

1 Corinthians 2:6-16 The Spirit's Ministry of Revealing

In this passage Paul elaborates on the Holy Spirit's ministry of enlightening that he mentioned in verses 4 & 5. He does this but using three contrasts:

- 1) 2:6-10a, Those who receive God's wisdom and those who do not.
- 2) 2:10b-13, The Spirit of God and the spirit of the world.
- 3) 2:14-16, The natural man and the spiritual man.

Paul's purpose throughout this passage is to get the Corinthians to understand who they are in Christ and to stop acting as men of flesh (3:1).

True wisdom originates in God and is hidden from the world.

Verse 6

Wisdom – Although God's wisdom in the gospel is simple and clear there is a depth to this message that only spiritually mature believers can fully grasp.

Mature – In 3:1-3 Paul will point out that they are not mature.

The rulers of this age – The intellectual trend setters which included those who crucified Christ (2:8, Acts 3:17-18).

Who are passing away – Christ will end their rule at the proper time (15:24-25)

Verse 7

Mystery – A truth that had not been previously revealed.

Before the ages to our glory – The gospel is not a post-script. God has always intended to glorify those who put their faith in His Son.

Verses 8-9

Lord of glory – This speaks of Christ's divine nature. It is through Him that we share that glory (verse 7).

As it is written – A loose quotation of Isaiah 64:4 and 65:17. There is no means open to man to comprehend the things that God has planned for those who love Him other than divine revelation.

True wisdom is revealed by the Spirit of God.

Verse 10

God revealed them through the Spirit – Every believer has the means of perceiving the wisdom of God.

Verse 11

The spirit of man – This relates to what dwells in every person, our self-consciousness (Proverbs 20:27)

The thoughts of God – Only believers, those who have the Spirit of God, can understand spiritual things.

Verses 12-13

We have received - All believers have received the Holy Spirit who helps us understand the mind of God. Unbelievers cannot understand the things of God as they have no supernatural means of discernment.

Spiritual thoughts with spiritual words – The Spirit not only helps us understand spiritual truth, He also helps us communicate spiritual truth.

True wisdom is only understood by the spiritually mature.

Verse 14

A natural man – Most commentators believe this is referring to an unbeliever who cannot accept spiritual things because he does not have the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Foolishness – See 1:18. The gospel is the power of God but man can only understand this through the work of the Spirit.

Verse 15

He who is spiritual – The mature believer is able to understand and judge all things and yet cannot be judged in spiritual matters by the unbeliever or carnal Christian.

Verse 16

Paul quotes Isaiah 40:13 (see also Romans 11:34) to marvel at the mind of God. Mature believers have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5) and are better able to understand.