

## **“The Wisdom of the Spirit Fuels Unity”**

### **1 Corinthians 2:6 – 3:4**

**For the week of September 13, 2020**

#### **First Look**

Close your eyes and visualize a church with problems. Let's count the ways: leaders in the church promote themselves against each other which generate their own group of followers. One person is having an affair with his stepmother. The church does not discipline the person but instead boasts in his freedom in Christ to behave in this way. Believers sue each other in secular courts. Some members are visiting prostitutes. Well, there's more but you get the picture.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians focuses on healthy church life. We are covering 1 Corinthians 1 - 4:5. There are a number of topics covered in this letter, but one key theme is at the forefront. Paul wants this church, which is divided because of arrogance of its leaders, to work together for the advancement of the gospel. Instead of self-centeredness and division within the body, Paul wants them to build up the faith of those who are weak and witness well to unbelievers.

#### **City of Corinth**

During the time of this writing, Corinth governed the Roman province of Achaia, which included almost all of Greece. It was the home of the regional governor, or proconsul. The city was rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 44 B.C. and was populated with many different ethnicities which made Corinth very diverse. The city had a robust commerce. With many religions in Corinth, it resulted in numerous temples to different deities, including one to Aphrodite, the fertility goddess. Cult prostitution associated with the temples was in effect as well as street prostitution.

Corinth was wealthy because of its location. It had a marketplace larger than any in Rome. Besides wealth, the city was popular to others. For example, it hosted the Isthmian Games, in which Greeks and Romans from all over the Empire competed not only in athletics but also in drama, music, and oratory. These games were very popular and attracted much tourism. Overall, the city of Corinth was one of the early cosmopolitan cities.

#### **Author + Date**

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from the city of Ephesus in the Roman province of Asia. He wrote near the end of this three-year ministry in Ephesus which puts the date around A.D. 53 to 55. The very first word of 1 Corinthians says that Paul is the author, which has been universally accepted by scholars.

## **The Set-Up**

### **Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5**

What are some ways you find power in your life?

Now look at verses 4-5. What is the power of God mentioned in these verses?

Review the following verses and describe how God's power is manifested:

- Isaiah 40:29
- Psalm 68:35
- Acts 1:8
- Romans 1:16
- Ephesians 3:7

Describe examples in your life where you have witnessed or been a part of the power of God.

Why is the power of God necessary for a follower of Christ?

Finally, why do we struggle to live life like we believe in the power of God?

## **Godly Wisdom**

### **Read 1 Corinthians 2:6-9**

What does this passage say about the nature of Godly wisdom? What is the secret and hidden wisdom of God?

Why is it impossible for anyone, including leaders and intellectuals, to understand the secret and hidden wisdom of God apart from Christ?

How is Godly wisdom achieved by mistakes we make? Why is seeing life from God's perspective and acting accordingly another key in receiving Godly wisdom (read 1 Corinthians 10:31)?

Finally, read James 1:5 and summarize how to receive Godly wisdom.

## **The Work of the Holy Spirit**

### **Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-13**

According to this passage, how do we receive the revelation of Godly wisdom?

What is the role of the Spirit in our ability to hear and respond to the gospel?

How does the Holy Spirit transform the way we proclaim the gospel?

## **The Mind of Christ**

### **Read 1 Corinthians 2:14-16**

How do these verses show us our dependence on the Spirit?

What does it mean to have the "mind of Christ" (verse 16)? Have you ever thought of yourself of having this? Why or why not? How does Paul's assurance that we have the mind of Christ affect you?

Here are some truths about the mind of Christ as we read this passage in 1 Corinthians

1. The mind of Christ is contrary to the wisdom of man (verses 5-6).
2. The mind of Christ involves wisdom from God, once hidden but now revealed (verse 7).
3. The mind of Christ is given to believers through the Spirit of God (verses 10-12).
4. The mind of Christ cannot be understood by those without the Spirit (verse 14).
5. The mind of Christ gives believers discernment in spiritual matters (verse 15).

## **Infants in Christ**

### **Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4**

How does this passage describe the behavior and lifestyle of the church at Corinth?

In what ways do churches today have similar problems?

What does the phrase "merely human" (verse 4) mean?

Based on Paul's rebuke, what are the believers in Corinth missing? How have you seen the same type of behavior and attitude present in your own life?

### **Final Question**

What spiritual disciplines could you practice in more regularity to make you more sensitive to the leading of God's Word and God's Spirit?

### **Prayer**

Prayer is essential as a follower of Christ. Below are four suggestions to include during your time of prayer individually or as a group:

- To be in awe of the Lord and praise Him (Psalm 119:18)
- To have joy in Him (John 15:11)
- To live out everyday evangelism (Psalm 126:5-6)
- To be constant in prayer (2 Chronicles 7:14-15)