

1 Corinthians 2:6-11 ⁶ Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; ⁷ but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory; ⁸ *the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; ⁹ but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND *which* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." ¹⁰ For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

Last week we ended with the truth that the power of God is that inward working of the Spirit to transform our lives from being spiritual corpses to living children of God. The power of God to create the universe is the same power which makes us new creations in Christ. And the means through which that is accomplished is through the shed blood of our Lord and Savior.

But simply knowing about what Jesus did will not save anyone. It is humbly coming to God with open arms as we confess our sin to Him and relinquish any ability of our own to get to heaven. It is understanding that as we embrace our Lord and His atoning work on our behalf by faith, we pass from death to life.

This is the message Paul preached, and this is the message that was not delivered with the persuasive words of man's wisdom, but was shown to be the miracle working power of God that is the wisdom from above.

1CO 2:6-7 "We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began."

Some people try to gain knowledge and then equate that with being wise. But knowledge about something or someone does not always translate to wisdom. In fact, our first parents learned this hard lesson when they tried to gain wisdom through disobedience.

GEN 3:6 “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”

True wisdom would have curbed their appetite for pleasing self as they embraced the truth of God’s clear message not to eat of the tree. In the same way, true wisdom will not look to anything in this world for salvation but will obey the clear command from God to repent and turn to Christ alone for that salvation.

This is the wisdom God gives and it comes through the message of wisdom found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. But notice in our text that Paul says, “we do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature,...”

In some translations, particularly the KJV, it reads, “we speak wisdom among them that are perfect.” This is somewhat misleading because, as anyone knows, no one in this world is perfect. This is why the better translation is mature, but even that does not convey the full meaning of what Paul intends.

If Paul is speaking a message of wisdom only among those in Corinth who are mature in their faith, it would appear that that would only be a handful of people at this time.

John MacArthur really clears this up when he says that the word mature in the Greek “can mean perfect or complete, but can also refer to a person who has full membership in a group, one who is fully initiated.....

..... Here Paul uses this term in the same way it is used in other forms by the writer of Hebrews (6:1; 10:14) to refer to salvation. Those who are mature are those who are redeemed and are completely trusting in Jesus Christ. True believers are the only ones among whom the gospel can be wisdom. To all others it is a stumbling block or foolishness.”

Now, Paul is not suggesting that every believer has the kind of wisdom to demonstrate that they are mature in their faith because we know that believers are at every level of maturity. Rather, they

are mature in the sense that they are complete in Christ because of the wisdom in Christ they have embraced in the gospel.

And so, Paul is saying that I am speaking a message among those who know Christ and have had their eyes opened by the Spirit of God and the power which resides only in Him.

Everyone one of us who have placed our faith in Christ ought to rejoice in this because it shows that this wisdom found in the gospel is not manufactured in our own little minds. It is there because God has placed it there. It is not vain imaginations but solid proof that the Spirit of God is at work in our lives and has sealed us for the day of redemption.

This is what Paul alludes to when he wrote to the church in Rome.

ROM 8:15-16 “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our sr those whose hearts and minds are united to Christ by faith, Paul is encouraging us that we have the ability to actually hear from God and to see the truth of His word for what it is; life and hope in Christ.

And what is amazing about this, in the context of this letter to the Corinthians, is that spiritually speaking these people are not very mature at all. They are acting like spiritual babies. But, I suppose being a spiritual baby in Christ is a quantum leap from being a worldly giant, because, as Paul has been stating, the wisdom of this world only produces death.

And so, Paul can write to these Christians in Corinth who are acting like babies, and yet he can still identify them as brethren and family.

1CO 1:10 “I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,...”

Now, Paul will not be content for these believers to remain babies in the Lord but to move on to a real maturity in their faith. But, he’s still laying the groundwork in these opening chapters of this letter to help them see the salvation they do possess in Christ and that it is not as a result of any wisdom they could have conceived themselves.

This is why he says that the wisdom they possess is “not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.”

Again, he makes the contrast that the wisdom of this age only produces what can be used in this world, but ultimately it is coming to nothing, which means that it is not effectual in producing a life with God. One who has not embraced the wisdom found in the gospel is still lost in their sins and will suffer the punishment for those sins.

1CO 2:7 “No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.”

Paul comes back to the wisdom of God in verse 7. He calls it secret wisdom according to the NIV. A better translation would be found in the NAS which uses the word “mystery”.

The word mystery in the Greek is *musterion* from a derivative of *muo* (to shut the mouth), and it implies a hidden thing. It doesn't mean that it can't be found, it simply means that it's a truth which is hidden to those whose eyes will not see and whose ears will not hear.

In fact, we know that this mystery has always been spoken of by God, and yet it has been veiled in a way where only the Spirit of God can make it known to the heart. It was first revealed to Adam and Eve when our Lord promised to send the seed of the woman who would crush the seed of Satan.

Of course, the seed spoken of in the Garden was the one who would be born of a woman, a virgin, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ, who did in fact crush the power of death which Satan accomplished in successfully tempting Adam and Eve not to trust God.

