

How To Receive God's Wisdom?

Our Text: **1 Corinthians 2:6-16** *However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

As we continue to deal with the problem of disunity in the church at Corinth, we will notice something that played a large factor in it . . . There was a continued allegiance to human philosophies and leaders that contributed to the disunity. *Why?*
BECAUSE THE SEEKING OF HUMAN WISDOM WAS KEEPING PEOPLE FROM GODS REVEALED WISDOM!!!

So this study can be broken down into two simple points:

- 1) True wisdom is not humanly discovered!**
- 2) Therefore, true wisdom must be divinely revealed!**

Let's dive in here . . .

True Wisdom From God Is A Mystery!

1 Corinthians 2:6-7 *However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,*

Notice that Paul said, **"We speak wisdom among those who are mature"** .

False wisdom, (that is human wisdom) is actually a great hindrance to the gospel . . . **BECAUSE TRUE DIVINE WISDOM FLOWS FROM THE GOSPEL!!!**

Remember . . . We read a couple of weeks ago that this wisdom is given only to those who are called:

1 Corinthians 1:21-25 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

“Those who are mature” refers those who are redeemed and are completely trusting in Jesus Christ. So Paul is **not** saying that he speaks God’s wisdom only when he is with believers who are advanced in the faith, **but only when he is among believers who are truly in the faith—the saved!**

True believers are the only ones among whom the gospel can be considered wisdom:

Ephesians 1:7-9 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

To all others it is a stumbling block or foolishness:

1 Corinthians 1:23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,

Why is this? Simply put, it is impossible for a lesser creature to understand a more advanced one!

“How can anything understand something more complex and advanced than itself? For a flea to understand a dog it would have to be at least as advanced as a dog. For a dog to understand a man it would have to be at least as advanced as a man. How much greater distance is there between Creator and creature. Men can imagine what God might be like, and people have plenty of ideas about Him. Almost everyone has an opinion as to what God is or is not like, or as to whether He even exists. But man’s opinions are irrelevant, because they can never be more than speculations. By his own resources the creature cannot possibly comprehend his Creator.” John MacArthur Jr.

Therefore, God’s wisdom, **(the truth about Himself and His message for man)**, is not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age. **All human wisdom is flawed and passing away. It is empty, futile, and comes to nothing! Even the best rulers (Authorities) or the wisest of men, cannot claim it or even come close to relating to it!**

But to God’s people, (His called and perfected ones), God predestined before the ages to give His wisdom!

Before time began, our heavenly Father determined to give us His saving wisdom that would lead ultimately to our eternal glorification!

Let's dive into our text here . . .

Man Cannot Discover It!

1 Corinthians 2:8 *which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

Notice where Paul starts . . . The crucifixion is proof that **“the rulers of this age”** did not have God's wisdom!

Known = **γινώσκω** *ginōskō* = *To know. To discern. To be certain by examination. To be assured of. To have resolved.*

For if they had **“known”**, **“they would not have crucified the Lord of glory”!**

Neither the leaders of the Jews, to whom the gospel was a stumbling block, nor the leaders of the Gentiles, to whom it was foolishness, understood God's divine wisdom. In their willing ignorance of God, **THEY ACTUALLY EXECUTED HIS SON!!!**

Just listen to Paul's testimony to this truth:

1 Timothy 1:12–13 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

This is the bankruptcy of human wisdom! In the world's eyes, Jesus was anything but glorious; but in God's eyes He is the very **“Lord of glory!”**

Only God Can Reveal it!

1 Corinthians 2:9 *But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

This verse is misapplied so often . . . It is quoted from Isaiah 64:4 and 65:17, but Paul is not referring to the wonders of heaven . . . Rather he is speaking of the wisdom God has prepared for believers!

The point is that the natural eyes, ears, and hearts of men cannot know or comprehend His wisdom . . . It is prepared only for those who love Him!

God's truth is not observable by the **eye** or the **ear**, **OR ANY OTHER MEANS THAT MAN MAY COME UP WITH!!!**

Remember . . . WHEN MEN USED THEIR OWN REASONING, THEY CRUCIFIED JESUS!!!

But God's truth, God's plan, God's wisdom, **WILL NOT BE HIDDEN FROM HIS CHILDREN!!!**

Therefore, **THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY RECEIVE GOD'S WISDOM IS WHEN HE DIVINELY REVEALS IT TO US!!!**

Here's the amazing paradox . . . **WHAT MAN IS INCAPABLE OF FINDING . . . GOD HAS FREELY GIVEN TO HIS CHILDREN!!!**

- **Man cannot come to God on his own; but God has come to him!**
- **The Holy Spirit has invaded man's closed box and shown him God—through revelation, inspiration, and illumination!**

Let's continue . . .

God's Wisdom Comes By Revelation!

1 Corinthians 2:10–11 *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.*

Notice that The Holy Spirit is the Trinity's agent of transmission and communication.

- The first step of His transmission of God's truth is "**revelation**":

Revealed = **ἀποκαλύπτω** *apokalyptō* = *To uncover. To disclose. To plainly declare. To appear, be manifested, and announced.*

- As a member of the Godhead, The Spirit knows the mind of God perfectly.
- God has used angels for many amazing and wonderful services to man.
- But He did not entrust the revelation of the New Covenant to an angel.
- The truths of His Word God revealed through the Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is the divine author of Scripture.
- He used many human agents, but the message is entirely His.
- Therefore, the revelation is God's pure Word!

