

The Ancient Message Revealed
1 Corinthians 2:6-16
Jerry Grey WBC 3-23

Introduction: Within man rest the characteristics of God because we are created in his image. Yet, those characteristics are flawed due to the fall.

We all know **peace** when we see it, and we feel it because Jesus said, “my peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, but my peace I give unto you.”

We all know what **love** is. But God's love is not like man's love. All his attributes are holy and eternal, and ours are not.

We get **joy** and **happiness** confused as well. **Wisdom** is no less misunderstood. Man thinks intelligence is wisdom.

We think old information passed down through the generations is spiritual wisdom, and it can be in many cases. It is important, but when we get into spiritual truth, things change.

Proverbs 8 gives us a clear picture as to how important wisdom really is. May I say not just wisdom... but **spiritual wisdom**. Wisdom is actually the first thing God brought forth. Did you know that? (Verse 22)

Proverbs 8

Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? 2 On the heights along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; 3 beside the gates leading into the city, at the entrances, she cries aloud: 4 "To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. 5 You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding. 6 Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right. 7 My mouth

speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness. 8 All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse. 9 To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge. 10 Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, 11 for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

12 "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. 13 To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. 14 Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power. 15 By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; 16 by me princes govern, and all nobles who rule on earth. 17 I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. 18 With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. 19 My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. 20 I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, 21 bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full.

22 "The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; 23 I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. 24 When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; 25 before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, 26 before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. 27 I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, 28 when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, 29 when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth. 30 Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, 31 rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind.

32 "Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. 33 Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it.

34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. 35 For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord. 36 But whoever fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death."

NIV

Quote- "Wisdom manifests the mind of God" JRG

Quote- Wisdom has been described as, "*the proper use of knowledge.*" I like that as well, but it falls short of a sovereign definition. This would be more of a natural or worldly definition... not wrong, just falls a bit short.

Quote- Job was a righteous man and God showed him he was a sinner. Solomon was a wise man and God showed him he was a fool.

Wisdom is manifested in the mind of God in creation, science, theology, history, and any other area of which you may think.

The greatest manifestation of God's wisdom was in salvation. The plan itself displays the brilliance and eternal wisdom of God. The plan of salvation is not only brilliant but beautiful. There is not an entity in all of creation that could have thought of this plan, and no one would have been able to complete the demands of it forensically and righteously. Only God.

God has revealed, and is still revealing, truth about His plan for man through his wisdom. You must understand, however, God has chosen a magnificent method of revealing His plan of salvation. God will be effective in delivering this message. ***We need this text that we have before us at this moment to understand God's wisdom in the message.***

Wisdom can be anything that reveals the truth about the mind of God that drives us to righteousness. These first few chapters help us understand what Paul was teaching in Ephesians 3:10, 11.

Eph 3:10-11

10 His intent was that now, through the church, **the manifold wisdom** of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

NIV

Read The Text:

1 Cor 2:6-16

6 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. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 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"—

10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 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. 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the

Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.

NIV

Verse 6: The wisdom of God is not like man's wisdom. Verse 6 is easy enough to understand. The context of Paul's statement in verse 6 is tied to verses 1-5. Paul says he did not come to them with impressive and brilliant speech. His goal was to reveal the wisdom of God in salvation. Paul didn't want to simply impress. Paul wanted men to be saved. Paul did not want them impressed with a great sermon or Paul's intelligence. He preached the cross.

Paul said, we did speak a word of wisdom... but it was not a worldly wisdom that passes away like the men who speak it. Paul spoke a word of wisdom that was understood by seeing the Spirit's power. Paul says man's wisdom, and man himself, were coming to nothing.

Greek: Nothing- καταργεω– katargeo. Abolish, cease, destroy, fail vanish, lose, to be without effect, cumber. Not a good way to describe man's wisdom is it? Paul's wisdom was founded in Christ and Him crucified. That wisdom will never lose its power.

The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power

The blood that Jesus shed for me
 Way back on Calvary
 The blood that gives me strength
 From day to day

It will never lose its power

It reaches to the highest mountain
 It flows to the lowest valley
 The blood that gives me strength
 From day to day

It will never lose its power

It soothes my doubts and calms my fears
 And it dries all my tears
 The blood that gives me strength
 From day to day

It will never lose its power

It reaches to the highest mountain
 It flows to the lowest valley
 The blood that gives me strength
 From day to day

It will never lose its power

Why does the modern preacher think he is wiser than God? He thinks he needs a new approach and a new message. He and his message will soon end up in hell.

