



# A Study of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians

## Lesson 3: The Way Paul Preached... 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Over the last couple of weeks, I have tried briefly to introduce you to the ancient city of Corinth and to the Apostle Paul's missionary ministry there. In doing that, I pointed out that the ancient city of Corinth was a rich, enormously rich for those days, sort of seaport Las Vegas. It was located on a narrow four and half mile isthmus in southern Greece directly on the route between Asia Minor (what we know today as Turkey) and the capital of the ancient world, Rome.

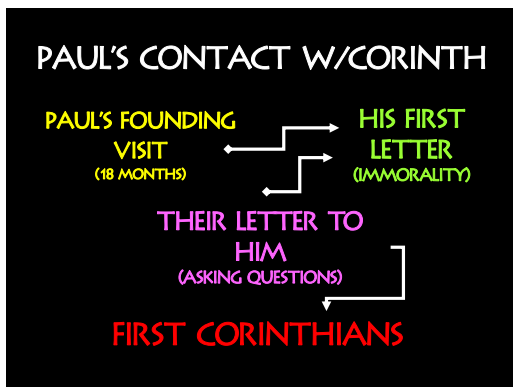


It was a rough and tumble sort of place. It was notorious in the ancient world for its eroticism and licentiousness.<sup>1</sup> But it was also known, and this may seem strange to you, as a very religious place. Corinth had over twenty-six major

temples. Corinth, it seems, could offer just about any of its visitors whatever they wanted.

Anyway, Paul traveled there sometime around the spring of 51 AD and enjoyed a surprising level of success preaching the gospel. His preaching and his ministry were used by the Spirit of God to turn the hearts of many of the Corinthians away from pagan idolatry to the worship of the living God.<sup>2</sup>

Paul, in fact, enjoyed so much success in Corinth that he stayed on there for at least eighteen months...longer than he stayed anywhere except Ephesus. After Paul left Corinth, he was followed there by Apollos<sup>3</sup>...a very gifted teacher.<sup>4</sup>



Now sometime after that, while Paul was Ephesus, he heard about a horrendous case of immorality at Corinth.<sup>5</sup> Because he was the Apostle to the Gentiles and the founding pastor at Corinth, he wrote the Corinthians a letter of concern and advice...it is a letter that we no longer possess.<sup>6</sup> Now apparently, the Corinthians did not think much of Paul's letter...that fact seems almost certain...and even if it is not certain, it is certain that they did not heed Paul's advice or recommendations.

In fact, the church at Corinth began to break into factions and divisions...separating into camps...each named after a particular individual.<sup>7</sup> Now there was no way Paul could have known about that...that is, until someone brought him word from Corinth about the factions at Corinth...and that is exactly what happened.

Paul received two reports...one from Chloe<sup>8</sup> and one from Stephanus<sup>9</sup>...and those two reports outlined for Paul the various factions in the church. They also told caught Paul up on the notorious case of immorality at the church and what the church had done or rather not done in regard to it.

Finally, Paul received a letter from the Corinthians themselves and while we do not possess the letter, it is easy enough to figure out that the letter contained a number of questions about some of the various issues they were fighting over. Two thirds of Paul's letter to the Corinthians addresses those questions and you can even see in the text when Paul turns to address their question because he uses the phrase "**now concerning...**" Whenever he uses that phrase, he is turning to their next question.<sup>10</sup>

Now just one other thing and we'll look at our text for the morning. It seems to me and this is a fact picked up by almost all of the commentators on 1 Corinthians...that each faction in Corinth was arguing for the superiority of their group's views and that as they were doing so...they appealed to the worldly wisdom of their own position.

I can almost guarantee you that each group was saying to the other group, "**We possess genuine wisdom on this issue...not you.**" I can just imagine that each

group responded, **“Yes, you do possess some wisdom but our wisdom is the true wisdom...and you are simply not wise enough to see that.”**

I say that because of Paul’s appeal here in 1 Corinthians not to worldly wisdom but to the wisdom of the cross. In fact, in 1 Corinthians Paul mentions the word **“wisdom”** or similar words like **“wise”** or **“wiser”** some 28 times...and 26 of those times occur in the first four chapters.

