

**Text:** 1 Corinthians 2:10-13 (1 Corinthians 2:6-16 Part 2)

**Title:** Revealed Wisdom

**Truth:** The believer *does* know God's wisdom (at least in part).

**Date/Location:** Sunday February 23, 2020 at FBC

## Introduction

Last time we learned about Paul's use of Isaiah 64:4 (in verse 9) and 40:13 (in verse 16). We also saw that the wisdom that comes from God in the gospel of Christ is not something you can obtain from the world or its rulers. What you hear from the world in all its opinion pieces and preaching through movies is worldly wisdom. Information on moral and political issues is shot through with worldly wisdom. The worldly culture has no interest in how God thinks of things. Sometimes the worldly approach will accidentally intersect with godly wisdom because God has created all people according to His image, including a conscience and a basic knowledge of right and wrong. This occasional overlap creates interest in some of us, but it is not a sign that most of what is said is correct. Be very discerning when you are listening to the things of the world.

The wisdom of God has that Biblical "mystery" character which we explained in the last message. It is planned before all time for the glory of God's people. And it is a preventative for evil. If you do not *know* God's ways, then you are certainly going to do bad things. And if you do know, but don't resolve to live rightly, then you are in the same boat.

This brings us to the next section of the chapter, where Paul says that the hidden nature of the wisdom of God is opened to man's view by a gracious act of God revealing it to His apostles, and in turn to His people.

## V. The Revelation of God's Wisdom to Man, v. 10-12

A. The wisdom of God includes "things which God has prepared for those who love Him." Those things were not perceived by human senses or reason, BUT God revealed them. They were hidden ("encrypted") but now are openly revealed ("unencrypted") in the speech and writings of the apostles.<sup>1</sup> The connection between verses 9 and 10 is the reason that we cannot wonder at what we do not know—as if it is about the unknown glories of heaven. Rather, we wonder and glory at *what we do*

---

<sup>1</sup> Let me be clear that I am *not* suggesting there is 'code' in the Bible. The Bible is the already-decoded wisdom of God, put plainly for us humans who were unable to attain to it when it resided only in the mind of God.

All Scripture is from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

*know* because God has disclosed it! In other words, the things that God has shown us include those things that God has prepared for us who love Him. We *do* know those things—just the opposite of the common interpretation of verse 9.

I suggest that instead of focusing on material blessings in heaven (mansions), let us focus on Biblical concepts such as the relationship of God and His people (Jer. 32:38, Rev. 21:3), or the fact that there will be no more sin or death to interrupt our relationship with God (Rev. 21:4), or that the nations will co-exist in the kingdom and eternal state in peace, serving God in a night-less, sinless existence (Rev. 21:24-27). There are material benefits as well, but let us remember the relational and holiness benefits first.

B. Verse 10: God has revealed them “to us” through His Spirit. I take it that the “us” is technically limited to the apostles and their predecessors, the OT prophets. Even the OT prophets were only given obscure glimpses of what the Christian church enjoys today. It was not until the 11 and Paul that Jesus disclosed a new program by “guiding them into all truth” (John 16:13). None of us can say that God directly reveals things to us. But we are not left out entirely, however, as every Christian shares in the indwelling presence and teaching ministry of same Spirit, and with the revelation previously given, we too can lay claim to those revealed truths and follow them (Deut. 29:29).

In verse 11, Paul illustrates how the Spirit can communicate the things of God. Every person has a spirit, and his or her spirit holds information close about thoughts and feelings and insights that are not knowable by an outsider unless the person discloses it to them. The parallel is that the Spirit of God is related to the persons of God like (not exactly alike) the human spirit is related to the human person. Therefore outsiders (us) can only know what God’s Spirit discloses to us.

C. Verse 12 explains how this conveyance of truth happens. It is that the Spirit of God ministers in the life of the apostle in such a way as to speak truth to and through him. The apostle’s inability—to understand the things of God—is overcome by the presence and teaching ministry of the Spirit so that he can grasp the things freely given by God.

D. Revealed truth is a gracious gift from God without equal anywhere else in the world. I marvel at the notion that this was graciously given by God to humanity, without cost, without merit. Thank Him!

