

I Corinthians

Chapter 2

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Again, we stop and acknowledge that you are our Lord, our Savior, and our God, and that it is your faithfulness that draws us. It is your provision that you give to us, along with your Spirit that ministers to each of us individually as we need. So we commit this time to you, and again we pray that your Spirit will work through your word to minister to us, to change us and to transform us, and to draw us closer to Christ. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen!

So we have taken the introduction to 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians Chapter 1 Verses 1 through 9 is the introduction. We were introduced to the manuscript authors. That would be the apostle Paul and Sosthenes.

Sosthenes was a convert from Corinth who came over to Ephesus to join Paul when Paul went to Ephesus on his third missionary journey. He was actually converted during Paul's second missionary journey. And so Paul sends the greetings of Sosthenes.

Also, the mention of thanks. That is so important. Back in Chapter 1, I attempted to mention to you the subheadings so that you can catch the seven things that Paul gave thanks for concerning the Christians in Corinth.

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Now remember that we studied how that Corinth was a carnal church, and we'll get to that in a moment. But this particular subheading is the condition of Christ in the church. In a moment we will see him describe the condition of the church in Christ.

So the Lord's condition in me and me in Him, as far as our relationship goes, is different. The condition of Christ in the church, the first thing he thanked them for was God's grace.

The second thing, that they were enriched in all speech and knowledge. Thirdly, that the testimony of Christ had been established, Bebeos, amongst them. Fourthly, they were not lacking in any spiritual gift. They had the fullness of God's Spirit in their church.

Fifthly, they were in the condition of waiting for the coming of the Lord. Sixthly, they were given the promise of their establishment, concerning Christ who shall also establish you until the end, God is faithful. And then seventhly, the fellowship of Christ, by whom you were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Every person who is saved, that is your calling. You're called into fellowship with Jesus Christ Himself. And they had all of this, and Paul gave thanks for that. But notice the condition of the church in Christ. They had problems.

Paul said in Verse 10 that he appealed to them in three things, that you all speak or say the same thing. Secondly, that there be no divisions among you. And thirdly, that you be in the process of being perfectly joined, or literally knit-together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

The word mind, Nous, is the perceptive processes and abilities of the mind. So when he says to all speak the same thing, he's about ready to introduce to us the divisions, because one said I am of Paul, another said I am of Apollos, or I am of Cephas, or I am of Christ.

And they were not saying the same thing. They were all under the Lord Jesus Christ. There was no division, and there is no division in the body of Christ. And Paul said, is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

And then Paul went on in Verses 14 to 17 to explain his participation. And he's glad he didn't baptize any of them. He remembered a couple of people, the household of Stephanas. Stephanas was there and it reminded him that he baptized also them.

But Verse 17 is a very important verse out of many in 1 Corinthians. It says for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

That doesn't mean that baptism is not important. But what it does do is it does reflect on the fact that baptismal regeneration is not taught in the scriptures. Water baptism is a testimony of the inner working of the baptism of God's Spirit at salvation.

So Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. But not with wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Just a simple foolish message that Jesus Christ died for our sins. He was crucified for our sins. To add to it or take away from it, to try to appeal to people through the human would make the cross of Christ of none effect.

Paul talked about the preaching of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, and it is the power of God to those of us that are being saved.

He called out in Verse 20, where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer or philosopher of this age? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

And so he says in Verse 22, the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom. Remember, the Greeks were the philosophers. And the Jews were always asking for signs. They're the ones that were looking for the power.

Verse 23, but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness. It's foolishness to somebody who's functioning according to logic and reason, someone who wants to debate with philosophical thought and philosophical concept.

It's foolishness to think that Messiah would come and die on a cross which was the most embarrassing and terrible death a criminal can experience within the Roman Empire. So much so, that in the city of Rome, they didn't even mention it because it was so despicable.

When Paul came into Rome, he was a tentmaker coming into Rome to present to the people a Messiah who died a criminals death on the cross. Foolishness! Not even acceptable to the natural man.