And since the time of the fall mankind has been blinded to this truth because of the hardness of their own sinful hearts. And yet, we know that not all of mankind remained blind because God was able to open the eyes of many people to embrace the good news, the gospel of His promised Messiah and redeemer.

We know that Adam and Eve believed this truth as well as many others through the centuries including those found in Hebrews 11. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, along with many

others. They had eyes to see and ears to hear because God revealed Himself to them.

And it is this wisdom from God concerning His Son that is a wisdom “that God destined for our glory before time began.” Paul touches on this when writing to the Romans as he explained that this mystery is now out in the open for all to see, if they would have eyes to see.

ROM 16:25-27 “Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him - 27 to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.”

The question remains for the world. Will you be wise in your own eyes and die in your sins, or will you embrace the wisdom of Christ and His gospel and live? It’s an either or situation and everyone is held responsible before God to make the choice.

But there is an element here which should not go unnoticed and that includes the personal involvement of God in plucking us out of the fire as He has chosen us before the foundations of the world. That’s what Paul means when he says, “that God destined for our glory before time began.”

In other words, before the first molecule of this universe ever came into existence through God’s power, He had planned in His eternal counsels to create mankind for fellowship and in those counsels to call out a people He knows by name and give them grace to believe and follow Him.

2TI 1:9 [God] “has saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,...”

He says the same thing when writing to the Ephesians.

EPH 1:4 “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

Peter even points out that the means of our being chosen is in Christ who Himself was chosen before time to be our substitute and our atoning sacrifice before the Father.

1PE 1:18-21 “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.”

Everything about our salvation has been carefully planned by God from all of eternity including the gospel message of hope that has been entrusted to every Christian who has been promised glory. The glory Paul speaks of is the glory of spending eternity in the presence of God.

ROM 8:30 “And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.”

We are commanded by our Savior to take this message of hope to the world, even as Paul was doing, knowing that many would not see it for what it was; a message of life which results in glory.

1CO 2:8 “None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

What Paul means is that Jesus Christ was not perceived to be who He said He was. He claimed to be the Messiah, the Savior of this world. He claimed to be God. He claimed to be the only way to the Father.

And yet, for all of His assertions the rulers of this world rejected Him for who He was. They didn't understand because their sinful hearts would not accept the fact that someone outside of themselves held them responsible for their sin on the one hand and yet on the other hand held out their salvation for the taking.

If they had truly understood who Jesus Christ was they would have honored Him and welcomed Him into this world and would have crowned Him the Lord of glory. Instead they crucified Him and put Him to death.

But, that's not a bad thing ultimately. Yes, it was bad in the sense that an innocent Jesus was cruelly tortured and killed, but it was not bad because it was through this act that we have our salvation.

And as we saw earlier, God planned to have it happen this way from all of eternity. In an odd sort of way, had the rulers of this

age seen Jesus for who He was, and not crucified Him, they would doomed mankind to pay for their own sin.

It was actually through the ignorance of sinful men that God used the wickedness of men to secure our salvation in Christ. Jesus took our place on the cross as He canceled our debt to a holy God and took our penalty by dying in our place. But simply because the rulers of this age were ignorant of who Christ was, it did not make them any less responsible for their sinful actions.

One note of interest here is that Paul uses the designation of Christ as the Lord of glory. This is once again a proof of His deity or His Godhood. Only God is shown to be One who is worthy of glory in Himself.

Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin.... ACT 7:2 ... "Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran."

David speaks of the Lord of glory and makes it clear that he is speaking of none other than God Almighty.

PSA 24:7-10 "Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. 10 Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty - he is the King of glory. Selah"

This King of glory whom David speaks of is none other than the King of kings and Lord of lords, our Lord of glory, Jesus Christ. This is the Lord of glory who has secured our salvation in His selfless act of redemption for mankind.

What a humbling thought. To know that the same King of glory who made the heavens and the earth is the same Lord of glory who chose to humble Himself and become part of His creation as He is born into this world to save it from itself.

And yet, He was rejected. He was scorned. He was crucified. But praise God He was, for in that we have our salvation; a salvation which man did not conceive or perceive and yet in the infinite wisdom of God He has given us a Godly wisdom which embraces this truth. And to make the point that no one in their own wisdom could grasp this truth Paul continues in our text.

1CO 2:9 "However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (Isaiah 64:4)

The first thing Paul does here is to base his entire line of thought concerning our salvation on the Scriptures, the written word of God. Paul most certainly received special revelation, but it was always in accord to what God had already revealed through His prophets. This is why we must place absolute dependency on the Scriptures. They are God's very word.

But Paul quotes from the prophet Isaiah here. "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (Isaiah 64:4)

Notice that Paul uses three senses of the human being which are used for gaining knowledge and translating that knowledge into workable applications. The eyes see and the ears hear to take in information which the mind then can decipher.

