



DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

SERIES: 1 CORINTHIANS •

MESSAGE: GOD'S SPIRIT VS THE WORLD'S SPIRIT •

1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-16 • 5/15/2022

MAIN POINT

We tap into God's power to live for Him when we ask the Spirit to open our eyes to God's Word.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What was the boldest thing you did to get to know your spouse or a person you have had a relationship with? Share a brief story with the group.

What are some specific things we do when we want to know other people better?

How many of you have struggled with growing in your relationship with God? What do you usually do when you don't feel like you are growing closer

to Him?

Although no human being can know everything about God, our understanding of Him and His purposes always has room to grow. God will give us the needed spiritual insight to understand more about Him through the Holy Spirit's involvement in our lives.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-10.

What influences tend to blind people to the revelation of God's mystery—salvation to all people through Jesus' death and resurrection?

What qualities or actions exemplify spiritual maturity to you?

What is the relationship between spiritual maturity, the Holy Spirit, and the ability to understand God's wisdom?

Christ-centered wisdom is for the mature, which Paul understood to be those who had been saved. These were the ones open to God's Spirit and thus were enabled by Him to comprehend God's wisdom. Paul stressed that only believers would understand and benefit from God's wisdom. The wisdom that Paul proclaimed was not a worldly wisdom, described here as a wisdom of this age. Rather it was the understanding of God's offer of salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection, revealed to unbelievers through the Holy Spirit.

What four statements about God’s wisdom does Paul make in verses 7–8? See the commentary section of the study to help you explain these four statements.

How do the truths in these verses make you feel about your relationship with God? What should our response be in light of these truths?

How can you gain a greater desire for and understanding of the “depths of God” (v. 10)?

Articulate speakers, profound philosophers, or intellectual scholars on their own cannot grasp God’s plan to redeem people through Christ. The Spirit alone understands the deep things of God; He alone can give understanding of those things to others.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 2:11-16.

What concepts did Paul contrast in these verses? What lessons in this passage apply to your life?

What do you think are the spiritual things Paul said are given freely to believers (v. 12)?

God reveals truth to us through the Spirit of God. One aspect of the Spirit’s role is to reveal to us believers what has been freely given to us by God—salvation in Jesus Christ. We have His full salvation the moment we receive Christ. Realizing and experiencing all the benefits and blessings of that salvation, however, is a learning process facilitated by the Holy Spirit.

According to verse 14, who can’t understand the things of God and why?

How did you feel about God and Christianity before your salvation? What changed in you that led to your conversion?

What does it mean to have the mind of Christ? When in your spiritual journey did the “mind of Christ” (v. 16) start to make a difference in your values, choices, and decisions?

What can you do to exercise “the mind of Christ” more fully in your life?

People without Christ do not have the Holy Spirit to help them comprehend God’s revealed truth. That is the reason they do not welcome what comes from God’s Spirit. When presented with truth about God, they refuse to believe. They reject the gospel as foolishness. However, those with the Spirit of the Lord have the mind of Christ. Knowing the mind of the Lord and having the mind of Christ are synonymous phrases for Paul. To understand the wisdom of God is to possess the mind of Christ. Therefore, the Spirit is constantly revealing the mystery of God, namely, Christ and Him crucified.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

The Spirit desires to reveal to you more and more about Christ and about what in this life really matters and what doesn’t. Be sensitive and obedient to the Him as He leads you daily to keep your focus on the Lord Jesus Christ. He provides you with all the wisdom you need to live as a mature Christian.

Where do you need the guidance of the Holy Spirit most in your life this coming week?

What will you do differently today in light of what we’ve read and studied?

Who needs you to share the gospel with him or her this week? What steps will you take to practically trust God to communicate His truth to that person?

PRAYER

Pray that your group members would continue to grow in the mind of Christ and would be more attentive to the Spirit's work in their lives this week. Pray that your group members would have a renewed desire to study Scripture for the sake of growing closer to God this week.

COMMENTARY

1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-16

In verses 1-5, Paul distanced his motive, method, and message from those who enticed hearers with entertaining but empty words. While he denounced the self-seeking wisdom of the world, Paul highly valued and shared God's wisdom. In 1:30, he defined God's wisdom as Christ Jesus. In 2:6-10, Paul defined several elements of this Christ-defined wisdom he taught and on which he relied.

Verse 6. In verse 6, he shifted to the first-person plural, we, including himself along with the Corinthian believers. The Christ-centered wisdom of which he spoke, therefore, applies to the whole church as well as to Paul. Christ-centered wisdom is for the mature. These were the ones open to God's Spirit and thus were enabled by Him to comprehend God's wisdom. (In 2:6, the mature is probably synonymous with "the saved." Paul was contrasting saved and lost people, not discussing levels of spiritual maturity as in 3:1-4.) Paul stressed that only believers would understand and benefit from God's wisdom. The wisdom that Paul proclaimed was not a worldly

wisdom, described here as a wisdom of this age, or of the rulers of this age, those who so strongly influence the thinking and behavior of worldly people. Those who subscribe to that kind of wisdom are coming to nothing, Paul said.