Now the fact that the first four chapters are largely concerned with the divisions that existed at Corinth tells me that the gist of the conflict concerned who was truly wise and who was not. In other words, the argument in Corinth had degraded into contest over who really possessed true wisdom...was it Paul...was it Apollos...was it Peter.<sup>11</sup>

You see the argument had taken the same form that it had with so many of the early Greek philosophers...is the wisdom of Plato greater than that of Aristotle...or that of Socrates greater than that of Plato...

Now I mentioned last week, that Paul asks three questions in rapid succession in 1:10.

**ESV 1 Corinthians 1:13...Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

What I failed to mention, rather chose not to mention, is that that question forms the basis of an extended chiasm. Now that is a term that I have used a lot over the years here at APC. But since we have a number of new faces and some of you may not be familiar with the term let me explain what the term means.

Now, I want to talk at length about these verses but even before I get into any detail I want to remind you once again of what is meant by chiasm or chiastic structure. Essentially what it means is that parts of a piece of literature or put together in such a way the order of the first part is reversed in the second part.

**CHIASMUS [KY-AZ-MUS]**  
A FIGURE OF SPEECH BY WHICH THE ORDER OF THE TERMS IN THE FIRST OF TWO PARALLEL CLAUSES IS REVERSED IN THE SECOND.

**chiasmus** [ky-AZ-mus] (plural -mi), a figure of speech by which the order of the terms in the first of two parallel clauses is reversed in the second.<sup>12</sup>

Here's one by Ben Franklin:

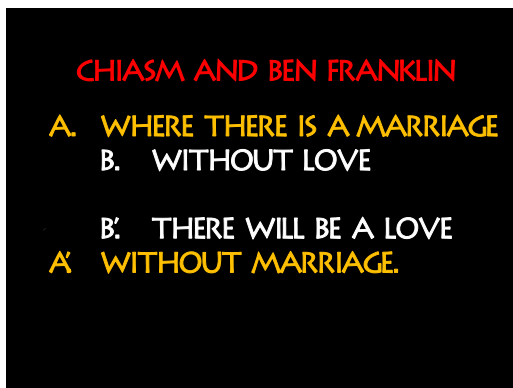
**"When I was young and had time to read  
I had no books.  
Now that I am old and have the books,  
I have no time to read."**<sup>13</sup>

**CHIASM AND BEN FRANKLIN**  
**WHEN I WAS YOUNG AND HAD  
TIME TO READ  
I HAD NO BOOKS.**  
**NOW THAT I AM OLD  
AND HAVE THE BOOKS,  
I HAVE NO TIME TO READ.**

Do you see how the ideas in the first two phrases are repeated in the last two phrases but reversed? They go like this....read:**books**; **books**:read. Or you could

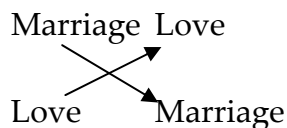
say they go like this...**time-read**:have no books; have books:**no time-read**. Don't spend an inordinate amount of time trying to figure it all out. The point I am trying to get you to see is that what order of the words in the first half is reversed in the second half. Do you see that? Here's another one by Franklin:

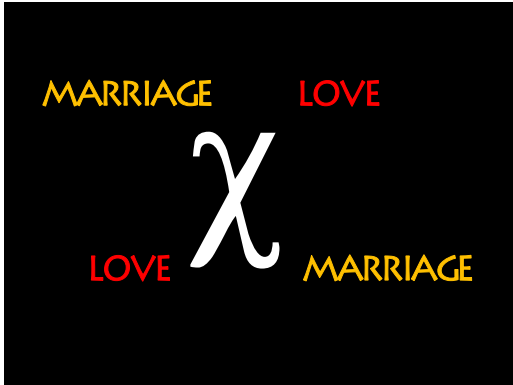
"Where there is a marriage  
without love  
there will be a love  
without marriage."<sup>14</sup>



Do you see the reversal of the words? The order goes marriage:love; love:marriage. Now the reason its called a chiasm is pretty simple.

In Greek the letter  $\chi$  looks like an English X. When you draw these parts out on a piece of paper and connect them they also make an X like this.