Jesus and Pilate: Pilate asked what truth is. He was in the presence of truth and missed it. He only had man's wisdom to help him. What a shame.

John 18:28-40

28 Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

30 "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

31 Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

"But we have no right to execute anyone," the Jews objected. 32 This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

33 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

34 "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

35 "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, **and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.**"

38 **"What is truth?"** Pilate asked.

NIV

Peter speaking to the Jews:

Acts 3:17-18

17 "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders.

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The ignorance of men keeps them in darkness. After Pentecost Peter told the “brothers” that they acted in ignorance, as did their leaders, in killing Jesus. Man’s wisdom keeps men in darkness.

Jesus on the cross: You finish it for me...

“Father forgive them.... They know not.....”

Application:

- If man’s wisdom is so intelligent, then why did man crucify the Son of God? Even if you say, “It was God’s plan for that to happen,” then why can man not recognize that today and accept it?
- Paul does indicate a spiritual maturity that exists among people who have grown to recognize God’s wisdom. We should all strive to understand God’s attributes.
- The rules of this world are coming to nothing. Whom should we follow?

Verse 7: The plan and revelation of God’s salvation was manifested at just the right time in history and in your personal salvation experience. Paul calls the plan a mystery. The Greek word for mystery is **musterion**, which means mystery or secret. This is not some spooky mystery but a hidden truth.

Remember Prov 8 and how long wisdom has been with us?

Prov 8:22-23

22 "The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works,
before his deeds of old;
23 I was appointed from eternity,
from the beginning, before the world began.

NIV

If this truth about the wisdom of God is true, and it is, then we know that the plan for our redemption is not plan B. Salvation is plan A. Salvation is and always has been under God's control, period!!! Doesn't matter what your theology is, God has always been in control of salvation.

If man's intelligence is useless to help him find God, then how can he be saved? Most of you know Romans 8:28, right? What is the immediate context of it? The context surrounds salvation, God's wisdom, and God's plan for your eternal life.

Rom 8:28-30

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God **foreknew** he also **predestined** to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he **predestined**, he also **called**; those he called, he also **justified**; those he justified, he also **glorified**.

NIV

Concerning Salvation's Plan... God is The:

- Creator-
- Initiator-
- Provider-
- Builder-
- Securer-

Quote: Truth is revealed, not learned (1 Cor. 2:14, Ephesians 2:1, 5). The lost man does not understand spiritual things and spiritually dead people must be made alive.

The truth has to be revealed. The text says truth or secret wisdom (The plan of Salvation) was hidden. The Greek word is

apokrupto. We get our word cryptic from this word. It has been hidden since **aions**. That's **eons** in English. Throughout the ages, God has kept hidden the mystery of the plan until the perfect time. Paul says it this way...

Rom 5:6-7

6 You see, **at just the right time**, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

NIV

1 Tim 2:5-7

5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its **proper time**.

NIV

Even the rapture and second coming fall under this truth. When will Christ return? I do not know but it will at just the right time.

2 Thess 2:6-7

6 And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the **proper time**.

NIV

Paul says that all this was ordained or predestined (**προορίζω**). **Pro-** before and **horizo-** marked out, laid out, determined, limited... like our word **horizon**. The limit from horizon to horizon. Ordained.

One last glorious thought on this verse. Why did God do all this? Believe it or not, **for your glory**. Not the glory of being credited with the plan but the glory of resting in it and being associated with it. You are participating in the plan of salvation and the divine rewards of it. We are consumed by the glory of it.

*** When a person is shown the truth about salvation, the glory of God rests upon them and continues to do so.***

Now many of you will have trouble this so I have scripture to help you. You think it is blasphemous to share in His glory. I'm telling you that you must share in His glory or you are lost.

Rom 2:9-11

9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; 10 but **glory**, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 11 For God does not show favoritism.

NIV

Rom 3:22-24

There is no difference, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the **glory** of God,

NIV

In Christ you do not fall short anymore.

Rom 8:17

17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also **share in his glory**.

NIV

Rom 8:18

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the **glory** that will be revealed **in** us.

NIV

Rom 9:22-25

22 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath —

prepared for destruction? 23 What if he did this to make the **riches** of his **glory** known to the **objects of his mercy**, whom he prepared in advance for **glory**— 24 even **us**, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?

NIV

1 Cor 15:42-44

42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, **it is raised in glory**; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual

body.