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So to the Jews he was a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks it's foolishness. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

The Jews are seeking after power. Christ is the power. The Greeks are seeking after wisdom. He is the wisdom of God, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world. And notice our calling. Not many wise according to the flesh. Not many mighty. Not many wellborn are called. God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

God chooses the "Have-nots," the ones that don't fit in in order to confound the world with its wisdom. He has chosen the base things of the world, things which are despised. It's literally people who are not wellborn, God has chosen. And things which are not to bring to nothing the things that are.

The purpose of it all is that no flesh should boast in His presence. Not one person in heaven will be able to boast about anything that they did. Everything has been done by God, including drawing us to Jesus Christ!

But of Him are you in Christ Jesus who God has made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, he that boasts, let him boast in the Lord.

That's the message of the gospel, Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Who do you belong to? Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. I've been called to fellowship with Jesus Christ. I belong to Him. I might fellowship in a larger group of believers, but I belong to Jesus Christ.

So we saw the mention of thanks. We saw that this church is blessed and not behind in any spiritual gift. We just did a summary of the message of the gospel.

Chapter 2 will be the method of the gospel, Chapter 3, the ministry of the gospel, Chapter 4, the messenger of the gospel, Chapter 5, the mandate of the gospel, and Chapter 6, the morality of the gospel.

I'll also point out to you as I did in the last study, that from Chapter 1 Verse 10, all the way to the end of Chapter 6, we have a section which is called correction.

All of Chapter 1 Verse 10 through 6:20 are corrections because those from the house of Chloe came over to Ephesus and told Paul what was going on. So he wrote this letter of correction.

But in Chapter 7 Verse 1, he begins to answer questions because the group also brought questions about the marriage instruction for Gentiles, the meat offered to idols, the meal of the Lord, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the meaning of the resurrection, and that money that was collected for the saints in Jerusalem.

And then we have our conclusion.

But in the last study, I told you how that Paul wound up over in Troas. And through the Macedonian vision on his second missionary journey, he made his way up through Philippi, down through Thessalonica, to Berea, and made his way all the way down to Athens and to Corinth.

And it was his stay here the first time that there was a riot in Corinth, and Sosthenes was a man who was leading the people who were rioting against Paul.

And what was interesting is that he was trying to get the people to beat Paul up but he got beat up instead. And in the ensuing time afterwards, he came to know Christ.

And so Sosthenes is from Corinth. So Paul goes from Corinth and Athens, and goes back on his second missionary journey. On his third missionary journey, he winds up in Ephesus and he's there for about 18 months.

And they hear that Paul is there. And this is where the house of Chloe and a group of other people make their trek from Corinth to Ephesus where they bring Paul word as to what's going on in this church. Corinth was known as the most corrupt city and the most immoral city of all cities.

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In fact, if a person was anywhere in the Roman Empire and they were considered an immoral person, they were called a Corinthianized person because everything in Corinth was corrupt.

We saw that Paul said that when I was with you, you were carnal, and that you were babes in Christ and I can only feed you with milk. The word carnal is Sarkinos. Notice the letter "n." The difference between the two words for carnal is the "n" and the "k."

But he says that when I was with you, you were Sarkinos and a babe in Christ, and I fed you with milk. And now, some five years later, you are still carnal, but you are Sarkikos. You're unnaturally carnal.

Paul gives us that teaching that he considers that five years later, they should have been maturing in the Lord and they should be ready to start handling the meat.

They were normally fleshly and babes, but now they are abnormally carnal. They should be farther along. But they are carnal and that's why he has to correct them.

C.O.

I Corinthians 2:1-16
The Method of the Gospel

So now in Chapter 2, we have the method of the gospel. This is one of the great chapters for anyone who's been called into service for Christ.

The preparation for teaching, Chapter 2 Verses 1 through 5:

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

The representation: Paul says and I, brethren, when I came to you, I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

So when he came to represent the Lord to them, it was not with excellency of speech. In fact, later on he will tell us that he was not a good speaker. And he didn't come with the wisdom of man either. He told us that in Chapter 1.

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:2

In Verse 2, he made a decision:

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

He says, for I determined, and that's the word decision making. I decided not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, period.

I know Him, the one who is crucified. I don't know any of these methods of man. And even though he could have come up with some, his determination with them was not to know anything except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

And his condition:

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

That was his physical.

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:4

But in his demonstration, he says:

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom. The word enticing is the Greek word for persuasion. It was not with persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

What a tremendous verse!

