

Paul contrasts Five types of people in Corinth:

1. "Spiritual" People contrasted with "Natural" People

^{2:13-14} 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.

- What do "Natural" people lack that "Spiritual" people possess?

2. "Mature" "spiritual people" contrasted with "Infants"

^{2:6-7} Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age,... ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

^{3:1} But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

- What do "Infant" Christians lack in contrast to "Mature" Christians?

3. "Infants" contrasted with those who are "still of the flesh"

^{3:2-4} I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? ⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

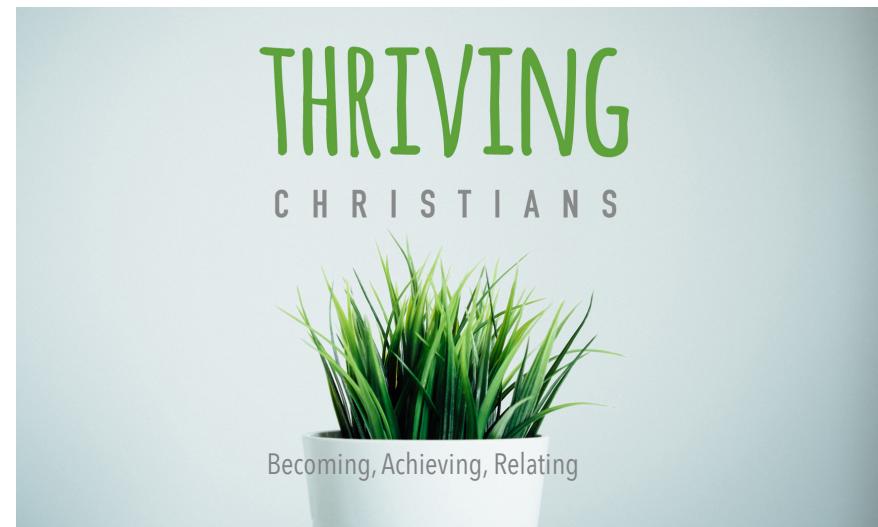
- What do "still Infant" Christians lack in contrast to "Infant" Christians?

Becoming: How to Thrive/Flourish as a Spiritual Person.

Ephesians 4:7-24 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!—²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to **put off your old self**, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to **be renewed in the spirit of your minds,** ²⁴ and to **put on the new self**, created after the likeness of God...

Next Sunday, May 3, 2020: Part 3 "Thriving Christians"

Zakk Ulher will focus again on the "Becoming" segment of our lives entitled: **Thriving by seeing our hearts.**



Today's Scripture Reading: Proverbs 3:13-16; 21-22

Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,
¹⁴ for the gain from her is better than gain from silver
and her profit better than gold.

¹⁵ She is more precious than jewels,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.

¹⁶ Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.

¹⁷ Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all her paths are peace.

¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called blessed.

²¹ My son, do not lose sight of these—
keep sound wisdom and discretion,

²² and they will be life for your soul
and adornment for your neck.

1Cor. 2:6-7

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. ⁷But
we impart a secret and
hidden wisdom of God,
which God decreed before
the ages for our glory.

1Corinthians 2:13-3:4

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. ¹²Now 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. ¹³And we impart this
in words not taught by
human wisdom but taught
by the Spirit, interpreting
spiritual truths to those
who are spiritual.

wisdom of this age / wisdom of God: Paul is contrasting two kinds of wisdom/influence here - God's and humanity's. There is a wisdom of this age/world which is not of God. This wisdom is a cause for human boasting and is in the end, futile. The human sophist's goal was persuasion by the manipulation of arguments and skillful rhetoric. Paul's goal was the manifestation of God's power in people's lives.
the mature: The mature one spoken about here is not some "elite" person, but rather a "spiritual" person - one of the "called" spoken of in 1:2. The mature spiritual person is one who has listened and aligned themselves (mind and heart) with the teaching of the Spirit. They have a deepening understanding of God and have come to know the mind of Christ (2:16).

who knows a person's thoughts: Paul contrasts two influencers: "Spirit of God, Who knows the thoughts of God and the "spirit of the world". Paul also speaks here of the human "spirit", meaning the inner part of a human being; the thinking, desiring, self.

received... the Spirit who is from God that we might understand: Paul has nothing good to say about the "spirit of the world". He sees this spirit as the author of "human wisdom" - the condition that causes people to boastfully think they have no need for the mercy of God. The work of the "Spirit who is from God" is that of teaching and interpreting spiritual truths to humans whom God has made "spiritual". The "Spirit" can do this because this "Spirit" is the third person of the Triune God which all Christians have "received".

natural person does not accept: Who is the natural person in verse 14? According to Paul it's everyone who does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. The natural person cannot understand the revelation of God spoken about by Paul - to the natural person's spirit and mind it sounds like folly. The "spiritual" or "mature"

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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.

^{3:1} But I, brothers, could
not address you as
spiritual people, but as
people of the flesh, as
infants in Christ. ² I fed
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ready, ³ for you are still of
the flesh. For while there
is jealousy and strife
among you, are you not
of the flesh and behaving
only in a human way?

(v.6) person is one, who having received (12) the Spirit, has called upon the name of the Lord (1:2) and can now understand the Spirit's revelation.

The spiritual person judges: Unlike the natural person, the person with the Spirit is able to bring his or her questions and challenges to God by the Spirit and discover how the wisdom of the cross applies to his/her situation. Those who are spiritual, Paul says, are not subject to merely human judgments, but can investigate/judge/ discern what must be spiritually discerned.

we have the mind of Christ: Paul quotes a question from Isaiah 40:13, "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" Paul's unexpected answer is that "we have the mind of Christ."

address you... as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ: When Paul comes to apply what he has said about the reception of spiritual things, God's truth and wisdom, to the Corinthians, he does not address them as "natural," "those without the Spirit" (2:14), because, as "saints" (1:2) and brothers and sisters (3:1), they do have the Spirit. But they are not spiritual (3:1), they are baby Christians—those unaccustomed to walking in the Spirit; they are of the "flesh", meaning, willfully rebellious Christians—those not in step with the Spirit, who thus prolong spiritual babyhood and invite God's fatherly discipline.

even now you are not yet ready: Now Paul makes a harsh charge: He sees clear indications that the Corinthian Christians are still in need of the "milk" of the word; they have not grown or matured enough over the years to be able to understand the "solid food". Paul knows this after hearing about their behavior (jealousy, strife, divisions). Christian maturity is not only about knowledge and understanding of the mind of God; it's about living like Christ - being more and more influenced by His Spirit and being like Him. The Corinthians are acting like mere human beings rather than those who have been led, taught and matured by the Spirit of God.