NIV

2 Cor 3:7-11

7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with **glory**, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its **glory**, fading though it was, 8 **will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?** 9 **If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!** 10 **For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory.** 11 **And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!**

NIV

Col 1:27

27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles **the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

NIV

Col 3:4

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in **glory**.

NIV

2 Thess 2:14-15

14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might **share** in the **glory** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NIV

Heb 2:10

10 **In bringing many sons to glory**, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

NIV

1 Peter 4:13-14

13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the **Spirit of glory** and of God rests on you.

NIV

1 Peter 5:1

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and **one who also will share in the glory to be revealed:**

NIV

1 Peter 5:4

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive **the crown of glory** that will never fade away.

NIV

1 Peter 5:10

10 And the God of all grace, **who called you to his eternal glory** in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

NIV

Verse 8: Was this why the mystery was hidden? If men actually knew what they were doing, would they have crucified the Lord of glory. The irony of the mystery is too much for the human to understand. The crucifixion is how we acquired redemption, yet, men did not know what they were doing, if they had, Paul says, they would not have done it. The rulers did not know this wisdom. God's wisdom is about the plan.

Man's wisdom does not even seek the eternal. Man's wisdom seeks power, riches, authority, pleasure, the temporal, but never the eternal or spiritual.

This was not a trick but a protection.

Verse 9: One of my favorite saying in the scriptures... "It is written." Paul quotes from the bible he had. Isn't that awesome. Paul quotes Isaiah.

Isa 64:4

4 Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

NIV

The eyes are the grand creation of God. There is nothing in all of nature that is as special as the eyes of men. Yet, they lack the ability to see God spiritually. The eye may be the splendor and zenith of God's creation. But, it lacks.

The ear has heard music, theater, joy, sorrow, the sound of the wind and waterfalls, yet, it lacks.

The mind of man contains the creative power of God. The depths of knowledge and thoughts are vast. The brilliance of academic realms is overwhelming. But the mind, the ears, and the eyes of man are woefully inadequate when it comes to understanding the mind of God.

Righteousness, holiness, and the entrance into heaven are all outside the reach of sinful man. Therefore, what is man supposed to do about the knowledge of God.

The Threefold Wisdom of God in Salvation

Verse 10: Revelation- In the gospels, Jesus said this about the people of Israel.

Matt 11:16-17

16 "To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

17 "'We played the flute for you,
and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge,
and you did not mourn.'

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." ' But **wisdom** is proved right by her actions."

NIV

The Matthew 11 passage reveals what we have talked about. Unless God reveals it to you there is no revelation of wisdom. Jesus then said to the Gentiles, "Come unto me."

However, in the plan of God, the Jews will come at the appointed time. The salvation of the nation is planned. Notice the beauty of this prophecy in Isaiah concerning revelation.

Isa 52:13-15

13 See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

14 Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness —

15 so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him.

For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

NIV

The passage before us and the Isaiah passage teach us general and specific revelation. God has revealed these things to us by His Spirit and He will also reveal them by His Spirit to Israel at the proper time. The Nation of Israel will see what they have not been told and they will understand what they have not heard. The revelation of the message belongs to God.

You may have wondered what will befall men who have not been told about Christ. We share the message with every man we can. But the truth remains. The scripture says God can reveal and help people know and understand that which they have not even heard.

Revelation comes only by way of the Holy Spirit. No matter how or when it happens, God is to be praised. If that is the case, and it is, no amount of human effort can save anyone. Likewise, no amount of disobedience can lead people away from the truth if God reveals it. Note Romans 1:18-24. “Although they knew God.” How did the pagans know God? By revelation!

We work, worship and witness, but without the aid of the Holy Spirit- we make no progress. Verse 11 teaches us that the wisdom of salvation comes by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit only. The Spirit can search the deep things- even the mind of God.
Selah.

The truth reveals why a man cannot just wake up one day and decide he will get saved. The truth has to be revealed to him and then He must choose Christ. And not until then!

This is why it is so important for you to respond while you are being drawn. If you sense the drawing of the Holy Spirit right now... do not respond in apathy. Surrender right now.

Verse 11-12: Illumination- The key phrase in these two verses is, **“so that we may understand.”** The revelation is understood by illumination. **Verse 11** gives us the first leg of the comparison. Just like no one can understand what is going on in the heart of any individual man, so it is with God. The spirit of a man knows what’s going on in his head. Likewise, the Holy Spirit knows what is in the mind of God because He is God.

