you (from Athens, Acts 17-18), did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

1Co 2:2 For I determined (Paul had options – he was a brilliant man) not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY – Hankey/Fischer (Ford)

*1. I love to tell the story of unseen things above
Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love
I love to tell the story because I know 'tis true
It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do
CHORUS: I love to tell the story 'Twill be my theme in glory.
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love*

*2. I love to tell the story more wonderful it seems,
Than all the golden fancies, of all our golden dreams,
I Love to tell the story, it did so much for me
And that is just the reason, I tell it now to thee. CHORUS*

*3. I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song
'Twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long. CHORUS*

THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS IS FOOLISHNESS TO THE CORINTHIANS:

v. 17 The Corinthians were much into philosophy and philosophers. They were impressed by orators. But here Paul is telling them, that he is not delivering the message with wisdom of words, lest the human vessel is drawing so much attention to himself that his message is scarcely noticed, producing unnecessary competition to the message of the cross.

v. 1 And I, brethren, when I came to you,...(Acts 17:22-18:1) We are told here that Paul, when he came to Corinth from Athens, *did not come with excellence of speech* or of man's *wisdom*, which he did try on Mars Hill, *declaring the testimony of God*, that is **the gospel of Jesus Christ**. The thing that God wants the whole world to know. That He so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, who died on the cross, bearing the sins of the world. That God had laid on Him the iniquities of us all, in order that through His death for us, we might receive the gift of eternal life and might know what it is to live in fellowship with God. That it is possible to know God. That it is possible to live in fellowship with God because of what Jesus Christ has done for us!

v. 2 For I *determined* – There was something that happened between Paul's time in Athens and when he came to Corinth. Something happened between him and God and Paul determined that he was **just going to lay out the simple gospel to people**. He was going to live or die with that gospel. No fanciness, nor trying to relate, no quoting poets or philosophers. Paul seems to be saying, that he is going to go down swinging. If he is going to fail, it's not because he's trying to be or speak anything else but the simple truth of the gospel!

not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The **clear, straightforward, simple, message of salvation**. That's all Paul was concerned with, to share the simple message of redemption through Jesus Christ. Paul was determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The message of the cross, to the Jew a stumbling block, to the Greek, foolishness, but to those that are saved, the power of God to salvation!

1 CORINTHIANS: 1:17-31

Brief Outline- (adapted from Dextor Sammons)

INTRODUCTION (1:1-9)

1. PROBLEMS REPORTED BY THE HOUSE OF CHLOE (1:10-6:20)

A. FACTIONS IN THE CHURCH (1:1-4:21)

CHAPTER TWO:

- Not in wisdom & excellence of speech, preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified! – vs. 1-5
- Wisdom of the world/Wisdom of God/Hidden Wisdom – v. 6-11
- Spirit of the world/Spirit of God – v. 12
- Natural man/Spiritual man-Mind of man/Mind of the Lord – vs. 13-16

SUMMARY:

Chapter One - Weakness, weakness, simple message by design. Weak messengers will never work! Nobody will listen! They are smarter than this, you've got to get them another way!

Chapter Two – IT WORKS! Just like at Corinth, it works in you! What makes the gospel powerful is that He stands behind it and He testifies to the truthfulness of it in every human heart that is eager to know the truth!

v. 17 Paul was sent to preach the gospel, simply, without words of wisdom, lest the message of the cross be minimized. Where and why has God sent you? **How faithful to that calling are you? Am I?**

v. 1 Do you, do I, frequently try to **make the simple gospel more fancy, using big words, trying to impress the hearer?** We need to let the power of the gospel through the working of the Holy Spirit make it understandable and understood!

v. 2 Our witness must be simply about Jesus Christ. Who He is and what He has done for us by dying on the cross, to pay the price of our sins in full and to satisfy the wrath of God for our sins. So that we will not have to die, but through what He has done for us, **we have the full assurance of everlasting life in His presence and being an heir of His kingdom, being adopted as sons!**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 2:3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.

1Co 2:4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power (God saying “Yes and Amen!”), 1Co 2:5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Spiritual Wisdom

1Co 2:6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

1Co 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery (unknown in the past, but now revealed; was silent, now vocal), the hidden wisdom, (pertaining to the cross of Christ) which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

v. 3 The gospel message was brought to Corinth in accordance with **1 Cor. 1:27-29** “*But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; [28] and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, [29] that no flesh should glory in His presence.*”

I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. It was brought in weakness, fear and much trembling! (**Acts 18:4-11**);

v. 4-5 Paul is in “sin city”. A place that has been given over to sin, to immorality, to great orators and people valuing great intelligence. But God has chosen to deliver His message, simply through simple means, so that if any are saved, everyone will know that that happened by the ***demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God***, that He gets all the glory!