As the mind of a person assimilates this information it can then make certain determinations as to how to act or proceed on that information. The eyes see a policeman standing in the middle of the road using his arms and hands to slow down traffic. The eyes also see a wreck on the side of the road. The ears hear sirens and the noise of people talking as he passes the accident.

All of this information is processed by the mind and it will then effect the rest of the body as the leg and foot go into action to slow down your car.

But, when it comes to the gospel all of the signs may be there as the facts are presented for a spiritual collision with God's wrath. And yet, the natural man with all of his natural faculties with eyes and ears and mind will not perceive those facts for what they are because they are spiritually discerned.

That's what Paul is saying. No amount of human wisdom can ever figure out the spiritual problem because man is not dealing on the same plain. He's trying to figure out spiritual problems with human solutions. And the human solution to his spiritual problem has always been a works/reward system.

"I can do enough good works so that God will reward me for my efforts." What this proves is that mankind is not loving God, because God says you do not love Me unless you obey Me. And

the obedience God is looking for is placing our “faith” in Christ who came to do the good works for us in perfect obedience.

We could never do enough good works to please God, but His perfect Son could and did. And because of His perfect righteousness we can now come to Him as our substitute who took away our sin. But our sin is only taken out of the way as we obey God through faith in Christ alone.

Those are the ones who love God as Paul says here in our text. And the ones who love God are the ones who have understood their spiritual need as the Spirit has opened their spiritual eyes and ears and hearts and minds, and they have fled to Christ for their salvation. These are the same one’s Paul refers to when writing to the Romans.

ROM 8:28 “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, with those who have been called according to his purpose.”

And God’s purpose is to bring us into the family and allow us to enjoy our Creator forever. This is wisdom. Not a wisdom of this world, but a wisdom from our God given to us and revealed to us through His Spirit. That’s exactly what Paul says in our text.

1CO 2:10 “but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.”

What Paul says here is that divine revelation must come through God alone. No man can figure this out with any wisdom he possesses in himself. And yet, God has chosen to reveal to men the most hidden purposes of God’s plan for mankind.

God didn’t have to reveal anything to us. He could have left us in our sin. He was not under compulsion to save us from ourselves and yet in the love and mercy of God He extends grace. And grace starts with revelation of Himself. He reveals who He is even as He did with Abraham and Moses.

But, according to verse 10, He reveals Himself through His Spirit. This doesn’t negate the Father revealing Himself as Jesus prayed in MAT 11:25 “At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.”

Even Jesus Himself is part of this revelation process.

HEB 1:1-2 “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.”

And so, what we see here is that all members of the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are all involved in this revelation to mankind.

But in the context of 1Cor.2:10a Paul is saying that the Spirit is able to work on the inner man and reveal things to the heart of man, just as the Spirit is able to search all things, even the deep things of God.

This by the way, is also a clear teaching on the deity or the Godhood of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is not an impersonal force, or a thing. The Spirit is God Himself. Only God knows Himself, just as only a man truly knows who he is.

And here in our text the Spirit is shown to know the deep things of God and to share in those things as only He can. When it says, that the Spirit is able to search all things, even the deep things of God, it does not suggest that the Spirit is looking for information as though He didn't know something, but through careful examination He now knows.

No, what this means is, as one commentator put it, “He penetrates into all things.” (Gromacki quoting Leon Morris)

In other words, there is nothing hidden from the Spirit. He is omniscient, all knowing. This again, is a clear indication that the Holy Spirit can be none other than God since only God is all knowing.

And if the Spirit is able to penetrate the deep things of God and know the Father and the Son intimately, then it is no problem for the Spirit to know the heart of man and cause that heart, (regeneration), to reach out to Christ for salvation.

This is the beauty of the work of God. He knows things about us we would never see clearly. Namely, that we are lost and need a Savior. Man would never admit to this on his own. His heart is too prideful. And as much as man thinks he knows himself, he really knows little of himself when it comes to his standing before a holy God.

1CO 2:11 “For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”

Man knows his own thoughts. In fact, no one in this world really knows another human being as well as that individual knows his own thoughts. We may think, for example, that we know our mates. But when it comes right down to it we will never know their inward thoughts and desires as they know them.

But even the Spirit can penetrate these areas since He knows all things. And in His infinite wisdom and love He reveals Himself and opens our eyes and ears and in His power we are able to respond to this love by embracing our Lord and Savior.

The Spirit knows the Father intimately and knows those whom Christ has chosen before the foundations of the world and knows exactly what we need to see Christ for who He is as He gives us this life in Christ.

Don't ever forget where your salvation came from. You didn't figure it out one day through your human reasoning. None of us are so smart that through our intellect we figured God out. He was kind enough to reveal Himself to us.

1CO 1:27-30 “But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things - and the things that are not - to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus,...”

May the Spirit of God continue to touch hearts as we take the gospel out into the world knowing that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

And may we submit to the Spirit who conforms us into the image of Christ so that we may honor God with our lives until He brings us to that glory He promises in verse 7 of our text that God destined for us before the beginning of time.

May we glory in that revelation and the life we have in Christ alone. May He be our boast all of our days.