Verses 7-8. Paul made four statements about God's wisdom. First, it is a mystery. The word describes something that had been hidden but has been revealed (see Eph. 3:4-5; Col. 1:26-27). Therefore, God's wisdom is wisdom once hidden from human reason that has been revealed in the Person and work of Jesus Christ "by His Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:10). Second, God's wisdom was predestined before the ages. God determined this wisdom, now revealed in Christ, before creation. This mystery has always been and always will be God's plan for redeeming sinful human beings. Third, God's wisdom is for our glory. God planned the revelation of redemption in Christ before time began. He reveals Christ in the current age. When Christ returns and is revealed as Judge and King, the completion of our salvation will result in our glory as we receive our resurrection bodies, equipped to live with God for eternity. Fourth, God's wisdom is unknown by the rulers of this age. The truth about Jesus Christ is revealed only by the Spirit (v. 10); therefore, those religious, intellectual, and political rulers who placed their confidence only in this world's wisdom were not able to understand God's wisdom.

Verse 9. This verse does not refer to the majestic and as yet unseen glories of heaven but to God's plan of salvation for lost sinners. Articulate speakers, profound philosophers, or intellectual scholars on their own cannot grasp God's plan to redeem people through Christ.

Verse 10. The difference between those who "crucified the Lord of glory" (v. 8) and "the mature" (v. 6) is an understanding of God's wisdom, which is revealed only by the Spirit. He alone understands the deep things of God; He alone can give understanding of those things to others.

Verse 11. Paul began this verse with for, which introduces an elaboration of what he said in verse 10 about the Holy Spirit's role of revealing God's truths to us. Paul contended by analogy that the only one who knows what goes on inside a man is the spirit of the man that is in him, a way of describing one's self-consciousness. So, the only way for others actually to know what we are thinking is for us to reveal our thoughts to them. Similarly, the only person who knows God is God alone. The only way we can actually know anything about God's plans and purposes is for God to

reveal them to us. He reveals truth to us through the Spirit of God. In the context of chapter 2, the Holy Spirit has revealed to believers God's saving purpose in Christ.

Verse 12. One aspect of the Spirit's role is to reveal to us believers what has been freely given to us by God. What has He graciously chosen on His own to give us? He has given us salvation in Jesus Christ. We have His full salvation the moment we receive Christ. Realizing and experiencing all the benefits and blessings of that salvation, however, is a learning process facilitated by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 13. Paul was among those who had learned much from the Holy Spirit. He was explaining spiritual things to spiritual people who could understand because they also had the Holy Spirit to help them. Would you like to know what spiritual things Paul was teaching? Begin to read the New Testament letters God inspired him to write, asking God's Spirit to guide you into the truths revealed in them.

Verse 14. The natural man is a term that describes all who are without Christ; the term is opposite of "spiritual people" (v. 13). People without Christ do not have the Holy Spirit to help them comprehend God's revealed truth. That is the reason they do not welcome what comes from God's Spirit. In other words, when presented with truth about God, they refuse to believe. They reject the gospel and all it implies as foolishness. Lost people simply are not able to know the truth of the gospel on their own, for that truth can only be evaluated or discerned as truth through the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, people who reject the Spirit's work in their hearts cannot develop a way to discern God's truth.

Verses 15-16. In vivid contrast to "the natural man" of verse 14, the spiritual person (the one with the Spirit) can evaluate everything, can discern truth from error. This does not imply infallibility. When speaking of spiritual matters, however, the person with the Spirit is not subject to the one without the Spirit. In other words, unbelievers cannot render correct judgments about believers or about the validity of their faith in Christ.

Paul then included a quote from Isaiah 40:13. The rhetorical question demands the answer that no one has known the Lord's mind except the Lord Himself. Therefore, those with the Spirit of the Lord have the mind of Christ. The word translated mind means more than mere thoughts; it includes the idea of a mind-set or disposition.

Paul's concluding statement is significant for two reasons. First, knowing the mind of the Lord and having the mind of Christ are synonymous phrases for Paul. To know

the mind of the Lord, one must have the Spirit. Thus, to have the Spirit is to have the mind of Christ. Secondly, Paul brought to conclusion his argument begun in verse 7. To understand the wisdom of God is to possess the mind of Christ. Therefore, the Spirit is constantly revealing the mystery of God, namely, Christ and Him crucified.