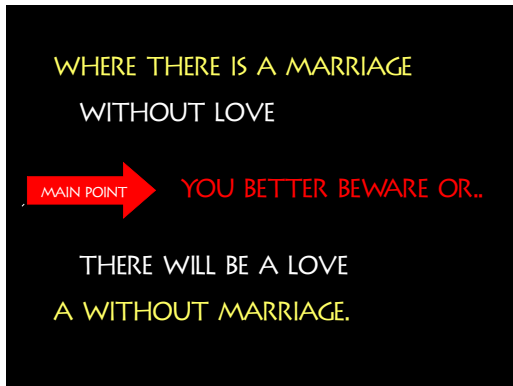


That's the whole idea in a nutshell. Now the point I want to make is this. In New Testament times, this was a fairly common literary device. It was used because it helped people to be able to remember lengthy stories or poems. We don't use this method much any more and when we do it sounds wonderfully clever and poetic. I am thinking in particular about Kennedy's famous inauguration speech. I'm sure you know the one that I mean.

"And so, my fellow Americans,  
ask not what your country can do for you;  
ask what you can do for your country."<sup>15</sup>

Anyway, I am making the point that in New Testament times this was a fairly common literary device. In fact, it was often used to make an emphatic point, especially if the chiasm had an odd number of elements in it. You see when that happened whatever was in the center of the chiasm reflected the emphasis of the chiasm. Let me illustrate what I mean by messing with Franklin's quote a bit.

"Where there is a marriage  
without love  
you had better beware or...  
there will be a love  
without marriage."<sup>16</sup>



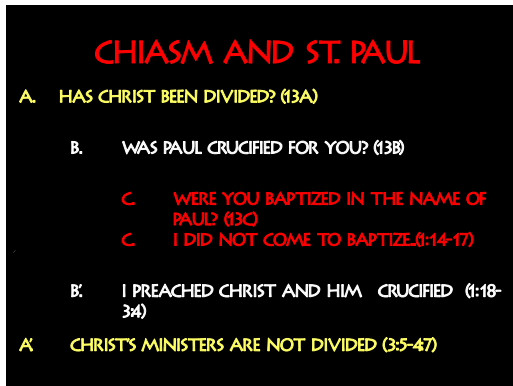
Now you can see from that, that the emphasis winds up in the middle and is the point that catches you attention both because of its location and because it is not parallel to anything else in the passage. Now I bring that up simply as an educational point because the chiasm in 1 Corinthians is an even numbered chiasm...meaning there is no central point.

Now having said that let me show you what I mean in First Corinthians 1:13. There Paul asks three quick questions in a row.

- A. Has Christ been divided? (13a)
- B. Was Paul crucified for you? (13b)
- C. Were you baptized in the name of Paul? (13c)

Paul asked those three questions and then answered them in the reverse order that he asked them. We have already noted that Paul answered each question in the negative. The answers look something like this.

- C'. You were not baptized in the name of Paul. (14-17) (4 verses)
- B'. Paul only preached Christ crucified. (1:18-3:4) (36 verses)
- A'. Christ's ministers may have different functions but they are not divided. (3:5-4:7) (26 verses)



You will remember that last week, we noted that Paul answered the question raised in verse 13c. He explained that he was not focused on baptism but on preaching.

He then began to answer the question raised in 13b about whether Paul was crucified for the Corinthians and he did that by explaining that he only preached Christ and Him crucified. He preached not in terms of worldly wisdom but in the true wisdom of God. This week we are going to see him expand upon the manner in which he preached. Let's read how Paul describes his preaching in chapter two verse one.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:1**...And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom.

Probably, Paul was speaking about the style in which he preached when he used the word "**superiority of speech**". On the other hand, he was probably referring to the content of his message when he referred to "**wisdom**". Paul, it seems, was picking up their terms and turning them against the Corinthians themselves in the light of Christ crucified. Those who said they were seeking wisdom may have sounded as if they were involved in a noble affair; in reality they were

striving for mastery over each other, and were dividing the body of Christ by their competition in both “**how**” and “**what**” they preached.

Paul, on the other hand, would have nothing to do with any spirit of competition. He made it a point to not use a clever style or to use clever arguments in his proclamation of the gospel. Still, his message did have content. In fact, it was the testimony of God and that testimony concerned the atoning work of Christ. In verse two, he gives an explanation of what that testimony included. Let’s look at it together:

