

these items: --

- a. Comparison. Paul does not identify the spirit of the world. Some feel it is Satan. Others that it is the profane spirit of man. It is mentioned, however, not to name it as much as to show that what the child of God has is not this!
- b. Designation. This is the Spirit Whom believers have--the One Who proceeds out of God. The transcendence of God and the Spirit are at once taught! This is obviously more than some human inspiration of the highest order.
- c. Intention. The verb, "know" suggests that there is a measure of greatness to all that a child of God receives in Christ. This can only be known by the Holy Spirit. The truths freely given are the same as "the things of God" (vv. 9-11). All that relates to God is the substance of it. Only through the Spirit can one plumb the depths (Eph. 3:18; Col. 2:2, 3).

Conclusion: God has an offer. It is wisdom. It does not come through human channels. The only clear channel is the Holy Spirit. If you lay down your personal intellectual paraphernalia and accept the pattern of heaven, you will know (John 17:17). Amen.

BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

"The Things of God"

I Cor. 2:9-12

Introduction

1. The failure of man's wisdom is patent (1:18-2:8). It ended in the ignominious death of Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory (2:8).
2. But God has a wisdom which He deigns to communicate with the world of men (2:6). True, it is for only a certain few who will submit to God, but it is available for all! How is this made available to men? That is the kernal of this study.
3. The fact that the Word is explicable through the Spirit only is taught in several ways. Consider these ways: --

1. MAN'S INABILITY v. 9.

Paul appeals to an OT quotation. Since this phrase normally refers to the Word of God inspired by the Spirit, it could not be a reference to the apocryphal book of the Apocolypse of Elias. Some have felt that it is a reference to a prophetic book now lost. However, it seems best to relate it as a combination of quotes from Isaiah 64:4 (Heb. v. 3) and 65:17. Clement of Rome wrote a letter to Corinth and quoted these two passages and the present one from Paul all in the same context. Hence, here is an early suggestion that the thought expressed here is accurate. But what does it say? It points to man's inability?

- a. The area. The phrase, "things of God" gives the answer. This is a reference to all the riches of the Lord in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ and His church (Eph. 3:18).
- b. The proof. The basic sense of man is shown to be insufficient for the task. Mark the three areas selected: --
 - 1) Immediate. This is the thought in the word, "eye." Sight is the immediate experience of man.

- 2) Mediate. Hearing is represented by the "ear." It provides knowledge gained by way of tradition or communication from others.
- 3) Ultimate. The discoveries from one's understanding is suggested by the word, "heart." None of these capabilities of man render him sufficient to come to the knowledge of the wisdom of God as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. No other sense is adequate as these are used as representatives of all others.

c. The reservation. Normally, the verb, "prepared" has been employed of the felicities and glories of heaven. The verb, however, is aorist and probably refers to past activity of God rather than future (cf. John 14:1-3). Since it is for those who are loving HIM (present tense) the thought probably is a reference to the present experience as the children of God.

2. GOD'S CAPABILITY. v. 10.

This verse begins with a strong adversative, "but." The wisdom of which Paul has been speaking is a mystery and has been hidden, BUT it has now been revealed! That's the key thrust of the verse. The top secret has been uncovered! What are some of the details? --

- a. What? The verb is aorist and it means to remove a veil. There is no object for the verb, hence it is not the thing revealed which is scored, but the act of revelation! The action of the verb probably goes back to the point of conversion (cf. Gal. 1:12, 16).
- b. Whom? The obvious answer is "us." But to whom is this a reference? Probably to Paul and his colleagues and thus to all of us by extension. The contrast is with the world to whom the mystery remains hidden.
- c. How? This can only be answered by the person of the Spirit of God. He is the Agent by Whom God works the unveiling and the preposition underscores this. The words, "of God" in refer-

ence to the Spirit are omitted because no doubt is to be left that the person of the Spirit is in view and not the personality of the Father.

- d. Why? It is the function of the Spirit to perform all of this. He is the luminous Principle Who possesses and from Whom all knowledge proceeds. The phrase, "all things" must be understood in its broadest term. He gives true significance to everything! One specific area of the "all things" is the concern of the passage, namely, the "deep things of God." What are these? They are the essence, the attributes, volitions, and plans of God. It is indeed God in His infinitude. Only the Spirit unveils this!

3. SPIRIT'S DEPENDABILITY. v. 11.

To make intelligible the inward activity of the Spirit, Paul invites his readers to contemplate the workings of man's spirit in man himself and compare this with the work of the Holy Spirit.

- a. For man. Man has been made in the image of God. This relates to his moral and spiritual nature. There is a life hidden from all eyes, a whole world of expression and impression. This inner world of man only comes to light by human speech. It is not a new phenomenon and one with which all are fully acquainted. The Greek verb for know is "innate and inborn knowledge."
- b. For God. Here the analogy with the Spirit of God is drawn. But Paul is careful to show that the analogy is not complete. The Spirit of God is not said to be in God (as the spirit of man is in man) as if God were a place for the Spirit. The mystery of the trinity remains something inscrutable. The verb for knowledge here is a neat change too. It refers to knowledge as recognition and experience. The RV makes the distinction by "know" (above) and "comprehend" (here).

4. BELIEVER'S RECEPABILITY. v. 12.

What a glorious word this verse is! It focuses in on all that man in himself cannot lay hold of! Note