

“Revealed by The Holy Spirit”

1 Cor 2:6-16

5.16.21

1 Corinthians 2:6–16 (ESV)

⁶ Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— ¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶ “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

We have several youth graduating from High School from both campuses. As our youth transition to their next phase in life whether heading into the workplace, military, or college they are embarking on a quest to gain wisdom in order to live effectively. In this message we are going to be looking at two different types of wisdom as well as understanding the Holy Spirit’s role in imparting the most essential wisdom.

In our series on 1 Corinthians we turn to chapter 2. There was a contingent of Christians in the Corinthian church that was infatuated with new knowledge, gaining new wisdom. They were enamored by eloquent words. They loved to hear lofty speeches. They were looking down on the gospel. Paul wanted to change their perspective.

When first bringing them the good news, Paul chose not to use lofty words or eloquent speech because that is what they wanted to hear. 1 Corinthians 2:1, 4-5 (NLT), “When I first came to you, dear brothers and sisters, I didn’t use lofty words and impressive wisdom to tell you God’s secret plan...⁴ And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. ⁵ I did this so you would trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God.”

Paul begins this section by contrasting two kinds of wisdom. Verse 6, “Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

The two kinds of wisdom are:

The wisdom of this world and wisdom from God.

Wisdom is accumulated knowledge or insight. Wisdom of the world is not all bad.

There is helpful wisdom. For example, wisdom in finances- knowing how to maximize the money you make by saving and investing. There are life hacks to make everyday tasks easier. There is wisdom in how to be a better student so that you can graduate with a higher grade point average. There is all kinds of practical wisdom to impact your today and tomorrow.

But there is also worldly wisdom that is contrary God’s Word. It is very prevalent in our culture. All roads lead to God. Love is whatever you want it to be. Do what feels good.

Paul describes wisdom of the world as “of this age” and “of the “rulers of this age.” Of this age means this wisdom is temporal. It is not lasting.

This wisdom comes from earthly sources- including “rulers or leaders of our age.”

Contrast that with the other wisdom. This wisdom comes from God the Creator Himself. His wisdom is not temporal. It is eternal. Human wisdom changes consistently. God’s wisdom doesn’t change. It remains the same.

In verse 7, Paul describes God’s wisdom as “secret and hidden.” The word secret can also be translated “mystery.” Leon Morris writes, “Mystery does not mean a puzzle we find difficult to solve. It means a secret we are wholly unable to penetrate, but which **God has now revealed.**”

This mystery was hidden- meaning it existed from before. It was not something thought up on the spot. This mystery was “decreed before the ages for our glory.” That means, God had a plan thought out and in place before creation ever existed.

This plan was “for our glory” meaning for our best. Before time began God was concerned for our well-being. He knew we would sin. He knew that we would be separated from Him. Out of His deep love and concern, He planned Christ’s entrance into the world in order to rescue us through His death and resurrection so that He could bring us into His presence for eternity.

Ephesians 3:4–6 (NLT), "As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. ⁵ **God did not reveal it to previous generations**, but now **by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets.** ⁶ And this is God’s plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God’s children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus.”

This gospel was hidden for thousands of years. You could get glimpses of it in the Old Testament but it wasn't something that you could figure out on your own. Paul explains in verse 9, "But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him."

No one would've thought up what God planned. No one would've figured out God's gospel without revelation. And even today, Christians cannot fathom all that God has in store for you. Your best days on earth will not compare to one moment in eternity. "Better is one day in your courts than thousands elsewhere." The best truly is yet to come.

How does one know a secret without it being told to him or her? We see in verse 10 who told the secret. "These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God." God's secret was not known by any way other than revelation from the Holy Spirit.

The rulers of the world, the philosophers of the world, the wise men of the world, the religious leaders of the world didn't understand God's mystery. Verse 8, "For if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Who are the "The rulers of this world"? Does Paul mean literal human rulers? Or does Paul mean evil spiritual forces of satan and his demons? Or does he mean both? The truth is satan is behind evil rulers. He is behind wicked countries. We could reasonably think both human and spiritual forces.