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:2**...For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Paul did not attempt to distinguish himself in either eloquence or in wisdom because he had already determined not to know anything but Christ and Him crucified. That does not mean that he left all other knowledge aside, but rather that he had the gospel, with its crucified Messiah as his chief focus and passion while he was among them. Some scholars have speculated that Paul had adopted a new methodology or had changed his manner of preaching after the fiasco in Athens. But the word determined does not really indicate any particular change in either the form or content of his message. For Paul to say that he resolved means that he had purposed to continue his regular practice. Luke gives us a picture of Paul’s typical style and content in Acts 13. There Paul was preaching to the members of a Jewish synagogue. Let’s look at it for a moment. I want to pick up with Paul in verse 23, Acts chapter 13, verse 23.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Acts 13:23**...Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. <sup>24</sup> Before his coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. <sup>25</sup> And as John was finishing his course, he

said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but behold, after me one is coming, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' <sup>26</sup> ¶ "Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation. <sup>27</sup> For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. <sup>28</sup> And though they found in him no guilt worthy of death, they asked Pilate to have him executed. <sup>29</sup> And when they had carried out all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. <sup>30</sup> But God raised him from the dead, <sup>31</sup> and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. <sup>32</sup> And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, <sup>33</sup> this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, "'You are my Son, today I have begotten you.' <sup>34</sup> And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, "'I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.' <sup>35</sup> Therefore he says also in another psalm, "'You will not let your Holy One see corruption.' <sup>36</sup> For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, <sup>37</sup> but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. <sup>38</sup> Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, <sup>39</sup> and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. <sup>40</sup> Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about: <sup>41</sup> "'Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you.'"

Now, you cannot help but admire the simplicity of Paul's message. It recounts the gospel in the simplest manner. It is the message of Christ and Him crucified. Paul explains the importance of repentance and faith in Christ Who has procured the forgiveness of sins.

Next, Paul turns to focus on his personal presentation of the gospel. He emphasizes that it was not a presentation of power or confidence on his part, but rather something altogether different.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:3**...And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, <sup>4</sup> and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

The weakness Paul speaks of here is not weakness of body, although he speaks of being weak of body in 2 Corinthians 10:10.

<sup>ESV</sup> **2 Corinthians 10:9**...I do not want to appear to be frightening you with my letters. <sup>10</sup> For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account."

Some scholars believe the Apostle Paul had infirm eyes. They base that upon several things like: (1) the fact that God blinded him on the Damascus highway,

<sup>ESV</sup> **Acts 9:5**...And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. <sup>6</sup> But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." <sup>7</sup> The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. <sup>8</sup> Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank

(2) the fact that he talked about having a thorn in the flesh,

<sup>ESV</sup> **2 Corinthians 12:6**...Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. <sup>7</sup> So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

...and, (3) the fact that at the close of one of his letters he makes reference to the size of the letters in the epistle he had written, seemingly implying that he had trouble with his vision.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Galatians 6:11**...See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

But here the whole context shows that he is referring to his state of mind. When he appeared before them he was not consciously depending upon his own strength or wisdom, but was burdened by a sense of his own weakness and insufficiency. The job he had to do, he felt, was entirely above his ability. He points out that both his message and his preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom. There are two important points to gather from this: first, his message was the same both privately and publicly. Secondly, he did not use cleverness in either place.

Now, it is important to say that Paul was educated, extremely educated. From his writing, we can see that he was conversant on a wide array of topics. We can see that he was well read and that he was schooled in both the rigors of Judaism and ancient Greek literature and poetry. He was equally at home quoting Old Testament writers from both the Hebrew and Greek versions of the Old Testament and he quoted secular writers on several occasions. He probably spoke at least four languages. But for Paul, everything changed on that dusty road outside Damascus when he came face to face with the risen Christ. He laid aside his worldly wisdom for the foolish message of Christ crucified.

It is impossible to think about Paul's statement without thinking about the current state of preaching in evangelicalism today. Today, the church is

apparently consumed with being considered wise. If you look at the titles of sermons listed in the newspaper, it is a clear indication that many preachers today consider it as important to have a clever title for their sermon as they do to have content in their sermon.

If you watch any of the television preachers it is easy to get a sense of the arrogance of the men involved. There is a tendency for the ministers to assume a role of condescension. There is a tendency for many television ministers to strut across their stages and reveal the glories of both their knowledge and experience. I know this is a subjective evaluation on my part, and that there is no way that I can know the heart of all of the men on television, but their countenances, I think, betray their hearts,

