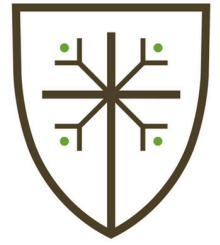


# Lacking Nothing

A Sermon Series on 1 Corinthians

## SERMON NOTES



June 15, 2025

### SERMON INFO

#### TITLE

"Spiritual People"

#### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

#### TEXTS

Isaiah 40:12-13, 29-31

1 Corinthians 2:12-16; 3:1-9, 16-17,  
21-22

Matthew 16:13-17, 21-23

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where have you experienced the lack of distinction between the Church and the world against which Paul warns the Corinthians?
2. How do we maintain distinctions from the world without falling into strife and jealousy with our neighbors and one another?

### SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, in our series on 1 Corinthians, Tim asked the question, "What is spiritual growth and what does it mean to be a spiritual people?"

#### Distinctions

In our passage today, the apostle Paul distinguishes between two types of people – spiritual people and natural people. A spiritual person is simply a Christian, someone united to Jesus. Tim spoke of the three ways someone is united to Jesus laid out by Lesslie Newbigin in his book, *The Household of God*: through hearing God's Word and believing, sacramentally through baptism and the Lord's Supper, and through the Holy Spirit who lives and dwells in us. Paul focuses on this third way. Spiritual people are those united to Jesus by the Holy Spirit that lives in them.

A natural person is one who is not united to Jesus in any of these ways – no faith, no Sacraments, no Spirit. They simply think that the world around them and what they see and experience is all that is. While this could be interpreted as very exclusive and even arrogant, it is simply the boundaries of doctrine and ethics required in order to have any religion or faith that is distinct from the world. The way that Paul articulates that to the Corinthians is the least arrogant way possible. He reminds them that they are not Christians because of any merit of their own but because God chose them, united them to Christ, and is at work transforming their lives. If God did this for each of us, if he changed us, he can do so for the non-Christian, the natural person.

#### Definitions

Paul tells the Corinthians that yes, they are Christians, but they are being ruled by something other than Jesus. They haven't grown or matured in their faith. Instead, they've fallen into strife with one another. The word "strife" comes from the Greek word *eris*, also the name for the Greek god of strife. The gods were projections of what Paul refers to as "merely human" behavior. We know this behavior and have all experienced it. The general consensus of our age is that this behavior is caused by low self-esteem. But there is a recent shift in thought back to the views of the ancient world which said just the opposite. Bad behavior is a result of too high self-esteem, a "threatened egoism."

The other word Paul uses in chapter three is the word "jealous" from the Greek word *zêlos* from which we get zealous. It means to boil or burn over something - an inordinate desire to hold on to what you have because you think you are less of a person if you don't have it. This jealousy was causing the Corinthians to hate and tear down their neighbors and other Christians. Jealousy was the root of their strife and the root of this jealousy is prideful discontent.

The cure for pride in the Christian is finding out by revelation of the Holy Spirit that God is not proud. If God was proud, he could never accept the proud person. Instead, as we read in Philippians 2, God in Christ "humbled himself becoming obedient to death" in order that the pride in the human heart might also be put to death.

Because he humbled himself, we too can let go of the prideful discontent that drives our worry and strife. We have been given all things in Christ. We are lacking in no good thing.