The attitude there was giving a simple message through simple people will never work! But Paul is saying to the believers there in the church in Corinth – “**It works! It’s already has worked!**”! **You’re the proof!** Your faith is not the result of ***wisdom of men, but it is in the power of God***

v. 6 We have **the contrast between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God**. Previously Paul said in **1Co 1:21** ***For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.*** It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save those that believe, the wisdom of the world versus the wisdom of God, the wisdom of the world that comes to nothing, the wisdom of God which he calls a mystery.

v. 7 In the New Testament, the usage of the word is not something that is hidden, but rather it is now revealed that has been hidden. **In the Old Testament the cross of Christ was a mystery, though God spoke of it in the Old Testament.** Over and over, God spoke of the Messiah, suffering, being despised and rejected, and dying. Now the Jews did not understand that, but now through Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection, this mystery is now revealed

v. 3 Note that even the great Apostle Paul was weak, fearful and trembling at times. What an encouragement for us! It’s kind of nice to see his humanity like that! God is much bigger than that! He encouraged Paul, who stayed 18 months establishing the Corinthian church!

vs. 4-5 We are not to forget what the demonstration of **the Spirit and the power of God did in our hearts and minds as we heard and were born again!** The **simple gospel message works!** No persuasive words of human wisdom! When a weak message, by design, delivered by a weak messenger, we see that indeed **any demonstration of faith is strictly in the power of God!** We, as well as were the Corinthian believers, are the proof of that! **Are you putting any hope in the wisdom of men, with their lack of fear of God? Or is all your hope in the Power of God?**

vs. 6-7 The world glories in its wisdom, but how much more **we glory in the wisdom which God gives us, that only comes from God**, including the hidden wisdom of the cross which God ordained before the ages for our glory! Oh, **how thankful we should be for that wisdom!**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 2:8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1Co 2:9 But as it is written: "EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

1Co 2:10 But God has revealed them (not something that we have to wait for!) to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

v. 8 The mystery of the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, The plan of redemption was something that God ordained before He created the world. The Bible speaks about Christ, crucified from the foundations of the earth. The Bible speaks of our names being written in the Book of the Lamb from the foundations of the world. Something that God ordained from the beginning, that He would demonstrate His love to fallen man by sending His own Son to take their guilt and to die in their place. The wisdom of God ordained before the ages for our glory, which ***none of the rulers of this age knew***, for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Now, they were without excuse because God had declared it in the Word, but had they really known the wisdom of God, they would never have crucified Jesus Christ.

v. 9 Often, this verse is spoken of as heaven? You know the glories of heaven, the beauties of heaven, the excitement of heaven, ***eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him***! No doubt, it refers to heaven also, but in context here, Paul is talking about **the blindness of the worldly wisdom to the grace and the mercy of God, demonstrated in the cross of Jesus Christ. The plan of God's redemption of man!** Before the life and ministry of Jesus, God's people had a vague understanding of the glory of His work and what it would do for His people. But they really didn't - they couldn't - fully understand it ahead of time.

(Isaiah 64:4) The Apostle Paul has cited this passage here and applied it to Gospel times, and to evangelical truths, which are not discoverable by the light of nature; had there not been a revelation from God, the ears of men had never heard them, nor the eyes of men ever seen them);

v. 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. The forgiveness of sins, the hope of Eternal life. This walking in the Spirit, living after the things of the Spirit, **the worldly wisdom, the worldly man, never dreamed of this, but God has revealed that unto us by His Spirit.** These marvelous things of God, justification, redemption, righteousness by faith, things that God has revealed to us by His Spirit!

v. 8 The world glories in its wisdom, but we glory in His wisdom. The wisdom that we believers have is what comes from God, which is most important. The **wisdom on how to be saved**; the wisdom about **how to be forgiven and be redeemed**; the wisdom on **how to live a holy life**; the wisdom **about Spiritual gifts and ministry of the Holy Spirit** and the **wisdom of all the kinds of these things**. We know things that the world and **its wisdom could never know** in a thousand lifetimes apart from God! **What would you trade for the wisdom that you have received from God?** Nothing! Nothing that the world's wisdom has to offer!