But Paul makes it clear that he did not want to demonstrate either earthly wisdom or cleverness but rather the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul had a reason for not using earthly wisdom or cleverness. He wanted the Corinthians to realize that they had not been swayed by his clever philosophy or manner.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:5**...that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Paul did not want the Corinthians to rest in his words or his wisdom but in the power of the message he preached. In spite of all that, the Corinthians were enamored with the idea of wisdom. Apparently, they had begun to carp at Paul and each other that Paul was withholding the good stuff from them. In the ancient world, most teachers had two separate parts to their instruction. First, they taught publicly to attract students. This part of their teaching was considered rudimentary; it was the stuff reserved for the novices (exoteric). Only

after students had made a commitment to their teachers of both their time and money did the teacher reveal his secret knowledge, his secret stuff, his hidden gnosis (esoteric). This seems to be the charge that the Corinthians were making against Paul and we get a sense of why they would feel that way, especially when Paul says things like:

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:2**...For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

If that were the case, Paul definitely got their attention in verse 6.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:6**...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. <sup>7</sup> But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

It seems that Paul is saying, **“When I am among the mature, I speak about the good stuff. But when I was with you I could not.”** But the point Paul is making is just the opposite. Now listen to me carefully because many have variously misunderstood this phrase. In fact, what Paul is saying is that the message that he preached remained the same all the time. He is saying that when he is among mature people they understand the wisdom of God as it is revealed in the preaching of the cross; it is the immature that think that there is another message that contains the good stuff. He is not saying, **“When I am among the mature, I speak about the good stuff. But when I was with you I could not.”** What he is actually saying is something more like, **“I preach Christ and Him crucified and when I am among the mature, they recognize it for being the wisdom of God that it actually is.”**

I think the implication of his thought might have startling ramifications for the church in America today. It might even have startling implications for our own church and our own body. From time to time, we are asked to pick leaders in our church. Surely, the Pauline standard for doing so is different than the standard that the world uses. For Paul the test of being mature is the recognition of God's wisdom as it is revealed in the cross. It is a coming to an appreciation of what God actually accomplished in the atonement. Today, we pick leaders for all kinds of various reasons. We may pick them for their skills in child rearing, or their skills in business. We may pick them for their listening skills or even their skills in conflict resolution. And all of those things are good things, as are things like their ability to express themselves, or their ability to pray, or their self-discipline in areas like prayer or Bible study. But for Paul, the obvious sign of maturity among Christians is their understanding of the wisdom of God as revealed in the crucifixion of Christ. Maturity, biblical wisdom, is objectively related to how one understands the atonement and there lies the problem that we face. There is, in modern evangelical Christianity, an apparent distaste to discuss concepts like the atonement. Probably, that is because we fear being exposed. We think discussion of such "heady" theological topics is just too much for the average Christian, but for Paul it was just the opposite.

For Paul this is wisdom, true wisdom. But it is not the wisdom of the world. Notice what he says in verse 7:

**ESV 1 Corinthians 2:7...**But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

This wisdom is the wisdom of God; it is God's hidden wisdom. It is a wisdom that absolutely none of the wise of this world could comprehend and it is apparent that they could not comprehend it by the very fact that they crucified the Lord of glory. Naturally, I like the way Luther puts it:

That person does not deserve to be called a theologian who looks upon the invisible things of God as though they were clearly perceptible in those things, which have actually happened. He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross. (Heidelberg Disputation. Thesis 19-20)

THAT PERSON DOES NOT DESERVE TO BE  
CALLED A THEOLOGIAN WHO LOOKS  
UPON THE INVISIBLE THINGS OF GOD AS  
THOUGH THEY WERE CLEARLY  
PERCEPTIBLE IN THOSE THINGS, WHICH  
HAVE ACTUALLY HAPPENED.

HE DESERVES TO BE CALLED A  
THEOLOGIAN, HOWEVER, WHO  
COMPREHENDS THE VISIBLE AND  
MANIFEST THINGS OF GOD SEEN  
THROUGH SUFFERING AND THE CROSS.

Calvin writes:

"Now we see how many good things, interwoven, spring from the cross...For, overturning that good opinion which we falsely entertain concerning our own strength, and unmasking our hypocrisy, which affords us delight, the cross strikes our perilous confidence in the flesh" (Institutes, 3.8.3).

NOW WE SEE HOW MANY GOOD  
THINGS, INTERWOVEN, **SPRING**  
**FROM THE CROSS.** FOR,  
OVERTURNING THAT GOOD  
OPINION WHICH WE FALSELY  
ENTERTAIN CONCERNING OUR  
OWN STRENGTH, AND  
UNMASKING OUR HYPOCRISY,  
WHICH AFFORDS US DELIGHT, THE  
CROSS STRIKES OUR PERILOUS  
CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH.