Neither the human rulers nor the evil spiritual forces knew what they were doing when they put Christ on the cross. The human rulers thought they were disposing of a blasphemous man from Nazareth who claimed to be God.

Satan, knew who Jesus was but he thought that once Jesus died, it was over. Warren Wiersbe wrote, "Satan thought that Calvary was God's great defeat; but it turned out to be God's greatest victory and Satan's defeat!"

Colossians 2:15 (NIV84), "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

The death and resurrection of Jesus resulted in saving mankind from their sins. Jesus has won. He is victorious. God's mystery has been revealed.

In the culture today especially, there is a strong push to categorize people into order to place them in different camps. They look at the color of your skin or your gender or by where you land on the tax bracket or how much education you have.

God doesn't have many categories. In fact, He only recognizes two categories. Paul explains:

The two categories of people- natural and spiritual.

Look at verse 14, "The natural person." Verse 15, "The spiritual person." Natural people are defined here as people who do not have God's Spirit. They are simply people whose hearts and minds have not been touched with the renewing work of the Holy Spirit. Because of that they rarely think about eternity. They rarely think about what God's will is.

William Barclay wrote, "This kind of individual "lives as if there was nothing beyond the physical life and there were no needs other than material needs." Such a person... "ranks the amassing of material things as the supreme end of life... and has never a thought beyond this world. He cannot understand the things of God."

A spiritual person is someone who has received the Holy Spirit when he or she accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord. This person's mind and heart have been renewed

by the Spirit. Look at verse 12, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God."

To have the Holy Spirit inside you is a big deal. It is a big deal because no one can truly understand God except God Himself. That is why

The Holy Spirit knows all things. (an additional point to add for those who are taking notes) Verse 10, "...For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God."

The Spirit knows the deep things of God. Picture the deepest spot in any ocean- called Challenger Deep. It is 1.7 miles deep. Few have gone there. The depths of God is deeper than any ocean. No human has ever understood the depths of God. Only the Spirit understands God fully.

Paul then uses an analogy in verse 11. "For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."

Who knows what really is going on inside a person? Just like only the Holy Spirit comprehends God, so only the spirit lowercase s, the immaterial personhood of that person knows.

What is one of the most frequent questions asked in a marriage? What are you feeling? Or what are you thinking?

A husband is quiet and not communicating. The wife **may have an idea** what is going on inside her husband but she is not completely sure so she asks, "What are you thinking about?"

A wife is quiet and not communicating. The husband **has no idea what is going on** inside her so with a little apprehension he asks, "What are you thinking about?"

The inner person knows. And so the Spirit knows God's plans, His passions, He knows everything about Him.

How can humans understand God, His plans, His purposes? It is imparted to us by the Spirit. Spiritual truths are imparted, gifted to us by God's Spirit.

The gospel is not complicated. It is rather simple. Charles Spurgeon wrote, "The things that are essential to salvation are so exceedingly simple that no child need sit down in despair of understanding the things which make for his peace. Christ crucified is not a riddle for sages, but a plain truth for plain people."

The gospel is: God loves us and created us for a personal relationship with Him. But all have sinned and are separated from a relationship with God. No matter how hard we tried to get right with God, our sin kept blocking our way. For without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. God sent Jesus, His perfect Son to shed His sinless blood for us. When we trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins we can be made right with God.

It is not that natural people cannot understand the gospel. It is that:

Natural people do not accept spiritual truths.

Verse 14, "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."

The word "accept" here means to receive or to welcome. When a natural person hears the good news they do not welcome or receive it. To them, it is "folly." Remember this word from a few weeks back? 1 Corinthians 1:23 (NLT), "So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense."

During my Senior year in college, I set aside a day and time each week to purposely try to share the good news with other people hanging around the Student Union.

I would stop and talk to people who were not working hard on their studies. They might be eating, or conversing with others or staring off in space- that was before cell phones. People now no longer stare off in space but have their eyes glued to a screen.

The majority of the people, when I brought up the name Jesus, immediately said, "Not interested." They had no interest in having a spiritual discussion.

There were people who were willing to have a conversation but were more interested in trying to minimize the truth of the gospel- they saw it as foolish.