There are many today that have charismatic personalities and go by the persuasive words of man's wisdom. There are bible schools out there that try and take people that are not very good speakers and try to make good speakers out of them, and teach them how to be persuasive to get people motivated in the church.

Paul says I came, and I did not come with persuasive words of man's wisdom, but rather in the demonstration of Spirit and power.

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That's what it's all about. It's not about words. Later on, Paul's going to say that he's going to come and see them and these people that are puffed up with all this pride and arrogance against him, he says we're going to check them out and see how powerful they are.

Not with their words, but in the Spirit and in power.

And then motivation:

This is a tremendous thing. And this is why Paul decided to come into Corinth this way.

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

That is so important! People who are persuaded by the persuasion of man will have their Christianity based on the wisdom of men. But those who are influenced by and saved by the power of God's Spirit, they will be established in the power of God and not in the wisdom of men.

Everybody that professes to be a Christian has been established in the things of the Lord one way or another, many times in the human, human persuasive words motivating people out of guilt, rather than the power of God.

Now we have the procedure for preaching in Verses 6 through 16. Remember, we're studying about the method of the gospel.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

Verse 6 is the destination of his message. He says, Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect:

The word perfect, Telios, denotes somebody who is saved and complete. It is the same word that Paul used in Colossians 2:10, that we are complete in Him.

Yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nothing:

His communication, he says:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

It's a mystery. It is hidden except for the revelation of God's Spirit. That's what he's going to tell us.

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

They did know that they were crucifying the Lord of glory. They literally believed they were crucifying an imposter, not the Messiah Himself!

K.V.

I Corinthians 2:9

Isaiah 64:4

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:9

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

That is from Isaiah 64:4. Man and his human faculties cannot understand the things of God. I have no idea. Eye hath not seen and ear has not heard the things that God has prepared for those that love Him. It comes by inspiration.

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:10

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

And he explains this in Verse 11:

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

The Spirit of God is the only one that knows the things of God. And the only way that a human being can know the things of God is if the Spirit of God reveals it to that person. You cannot be enlightened any other way!

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

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That little term "freely given" is the Greek word Charisma, which means expression of grace.

We've received the Spirit of God so that we can know the things that are freely graced to us of God.

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:13

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Literally in the Greek text, comparing spiritual words with spiritual things.

You see, the things of God are Spiritual. They're not human. They're not physical. God's Spirit takes spiritual words and spiritual truth and God's Spirit teaches us.

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:14

As far as interpretation goes, he says:

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

But the natural man, the person who goes by the natural psyche of the human being. But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they, that is the things of God, are spiritually discerned, spiritually understood.

So if you don't have the Spirit of God, and the things of God are spiritually understood, and the natural man just has his normal psyche, he's not going to receive it. They can't, because they are spiritually taught by the Spirit of God.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

But he that is spiritual, that's the saved man, judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

K.V.

I Corinthians 2:16

Isaiah 40:13 LXX:

Jeremiah 23:18

M.V.

I Corinthians 2:16

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The word mind is the word Nous. Again, this is the perceptive abilities. We don't have His brain. I think that there are some people that misunderstand this text.

There have been people in the past that said "Now that I'm saved, everything that passed through my brain is God's thoughts, and therefore I speak whatever my thoughts are, and they're all of God because I have the mind of Christ."

Well, there are several Greek words. Pseuke, mostly for the brain, but there are several other words that describe the function of the brain. And the word Nous describes the perceptive abilities of the mind.

So when it says we have the mind of Christ, we've got the Spirit of Christ that is revealing to us and giving us the ability to perceive spiritual truth.

It's not just a head knowledge, it's a perception, and we're able to perceive because we've received Christ. Then we have His Spirit giving us the perception of Christ.

And the more we grow in Christ, the more we perceive Him during the day, during the night, we perceive the workings of His Spirit and the truths of God functioning in the Spirit realm.

Let's close with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Again we want to thank you for your word. We confess our spiritual ignorance and our inability to know and understand these important truths of your word unless you reveal them to us. We have no way of knowing without your Spirit revealing it to us.

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Help us to grow through your word. Give us the hunger and desire to continually be drawn to you so that we might grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Again, we do thank you and it is in Jesus' name we pray, Amen!