It seems that the Corinthians were still enamored with the wisdom of this world. They wanted Paul to give them the good stuff, just like the world offered. They wanted their secret wisdom because the world had a secret wisdom and Paul tells them that the wisdom they seek has already been revealed to them. The problem is not with the message; the problem is with the Corinthians. They are too much like the world. The things that they seek are foolishness to the world and cannot be comprehended by the world. Paul says that such wisdom is of a nature that it contains:

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:9**...But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"-

This raises the question of how such things are to be understood. This wisdom, the wisdom of the cross, is so radically different than that of the world that nothing like it had ever even occurred to man. So Paul explains to them just how they are comprehended. These things, that are so esoteric, are revealed by the Spirit of God.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:10**...these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

To explain this Paul uses a wonderful little analogy. He says that what goes on in a man's heart is unknown except in a man's spirit or mind. While that is true for men, it is also true for God. God cannot be comprehended from without; if He is ever to be comprehended it must be by His own Spirit. Listen to the way Paul says it:

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:11**...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. <sup>12</sup> Now 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. <sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

Now, before we get too far along, I want to ask you what is it that Paul is talking about? What is this wisdom of God? I ask that because if you listen to much of the teaching done in evangelicalism today you may get a sense that this wisdom includes speaking in tongues, the gift of a word of knowledge, or the ability to laugh like an idiot, or bark like a dog. It may include a crucial understanding of the exact time of Jesus' return or even practical instruction for making rivers of wealth. But for Paul, the answer has already been given. This wisdom is the wisdom of God as revealed in Christ and Him crucified. I know this is true because that is the whole context of what he has spoken about thus far and it is the content of what he speaks about next.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:14**...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.

Now, allow me to belabor the point for a moment. What is it that Paul has been saying all along is foolish to the world? It is the crucified Christ that is foolish to the world. But it is different for the Christian.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 2:15**...The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.

Now the "**all things**" of verse 16 is limited by the context of the passage. We do not necessarily gain the ability to appraise molecular biology, or really even any of the wisdom of this world. But we have been given the ability to appraise the

wisdom of God as revealed in the Christ, and regardless of what the world in all of its wisdom thinks about it, we who belong to Christ recognize it as the glorious wisdom of God.

Next week, we'll look at how Paul deals with the apparent inability of the Corinthians to comprehend this wisdom, the wisdom of the crucified Christ and we'll explore the notion of whether there is such a thing as a "carnal Christian". In preparation, you might want to read 1 Corinthians 3.

---

<sup>1</sup> F.F. Bruce, *First and Second Corinthians* (Butler and Tanner Limited: London, 1971), 18.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce, 19.

<sup>3</sup> **NIV Acts 18:27**...When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. <sup>28</sup> For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. **NIV Acts 19:1** While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples...

<sup>4</sup> Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing: Grand Rapids, 1975), 20. He writes: "It is often said that Apollos used the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture. He may well have done so, but the only evidence is that he came from Alexandria, the home of allegorical interpretation. But whatever his method it almost certainly differed from that of Paul. Paul's preaching had a studied simplicity (1 Cor. ii. 2-4) that of Apollos was probably highly rhetorical (Acts xviii. 24, 27f.). There was no fundamental difference in the message preached, for Paul speaks of Apollos as continuing the work that he had begun (1 Cor. iii. 6, 8)."

<sup>5</sup> Bruce, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Morris, 21.

<sup>7</sup> C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Harper & Row Publishers: New York, 1968), 3.

<sup>8</sup> **NIV 1 Corinthians 1:11**...My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you.

<sup>9</sup> **NIV 1 Corinthians 16:17**...I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you.

<sup>10</sup> Morris, 25. He writes; "Having dealt with these grave evils, Paul turns to the matters

mentioned in the letter written to him. Then he includes a magnificent passage on the resurrection, elicited, it would seem, by the fact that some of the Corinthians denied that the dead will rise (1 Cor. xv. 12). The result of all this is “an inexhaustible mine of Christian thought and life.”

<sup>11</sup> Bruce, 24.

<sup>12</sup> J.A. Cuddon, *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 138.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.chiasmus.com/mastersofchiasmus.shtml>. Taken from the section on Ben Franklin

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, See section on Kennedy.

<sup>16</sup> My apologies to BF.