**1 CORINTHIANS 2**

**THE PRIORITY OF CHRIST**

Paul has been dealing with the divisions within the church at Corinth. Some of the divisions were over the people claiming they were from the Apollos assembly, or from the Cephas crowd, I am from the Apostle Paul’s assembly and some were claiming to be from Jesus Christ’s group… Paul closed chapter one like this:

**1:30** But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—31 that, as it is written, "HE WHO GLORIES, LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD."

* Or in the NLT - "If you want to boast, boast only about the LORD."

**PROCLAIMING CHRIST CRUCIFIED**

**1 Corinthians 2:1** And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. **(That He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. The testimony of God is that He is NOT mad at us – He is mad about us. The Lord Jesus loved us so much He willingly died in our place!)**

**MY ONE GOAL**

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except **Jesus** Christ and Him crucified.

* In a land where they had thousands of gods and goddesses… Paul had one.
* 5 years ago Lynette and I visited the Areopagus in Athens Greece and there are acres and acres of ruins of these gods and demons – some of them very disturbing to look at.
* In the midst of them all Paul said I present to you one God, the Lord Jesus Christ!

**SCARRED & SCARED**

3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. ***WHY?***

* **David Guzik** - Paul was not brimming with self-confidence. Knowing the need and his own limitations made him weak and afraid. Yet it kept him from the poison of self-reliance, and to let God’s strength flow.
* You see… The Greeks loved handsome tall and eloquent speakers. Paul says that he was none of those.
* In a letter from the time of Paul that did not make it into the bible Paul is described as: “small in size, bald-headed, bow-legged, well built, with eyebrows that met, rather long-nosed and full of grace.” <https://justcallmepastor.wordpress.com/2013/03/04/what-did-the-apostle-paul-look-like/>
* So after being stoned almost to death, shipwrecked, attacked in riot after riot, beaten, arrested, tortured and run out of several cities… Paul arrived in Corinth a little more humbled, scared and scarred than at the first…

**THE POWER OF GOD IS THE PROOF OF THE GOSPEL**

4 And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ***(IE, changed lives)*** 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

* Faith in wisdom is shallow faith… Sometimes people are fascinated by the Gospel… but not transformed by it…
* Like the parable of the sowing of seeds in stony ground – the seeds spring up and look OK, but the ground has not been broken up and the plants dry up and wither away.
* The “Power of God” breaks hardened soil, or hard hearts – and allows the Gospel to take root. It IS NOT ENOUGH to look spiritual or sound spiritual. That is what shallow Christians strive for.
* Jesus said, Blessed are the “Poor” or broken in spirit; Theirs is the Kingdom. **Matthew 5**
* Paul said that he came to them from the scratched and dented shelf.

**WISDOM FROM THE SPIRIT**

6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. **IE, ARE SOON FORGOTTEN.**

* Imagine Paul speaking while **surrounded** with hundreds and hundreds of statues looking gods and idols. You could wait all day and not hear a word from those stone and bronze images.

**THE REVEALING OF CHRIST**

7 But we speak the wisdom of God **in a mystery**, **(a revelation)** the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained **PLANNED** before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. **HAD THEY KNOWN THAT JESUS WAS THE CHRIST THEY WOULD HAVE WORSHIPPED HIM & NOT CRUCIFIED HIM.**

* Is it not a wonderful blessing when somebody plans a blessing for you far in advance? God planned a glorious eternity JUST FOR YOU and He planned it a “Gazillion” years ago!

9 **But** as it is written: "EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." **ISAIAH 64:4**

* **CHUCK SMITH** – Do not ONLY think of heaven when hearing this glorious verse… Paul **and** Isaiah were speaking in present tense… God has prepared blessings and trials for us to enjoy right here and right now too😊
* We are NOT in heaven yet… But I like to think that this life is the Foyer of heaven… The beginning of His glory… I like to close my eyes during worship and imagine that we are in the foyer singing into the halls of heaven.
* The world has nothing to offer Him… They cannot understand… **BUT…**

**SEARCH & RESCUE MINISTRY**

10 **But** God has revealed *them* **(the mysteries)** to us through **His Spirit**. For the Spirit **searches** all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. **I LOVE THE SEARCH AND RESCUE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**THE PRESENT OF HIS PRESENCE**

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

* What a blessing to have received a living Holy Spirit within us and NOT just some stale religion.
* If you are a child of God you have the Holy Spirit, His presence, and His influence too. Some of us get it, know it, sense it, and depend on it…
* Some of us are struggling- like trying to learn a new language… That’s OK… Keep trying, keep reading & praying… The Holy Spirit is STILL in you too. Obey His voice every time you hear it. That will make the process go much faster.
* YOU STILL HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWING HIM… **But…**

**THAT’S ABSURD**

14 **But** the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness **(Absurdity)** to him; nor can he know *them,* because they are spiritually discerned.

* **CEV** - That's why only someone who has God's Spirit can understand spiritual blessings. Anyone who doesn't have God's Spirit thinks these blessings are foolish.
	+ I remember one time I was picking out a birthday card for one of our kids. I found one that I liked but I picked a card from the back so that it would be nice and clean. I paid for the card, hurried home, signed it and stuffed it and sealed it with mere moments to spare. When our kid opened it they collected the money then asked why I had bought a card in a foreign language… I had not even noticed… I THEN had to explain to them what exactly the card said… It is like that sometimes with the Holy Spirit…
* If you and I met at a restaurant and spoke for a few minutes about the Lord and how He is working in our lives… IT MIGHT SOUND like a foreign language to people who do not know the Lord…
	+ Sometimes we just have to say: ”I do not understand what this trial means Lord but so long as YOU do that’s OK.”

15 But he who is spiritual **(IE, has the Holy Spirit)** judges **(Discerns)** all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged **(Understood)** by no one.

16 For "WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD THAT HE MAY INSTRUCT HIM?" **ISAIAH 40:13** But we have the mind **(Changed mind)** of Christ.

To say that we have the mind of Christ is to say that Christ has changed our minds, right? Listen…

When the great Evangelists **H.A. Ironside** first left his position in the Salvation Army to preach full time he happened upon an outside evangelistic meeting being held by his former S.A. Group. When they recognized him they invited him to give a gospel testimony. Of course he gladly accepted and launched into his well-rehearsed testimony.

As he spoke he noticed a well dressed man in the crowd who looked familiar. The man was writing a note on a business card and presented the card to Dr. Ironside afterwards.

Turns out the man was a famous agnostic who had been on a speaking tour of his own. The writing on the card was a challenge to come and publicly debate on the next Saturday afternoon at a local venue. Dr Ironside read the card aloud and told the man he WOULD come and debate him on the following conditions: That the Agnostic debater have with him one man, and one woman who could stand and give testimony of how agnostic beliefs had changed their lives from one of addiction and debauchery to a life of sobriety and restraint. Ironside said “You bring two people and I will arrive with 100 people who will give testimony to how accepting Jesus Christ DID INDEED change their lives from lost to saved forevermore!” The agnostic man just smiled, waved off the Evangelist and walked away.

FROM: www.wholesomewords.org/etexts/ironside/irsrem4.html