How much do you really appreciate the wisdom of God in your life?

v. 9 Although this verse has application to heaven, here the Apostle Paul is **talking about the eyes and the ears and the heart of the world of unredeemed man. No unsaved person can see what you see every day**, with the eyes God has given you! **They don't hear** what you hear every single day. **They don't have in their hearts the glory** that you experience in your heart as a child of God every single day. The natural man can't know these things.

v. 10 No one can know anything about another unless they reveal it about themselves. So **here we see that God has revealed Himself!** Not by the revelation of the wisdom of man, but **this revelation only comes by His Holy Spirit!**

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1Co 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

1Co 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world (either Satan, the god of the world, the spirit that is in it, and rules over it; or the sinful carnal disposition of the men of the world), **but the Spirit who is from God** (the Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, is the gift of God to His people, and whom they receive through the doctrine of faith into their hearts, as a spirit of illumination, faith, comfort, adoption, truth, and as a seal and earnest of future glory) , **that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.**

1Co 2:13 These things we also speak (the things which have not been seen by the eye, heard by the ear, or understood by the heart of man; the things God has prepared for his people; the deep things of God; the things of God which are only known to the Spirit; the things that are freely given to them of God, and made known to them by the Spirit of God: these things are spoken out, preached, and declared to the sons of men), **not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**

v. 11 Who really knows what's in your heart? You do! But I don't know the motives of men. You don't know the truth about someone else. We do know those secrets of our heart, but who really knows the things of man, except the spirit of man, which is in him? **You wouldn't know anything about me, unless I reveal it to you, similarly, no one knows anything about God, unless God reveals it to us.** So with God, man doesn't understand or know God, but the Spirit of God, understands and knows God and reveals to us.

v. 12 Now we have a contrast between **the spirit of the world** and **the Spirit who is from God**. The spirit of the world is the spirit of rebellion, rebellion against God, against the things of God. The Spirit of God is what we have received as the Holy Spirit teaches us, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. Now, eye has not seen the worldly wisdom. Their ears have not heard, it hasn't entered into their hearts, but God has revealed unto us by His Spirit. And this Spirit of God has caused us to know the things that are freely given to us of God. The love, the salvation, the things freely given to us of God. We know them by the Spirit. In *John 14*, Jesus told His disciples, “I go to My Father, and you see Me no more. I have many things to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He the Spirit of Truth has come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall speak not of Himself but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak. And He will show you things to come. So the promise of the Holy Spirit, to be our instructor, **to teach us, to show us** things to come. So Paul said, we have received the Spirit, **who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.**

v. 13 So not in man's wisdom, but that which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. The worldly wise approach with the worldly wisdom and impress by their wisdom, **rather than just allowing the Spirit of God to unfold the truth as He compares the spiritual things with the spiritual.**

v. 11 God has chosen to reveal Himself to man, but that revelation of Himself only comes through the Holy Spirit! It doesn't matter how great your eyes are, or ears or heart, how deep their emotions, how great is your intellect – it comes only by the revelation that the Holy Spirit gives. **On what are you depending for your knowledge of God and His will for you?**

vs. 12-13 One is only able to understand when you have, comparing things with spiritual, and you now you have a tremendous dynamic – a spiritual person receiving the things from the Holy Spirit! No one knows the things of the Spirit, unless you have the Holy Spirit within you as a born again believer. He then reveals spiritual things to you.

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1Co 2:14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

v. 14 So now we have another contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man. The natural man, the man with the nature of the flesh, who lives and is controlled by his fleshly desires, by the lust of his flesh. He lives after the flesh. He is controlled by the flesh.

In contrast is the spiritual man, who is controlled by the Spirit of God. One man whose mind is the mind of the flesh, who do mind earthly things, Paul said, that's the natural man. His mind is the mind of the flesh, versus the man with the mind of the spirit. Now Paul said the mind of the flesh is death. But the mind of the Spirit is life and peace and joy. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him.

The natural man doesn't understand the things of the Spirit. They are an enigma unto him. When you talk to him about justification, about redemption, about sanctification, he doesn't comprehend. He doesn't understand. **He doesn't have a clue as to the glorious things that God has provided** for mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ!

The natural man just doesn't understand the things of the Spirit nor can he know them. It isn't that he just doesn't. He can't know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Comparing spiritual with spiritual, Paul said. These things are spiritually discerned. It is only as the Holy Spirit opens up our understanding, opens up our minds to understand. It's interesting that God has chosen the foolishness of preaching as the instrument of opening man's minds to the things of the Spirit, but the natural man cannot understand them, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. In fact, they are foolishness unto him. He is just at a loss when it comes to spiritual comprehension of God's truth.