There were some who were interested in hearing the good news and they were tracking all the way until it came to the decision to choose Jesus. They understood the gospel but didn't want to submit their lives to Christ. They wanted to have fun and live for themselves. They saw Christianity as an enemy of fun.

Jesus said, "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴ But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it."
Matthew 7:13–14 (NLT)

But there are those who when hearing the good news will bow their hearts to Jesus. Natural people become spiritual when they accept the good news of Jesus Christ.

The Trinity is involved in turning natural people into spiritual people. You can see the Trinity- Father, Son and Spirit involved in making spiritual people- in this text.

Warren Wiersbe explains some encouraging words about the Trinity's involvement, He writes, "Many people get confused (or frightened) when they hear about election and predestination. As far as the Father is concerned, I was saved when He chose me in

Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4); but I knew nothing about that the night I was saved! It was a hidden part of God's wonderful eternal plan.

As far as God the Son is concerned, I was saved when He died for me on the cross. He died for the sins of the whole world, yet the whole world is not saved. This is where the Spirit comes in: as far as the Spirit is concerned, I was saved in May 1945 at a Youth for Christ rally where I heard Billy Graham preach the Gospel. It was then that the Holy Spirit applied the Word to my heart, I believed, and God saved me."

For some of you here and online, God has chosen you before you were born. Jesus died for your sins. And the Holy Spirit is working. It is time for you to say "Yes" to Jesus. It is time to believe and accept Christ as your Savior and Lord."

Once you say yes, you are no longer a natural person. The Holy Spirit enters your life and you become a spiritual person. Think about that. God's Spirit living in you.

Bart Millard, the lead singer for Mercy Me, told the story about his future conversation with Moses in heaven. Millard said that when he gets to heaven he is going to go find Moses and ask, "What was it like to part the Red Sea." Moses will interrupt Bart and respond, "What I want to know is what was it like to have God living inside you?"

Believer in Jesus, God lives inside you by His Holy Spirit. That is amazing news. That is why Jesus could say to His disciples, "It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." John 16:7

What Jesus is saying is, "You are better off with the Spirit inside you than to have Me walk beside you." **Why were the disciples better off? Why are we better off?**

We are better off because the Counselor as Jesus calls Him lives in us. God lives in us.

As a result of the Spirit living in us,

Spiritual people have the mind of Christ.

Verse 15, “The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.

¹⁶ “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”

Paul is saying that no natural person has any understanding about spiritual things so they are unable to truly judge us. But they will try.

Do you ever hear anyone tell Muslims how they ought to live better? Or Buddhists to shape up? But Christians are called out by natural people all the time.

Paul is writing that the spiritual person **can ultimately only be judged by God**. That does not mean, that brothers and sisters in Christ are not to challenge each other or keep each other from sin. The NT is full of scriptures about turning our brothers and sisters back to Christlike living. In fact, chapter 5 of 1 Corinthians is a strong warning toward the Corinthian Christians.

What does it mean to have the mind of Christ?

To “have the mind of Christ” means to look at life from Jesus’ point of view. It means to have His values and desires in mind. It means to think God’s thoughts and not think as the world thinks. We receive this viewpoint by the Spirit who resides in us.

Instead of looking at life from a worldly perspective we are to see as Jesus does.

Philippians 2:5–8 (ESV), “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

What can we apply from this passage?

First, if you have yet to give your life to Christ what are you waiting for? Take the step today and you will experience the saving work of Jesus, receive the Holy Spirit and will forever see life from very different eyes.

Second, for those who are already believers. Realize there is no room for pride. To receive understanding of the gospel and to accept it and receive the Holy Spirit who resides in you is all a gift. It wasn't acquired by intellect or hard work or clean living. It is all a gift! Instead of pride be grateful. Be thankful. If it wasn't for God you would not know Him.

Third, just as the disciples shared the mystery with others, God wants us to share it with people. There are people around us who have never heard the good news. They don't understand that God deeply loves them and created them for a special relationship. We know the truth.

Ask God to lead you to people who need and want to hear the good news. Jesus says the harvest is ready. He is waiting on workers. Are you willing to be His harvester?

Let's pray

o.b.g.