Many of you may be under deep conviction right now and the person next to you have no idea what’s going on. Many of you are rejoicing in the fact that you understand the message and Jesus has made the message clear to you. The person next to you doesn’t know.

The Holy Spirit doesn’t know some things; the Holy Spirit knows all things... the deep things of God.

Revelation is **apokalupto** (apocalyptic). This means to take the lid off. To uncover something. Understanding is to perceive something. To know it. That’s what the apocalypse will be- the

great unveiling. The revealing of what? Jesus Christ!!! That's what the book of Revelation is all about. The Revelation is the Revealing of Jesus Christ. Don't ever say you don't understand the book of Revelation. You do! It is the revelation of all time and history. Jesus!

The revelation was given to us *freely*. The understanding (**eido**) is given by grace (**Charizomai**). The word grace is embedded in this word. **Charis is grace**. The revelation and understanding of the wisdom and plan of God comes through grace. The text says *freely given*. Aorist Passive Participle. Done in the past by an outside source with continual existence. God has given, is giving, and will continue to give grace freely to understand the wisdom of God's plan.

~Here is what we are looking at: The third aspect of wisdom in salvation: Revelation, Illumination, and Now...

Verse 13: Inspiration- God inspired the Bible writers and prophets so as to *reveal* and *illuminate* Spiritual truths.

Verse 13 teaches that the author of the Bible is the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches us that God is the author via Holy Spirit. The Christian is given the *Author* to live in the heart so that the Author can help *illuminate* the *Revelation* that was given by way of *inspiration*. Did you get that? ***The Revelation is inspired and it is illuminated for our understanding.*** Bro Jerry, does the scripture really teach that? Yes!!!

2 Peter 1:16-21

16 We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the

Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

19 And we have the **word of the prophets made more certain**, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 **For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man**, but men spoke from God as they **were carried along by the Holy Spirit**.

NIV

Peter was with Jesus at the transfiguration. He saw with the eye and heard with the ear and even felt the presence of God. He heard the voice of God and saw Jesus transfigured and yet, Peter says he placed more faith in the certain words of the scripture than his own eyes and ears. If you cannot validate your experience with the inspired Word, it cannot be trusted. Emotions, eyes, and ears will lie to you. The Word never changes. Satan can trick you with your emotions. The Word never will.

The prophets were carried along- **φέρω**, (Imperfect passive Indicative)- to let drive or carry. **επιδιδωμι** (2 Aorist Active Participle) to deliver, give way, or surrender. In 2 Peter 1:21 the same word is used for carried along. It is translated as moved, carried along, or guided by the Holy Spirit. The word is **phero**. The idea is simple. The Holy Spirit carried the men along that were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Word of God. It is like being moved in a boat by an unseen wind to the proper destination. Same word used in Acts 27:15

Acts 27:15

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let (**επιδιδομι**) her drive (**φερω**).

KJV

Notice with me 2 Timothy 3:16-17. “God Breathed”

2 Tim 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is **God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

NIV

Our key word is **θεοπνευστος (Theopneustos)**. This is the word for God and the word for wind put together. The scriptures are spoken of as being **God-Breathed**. Scripture literally came from the existence or life of God. This word is so important in its relation to Christianity that no other occurrence in pre-Christian literature has ever been found. It is only found here in 2 Timothy. This describes the importance of **inspiration** to us regarding the Word of God.

Any link in the chain of *The Threefold Wisdom of God* in Salvation that is broken, results in ignorance of God and the plan of salvation.

As if this were not good enough to explain the truths of the revealed message, Paul goes on to illustrate it for us. Paul teaches us about the Natural, Spiritual, and Carnal man. Dr. Vines actually has illustrated this for us in this trilogy: In Egypt, Israel was the Natural man or lost man; In the wilderness, Israel was the carnal man, and In Canaan, Israel was the spiritual man.

Paul illustrates this truth for us in the next few verses:

Verse 14: This is the summation of the argument. I prefer the NIV and the KJV here.

1 Cor 2:14

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.

KJV

1 Cor 2:14

14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

NIV

1 Cor 2:14-15

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.