God has justified us. The records against us have been destroyed. Now the natural man doesn't understand that. How that God can so completely forgive us that the indictments are all dismissed. I stand before God innocent as though I had never sinned. **The natural man, the natural mind just doesn't grasp this. It's foolishness unto him. He can't know them because they are spiritual discerned.**

v. 14 Do you frequently have your unbelieving friends question **why do you love to go to church and immerse yourself in the things of the gospel and the Spirit?**

Dr. HARRY IRONSIDE – Story of the Changing Power of the Gospel!

Dr. Ironside's preaching was simple and unspectacular. He was known for attracting large audiences, whenever he spoke! With no outline or notes, he preached extempore from a passage of Scripture, rarely on a topic. He never sat down to prepare sermons as such, but was continually on the lookout for illustrations and ideas to fill out his future messages. His unconventional places and ways of speaking often provided many unusual and humorous opportunities. Preaching on a San Francisco street corner one evening, he was challenged by an atheist, a leader of the old I.W.W. movement, to debate on Christianity versus atheism. Before the crowd of 300 or 400 people, he accepted the challenge—adding, however, that he had one condition. The atheist must present at least two bona fide witnesses who had been saved from lives of disgrace and degradation by their belief, while he would provide no less than 100 who had been saved from the same state by the gospel of Christ. Hurriedly the atheist declined the terms and left, to the delight of the crowd.

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1Co 2:15 But he who is spiritual (one who has the Holy Spirit within him) **judges** (*anakrinō* - discerns, understands) **all things, yet he himself is rightly judged** (is not understood) **by no one.**

1Co 2:16 For "WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD THAT HE MAY INSTRUCT HIM?" But we have the mind of Christ (He has endowed us with the same disposition, being born again by His Spirit; therefore we are capable of knowing His mind and receiving the teachings of His Spirit. These teachings we do receive, and therefore are well qualified to convey them to others.)

v. 15 The *spiritual* man is qualified to sift, to examine, to discern, because he has the eyes of his heart enlightened (*Eph_1:18*) and is no longer blinded by the god of this world (*2Co_4:4*). There is a great lesson for Christians who know by personal experience the things of the Spirit of God. Men of intellectual gifts who are ignorant of the things of Christ talk learnedly and patronizingly about things of which they are grossly ignorant. The spiritual man is superior to all this false knowledge. The natural man does not understand the things of the spirit. They are foolishness unto him, **but he who is spiritual understands these things.) all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.**

v. 16 For who has known the mind of the Lord,... The deep counsels of His heart, the scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ, as designed in His eternal mind, the sense of the Spirit of God in the writings of the Old Testament, the things of the Spirit of God, or the doctrines of grace more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation; not any natural man, by the light of truth and strength of reason, has known any of these things. The apostle either cites or alludes to ***Isa_40:10-14. that He may instruct him?*** not the Lord, who needs no instruction from any, nor can any teach and instruct him, nor would any be so bold and insolent as to attempt it nor does the knowledge of the mind of the Lord qualify any for such a work; since if he knows ever so much of it, he cannot know more than the Lord himself: but the spiritual man, whom a natural man, being ignorant of the mind of the Lord, cannot instruct; and so the words give a very proper and sufficient reason why the spiritual man is not discerned, judged, convinced, and instructed by the natural man: **but we have the mind of Christ;** the same with "the mind of the Lord" which proves that Christ is the Lord, or Jehovah, and so truly and properly God; and which is to be understood, not only of the apostles and ministers of the Gospel, but of all true believers; and therefore want no instruction, as they can have none from the natural man; though chiefly of the former, whereby they were abundantly qualified for the further instruction even of spiritual men..

v. 15 We believers know both worlds, before we were born again we thought as a natural man, but now we also know the world of a spiritual man. This wisdom is revealed only by the Spirit. **Do you ever get frustrated** when an unbeliever just can't seem to understand the obvious truth from Scripture? For those unbelievers whom we have already received the **gospel, we need to continue to show God's love, answer any questions and pray for their salvation!**

v. 16 Who has known the mind of the Lord that He may instruct Him? **Do you think you know the mind of Christ? Why do we know? Because of the revelation to us by the work of the Holy Spirit in us! That's where the revelation comes from.**

SUMMARY:

Chapter One - Weakness, weakness, simple message by design. Weak messengers will never work! Nobody will listen! They are smarter than this, you've got to get them another way!

Chapter Two – IT WORKS! Just like at Corinth, it works in you! What makes the gospel powerful is that He stands behind it and He testifies to the truthfulness of it in every human heart that is eager to know the truth!