To illustrate the Holy Spirit's unique qualification for revealing the Word, notice that Paul compares The Holy Spirit's knowledge of God's mind to a human being's knowledge of his own mind.

- No person can know another person as well as he knows himself.

- Even husbands and wives who have lived together for dozens of years, and have freely shared their thoughts and dreams and problems and joys, never come to know their mates as intimately as they know themselves.
- Our innermost thoughts, the deep recesses of our hearts and minds, are known only to ourselves.

In a similar way, **ONLY THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN KNOW THE MIND OF GOD BECAUSE HE IS GOD!!!**

So, wonder of wonders, it is the Spirit of God, the One who intimately knows the depths of God and the thoughts of God, whom God has sent to reveal His own wisdom to those who believe — to us!

God's Wisdom Comes By Inspiration!

1 Corinthians 2:12–13 *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

- The process of the Spirit's transmission of God's truth is called "**inspiration**":
- His truth cannot be discovered by man; it can only be received.
- In order to be received, something must first be offered.
- God's truth can be received because it is freely given.
- The Spirit who is from God, not the spirit of the world (*that is, human wisdom*) has brought God's Word—which comprises the things freely given to us by God.
- Therefore, the Bible is the Spirit's vehicle for bringing God's revelation!

We really have to be careful and note something here . . . The "**we**" and the "**us**" of verses 12–13 (*as well as in 1 Corinthians 2:6–7 & 10*) **DO NOT REFER TO CHRISTIANS IN GENERAL!!!** Paul is referring to himself. *How do we know that?*

While it is true that God's Word is for all believers, it was specifically *revealed* only to the apostles and the other writers of Scripture!

- Only those men properly can be said to have been "**inspired**".
- Paul and the other writers of Scripture did not record their own ideas and interpretations.
- They recorded **WHAT GOD GAVE THEM** and **ONLY WHAT HE GAVE THEM!!!**
- That's why it says, "**We have received... that we might know**".
- The Spirit used words that the human writers knew and used, but He selected them and arranged them in precisely the order that He wanted.
- **THE BIBLE THEREFORE IS NOT ONLY GOD'S WORD, BUT GOD'S WORDS!!!**

“It is not simply the “Word behind the words” that is from God, as many liberal and neoorthodox interpreters maintain. “All Scripture is inspired by God [lit., ‘God-breathed’]” (2 Timothy 3:16). Scripture means “writings,” and refers specifically to what God’s chosen men wrote by His revelation and inspiration, not to everything they said and wrote. It refers, as Paul explains, to the things freely given to us by God, to the “God-breathed” words they recorded.”

Let’s look at something to validate this:

Matthew 4:1-4 *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”*

But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”

When Jesus responded to Satan’s first temptation in the wilderness, notice that He quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3, ***“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”***.

So we see clearly that, God gave His own Word in His own words! ***“Every word that proceeds out the mouth of God” is revealed, inspired, and authoritative!***

Let’s wrap this up . . .

God’s Wisdom Comes By Illumination!

1 Corinthians 2:14–16 *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*

- **The third step in the Spirit’s transmission of God’s truth is that of “illumination”:**
- It is possible to read the Bible—even many different copies and versions of the Bible—and yet not understand it.
- It is possible to study the Bible for many years, memorizing much of it, and still not understand it.
- The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day were highly trained in the Old Testament, yet they missed its central message.
- In fact, they completely failed to recognize the promised Messiah when He came and lived among them!

John 5:37–39 *And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.*

They did not believe Jesus because they did not truly believe Moses, the great lawgiver in whom they placed their hope. They did ***“not accept the things of the Spirit of God”*** because those things seemed like ***“foolishness”*** to them. *Why?*
BECAUSE THEY DID NOT BELONG TO GOD SO THEY COULD NOT UNDERSTAND IT!!!

Those scribes and Pharisees are like everyone who rejects God . . . **They lived only in the realm of the natural man, and they had no means and had no desire to understand the spiritual nature of God’s Word!**

The psalmist understood the need for God’s illumination of His Word. He prayed:
Psalms 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.

Notice, he did not need the Lord’s help to read His Word . . . BUT HE KNEW HE NEEDED HIS HELP TO UNDERSTAND IT!!!

Martin Luther said, ***“The Bible cannot be understood simply by study or talent; you must count only on the influence of the Holy Spirit.”***

John Calvin wrote: ***“The testimony of the Spirit is superior to reason. For . . . these words will not obtain full credit in the hearts of men until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit.”***

Someone else has suggested that the best man can do on his own is to ***“gnaw the bark of Scripture without getting to the wood.”***

“God must open the eyes of our understanding before we can truly know and rightly interpret His truth. His truth is available only to those with a regenerate spirit and in whom His Spirit dwells, for only the Spirit can illumine Scripture. Just as the physically blind cannot see the sun, the spiritually blind cannot see the Son. Both lack proper illumination.” John MacArthur Jr.

Martin Luther said, ***“Man is like a pillar of salt, like Lot’s wife—he is like a log or a stone, he is like a lifeless statue which uses neither eyes nor mouth, neither senses nor heart—unless he is enlightened, converted and regenerated by the Holy Spirit.”***

But as believers, we have a resident Truth Teacher to enlighten us about all the things of God about which we need to know!

1 John 2:27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

The Holy Spirit takes God's Word, the Word which He has revealed and inspired, and illuminates it for those in whom He dwells!

Is He dwelling in us currently?

Let's pray . . .