ESV

The text:

- The **natural man** without the Spirit. **ψυχικός, psuchikos**-natural, sensual. This word is contrary or in distinction from **pneumatikos**, which is the higher nature. This would be the spiritual, ethereal or regenerate nature. But on the other hand like Phusikos, which is physical and natural.
- What does Paul teach about this natural man? Paul says that he cannot accept the things of the Spirit. Paul uses the word **dechomai**, which means to accept or receive. This is tragic for the lost man. He cannot even accept the things of God because he is not a spiritual being. He is dead in trespasses and sins. He is a natural man in Egypt. He is not looking for God and would not know God if he ran into him. He is not

moved by spiritual things because his soul is dead to the Spirit.

- Paul says the things of God are **μωρία (moronic)** to him. They are absurd and foolish to him. The lost man sees spiritual things as foolish silliness. This explains why we often witness, preach, and minister without results. Just do your job and let the Spirit of God work. We are not responsible for results. Not your job.
- Paul goes on to describe why the natural man cannot understand. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The text says **πνευματικός ανακρίνει**. This is the ability to understand and judge the supernatural or the spiritual.
- The natural man cannot understand. There has to be a divine revelation of the inspiration for salvation. This is called illumination. ***This is the mystery and heart of salvation.*** Our job is not to choose or even figure out who gets saved; our job is to make opportunities where the Holy Spirit is working and drawing people for salvation. Just do your job and let God take care of His sovereign will.

Verse 15: Here we have the spiritual man. The spiritual man is the exact opposite. This is the same word used in verse 14 but in juxtaposition. The natural man can't, but you can. The saved man is spiritual and can discern or judge all things. Your spirit has a check valve in it. You have red flags in your soul. You know when something is not right.

No one can evaluate you like you judge yourself. Have you ever had a friend praise you for your great Christian witness and work for Christ and in your heart you knew the real truth about your life? You knew you were faking it. You judged yourself. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. It proves you are saved friend. By the way... this is congruent with light and dark too. You are saved or lost. You are light or dark. You are spiritual or natural. You have the Holy Spirit or you don't. You can't be a little bit

pregnant and you can't be a little saved. The country preacher said you is or you ain't not.

We are saved by the Spirit and we walk in obedience by the spirit. No man can judge you and grow you in the faith like the Spirit. The Spirit helps you judge all things. Every Christian should be aware of and understand Romans 14.

Rom 14:22-23

22 So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. 23 But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

NIV

Rom 14:19-21

19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. 20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. 21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.

NIV

Verse 16: Paul illustrates the working of the Spirit in verse 16 and concludes this section by using Isaiah 40:13.

Isa 40:13-14

13 Who has understood the mind of the Lord,
or instructed him as his counselor?
14 Whom did the Lord consult to enlighten him,
and who taught him the right way?

Who was it that taught him knowledge
or showed him the path of understanding?
NIV

Taylor says, “God’s ways are inscrutable (2:9), NAC. No man can know the mind of God. The hidden wisdom and plan of God was revealed to by grace. The question is raised, “who knows the mind of God” is answered quickly... no one. Paul, as Taylor, says we have the mind of Christ, not that we have the Spirit as he does in 2:12. This refers to the hidden wisdom of God. The hidden wisdom that was revealed is the mind of Christ. This is a bold statement by Paul and beautifully describes the limits of grace given us in salvation. Salvation is the mind of God revealed in man. The world and principalities have to see this and that is exactly the meaning of Ephesians 3:10. God’s intent through the church is to display the manifold wisdom of God.

What is it that will heal the divisions in the Corinthian church? It will be the wisdom of God. In Philippians 2:1-5 Paul says, “let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.”

The filling of the Spirit at salvation means we have the mind of Christ. Wow!

To close out the trilogy notice with me that 3:1 speaks of the carnal man. I will deal with this in the next message but notice the last group. The wandering Israelites in the wilderness. The saved who are carnal. There are so many. The babes in Christ that stay that way. Those who act just like crybabies and babies in diapers. Always wanting their way and always crying. God help us!

Closing: Just do your job and let God reveal the ancient message.

Illustration: A young preacher was asked by his superiors to accept the pastorate of a church that was at the edge of a university campus. He remonstrated, saying to them he would feel reluctant to do so or to even discourse on science, for the professor of science would be there; he would hesitate discussing history or sociology or philosophy or economics or politics, because the professors might happen to be in the audience. His Bishop suggested this, *“just preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. Maybe some of those professors don't know that subject so well.”*

All men and women need Jesus Christ no matter their stature, or position, or financial situation. We're just messengers. God has done his part to inspire, to reveal, and will illuminate the message. Are you in Egypt, are you wandering in the desert, or are you in Canaan today.

Just speak a word of wisdom and watch God work.