E. God has revealed his truth with the intention that we should know and understand it. As with Daniel, God has disclosed his truth so that we can

have insight and understanding (Dan. 9:22). But why? Why is Amos 3:7 true, that is, why does God do nothing unless He reveals His plan to the prophets? Why is Gen. 18:17 true?

1. Part of the answer is that it pleases God to make known to those closely related to Him what He is about to do. Consider John 15:14-15. Believers are the “friends of Christ” like Abraham was the friend of God (James 2:23) and as such have “insider” privileges.
2. I think another part of the answer relates to the next verse, John 15:16, which states that Jesus wishes for his disciples to bear fruit. Knowing the plan of God helps us to do that most effectively. We are not left wandering in the dark as to what God has done, is doing, or is about to do. Therefore we can most profitably integrate and align ourselves to what God wants to accomplish in this age.
3. Unfortunately many people *are* effectively in the dark because they do not know their Bibles very well, or at all. Some twist the gospel by preaching a partial gospel or a flat-out incorrect one; they think that love is the only factor in God’s plan, ignoring holiness; or they deny the deity of Christ or the sufficiency of His work to save. These are not the friends of God. Others think we are called to make social improvements until utopia arrives, misdirecting their efforts away from the Great Commission. Most common is a mis-directed kind of priority structure that puts pleasures of life or children or work ahead of the priorities of God. This too is evidence of not properly knowing the things that God has freely given us.

## **VI. The Communication of God’s Wisdom, v. 13**

- A. After “we received” (v. 12), revealed truth moves to the next step in its journey, which is “we speak” (v. 13). Some jump to the notion of “inspiration” at this point, but I do not believe Paul is limiting himself to only the written revelation of God. He is speaking of the fact that as an apostle he is communicating God’s wisdom, whether by word of mouth or word of pen. “We” directly refers, again, to the apostles.
- B. Those who have received truth are naturally interested to speak it to others. The apostles were *compelled* to speak it to others because they were specially chosen representatives of Christ for that task. Paul, for example, had no choice in the matter because he was entrusted by God with a gospel stewardship (1 Cor. 9:17). If he carried out his task with gusto and a willing heart, he would be rewarded; otherwise, he would just be doing what he is supposed to do.

Given what I've just said, you might try to slip under the radar or sink into your seat as far as your responsibility with the gospel. Is proclaiming the truth of the Bible entrusted to you as stewardship, or is it a completely voluntary thing? Can you choose freely to do so or not to do so?

- C. Verse 13. In another negative/positive statement (see v. 5 and 12 for others), the apostle denies one method of speaking the things of God so he can emphasize the right method. Man's wisdom cannot guide us as to how to speak the wisdom of God. That requires the wisdom of the Spirit of God, who explains spiritual things with words empowered by the Spirit. The gospel is powerful, but only if the Holy Spirit accompanies its proclamation and illumines the soul of the hearer.

## VII. The Illumination of God's Wisdom in Man, v. 14-16

- A. We will look at this in detail next time.
- B. Suffice it for now to say that people's reception of the truth depends completely on the work of God's Spirit. This means that we must pray that God's Spirit will empower our proclamation of the gospel and open the eyes of the listeners. Let us ask Him for that. He has given us everything we need to share the life-giving message of Christ. He has given us the Holy Spirit, along with peace and prosperity that we can use for the purpose of serving Him.

## Conclusion

We can summarize the passage like this: verse 9 = darkness; verse 10 = light when God discloses truth; verse 11 = the light-giver is the Spirit of God; verse 12 = apostles have received the Spirit from God; verse 13 = the apostles speak what they have heard by means of the Spirit; verse 14 = unsaved people do not and cannot receive the wisdom from God; verse 15a = saved people have the Spirit and can discern the truth; 15b-16 = because they have the mind of Christ, the saved are not understood by the unsaved.

The state of the unsaved is little better today than it would be had God not disclosed anything—because they don't open the Bible! Imagine the darkness that would envelope *you* if there was no revelation from God—where could you get assurance of the forgiveness of sins? Of a right relationship with God? Of heaven? Of a future restoration of the creation? You couldn't. We thank God that He *has* revealed these things in the Word and to us by His Spirit.

MAP