

1Corinthians 2

Brought into the Incomparable Glory of God by His Own Glorious Being, Glorious Plan, and Glorious Work

Saturday, February 4, 2023 • Read 1Corinthians 2

Questions from the Scripture text: How did Paul not come to them (v1)? What did he come declaring instead? What was he determined not know (v2)? What, alone, was he determined to know? What about Christ did he emphasize? How did Paul present himself before them in v3? What did his preaching appear to be missing, to some (v4)? But with what did that preaching come? What did this keep them from putting their faith in (v5a)? What did it ensure that they would put their faith in (v5b)? What kind of wisdom do Paul and his partners not speak (v6)? To what are the rulers of this age coming? Whose wisdom does Paul speak (v7)? When had God ordained it? For what purpose? How many of the rulers of that age knew that wisdom (v8)? What wouldn't they have done if they had known it? What hadn't man's eye seen, ear heard, or heart considered (v9)? Through what (Whom!) has God revealed them (v10)? From where, alone, can come the knowledge of the things of God (v11)? So, whom must believers receive if they are to know the things of God (v12)? So, what wisdom does Paul speak (v13)? For what kind of people? What kind of person cannot receive them (v14)? Why not? How are they discerned? But who has the resources to judge all things (v15)? What is the expected answer to the question, "who has known the mind of the Lord" (v16)? What is the surprising actual answer at the end of that verse?

With what did the apostle come to the Corinthians? 1Corinthians 2 looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these sixteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **what the apostle brought to Corinth was not the wisdom of men but the power and wisdom of God brought by the life of God Himself**.

(vv1-5). What do we put our faith in, and what do we lead others to put faith in? Praise God for faithful churches, and praise God for faithful ministers. But, our passage leaves us with the clear message that if people come away from us thinking, "what a great church!" or "what a great minister!" then we have not truly achieved our aim. Rather, we should desire that they come away thinking, "What a great God!" and "What a great Savior!" and "What a great salvation!"

Paul is still encouraging them to embrace their ordinariness—to embrace their unimpressiveness. Not only does this ensure that all the glory goes to God (as we learned in the previous passage), but it also redirects people's faith.

How we present ourselves to those to whom we minister is, in the economy of God's providence, a significant factor in determining upon what they come to depend. Will they end up with faith in the wisdom (or, perhaps thoughtfulness or goodness or togetherness, or ?) of men? Or will they end up with faith in the power of God?

Paul didn't preach cleverly assembled sermons full of catchy turns of phrase. He preached plain doctrine about how God became man to save, and did so not by being impressive but rather by being executed.

In fact, he preached such sermons that one would say, "Come on Paul... it would take a miracle from God for that sermon to bring someone to faith!"

And that is exactly the point, isn't it? Paul came and preached plainly about Jesus so that when the people believed, all would know for sure, "This can be a demonstration only of the Spirit and power of God!"

Isn't this what we want most, when we witness, or when we have others preach and teach to us: not that there would be a great presentation that gives us a memorable encounter with men, but instead that there would be a plain gospel presentation, that Christ would be clearly seen, and that there would be a glorious encounter with God. Let us so act and so speak as to have this as our great aim!

(vv6-16). Here is the most glorious thing that we can know, and about the only way that we can know it. Sometimes, I have heard people take v9 to mean something like when 1John 3:2 says, "It has not been revealed what we shall be"—that is, about some future glory. But that most certainly is not the case here. Rather, the Holy Spirit is saying here that what the rulers of this age did not know is that God had prepared to give Himself, the Lord of glory, for those who love Him.

This is the extraordinary that eye hadn't seen, ear heard, nor heart considered. No, God had kept the details of this glorious gospel gift hidden from the eyes and ears and minds of men.

This is the most glorious thing that we can know. The Lord of glory has given Himself for sinners! Even with the access and instruction that we have, we do not really wrap our minds around this: the Lord of glory was crucified for me! For this, we must have the active working of the Holy Spirit.

When we say that "the only way we can know" this amazing gospel truth is by the work of the Spirit, we mean more than just that the Spirit has to come up with the words.

Certainly that is true, which is what vv10-12 are all about. ONLY the Spirit knows the things of God. ONLY THROUGH the Spirit has God revealed the truth to us. And the greatest part of that truth, the heart of that truth, is "the things that have been freely given to us by God." Behold how good and generous is our God that the height of the revelation of His glory would be how He has given Himself for us!

But just as the work of the Spirit is the only way that we could have had the Scriptures, so also the work of the Spirit is the only way that we can come to believe them. The natural man does not receive them. Rather, the Scriptures are spiritual for spiritual (how v13 literally ends): Holy-Spirit-given words for Holy-Spirit-helped people.

And how does the Holy Spirit help us? By giving to us that which is Christ's. Not only Christ's words, as promised in John 16, but also even Christ's mind, as we see here in v16! The Lord gave Himself for us once for all at Calvary, and He continually gives Himself to us by the working of His Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord!

How can you be presenting Jesus more plainly and yourself less impressively to others? How does your habit/practice of Bible reading reflect the necessity of the Spirit's work in it?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving Yourself to us in the Son, to Whom You have united us, and the Spirit, by Whom You have indwelt us. Give us to know Your mind, that we may glorify You and enjoy You as Your children, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP24 "The Earth and the Riches" or TPH297 "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First Corinthians 2. These are the words of god. 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. For i did not for, i determined not to know anything among you except jesus christ and him crucified.

I was with you in weakness and fear, and in much, trembling My speech. And my preaching, we're not with persuasive words of human wisdom. But in demonstration of the spirit, and of power, That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men. But in the power of god, However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature.

Yeah, not the wisdom of this age nor of the rulers of this age were coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of god in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which god ordained before the ages for our glory. Which none of the rulers of this age knew. Or had they known?

They would not have crucified the lord of glory. But as it is written, eye has not seen nor heard nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which god has prepared. For those who love him. But god has revealed them to us through his spirit. For the spirits such as all things.

Yes, the deep things of god. 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. 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.

These things we also speak not in words. Which man's wisdom teaches. Which the holy spirit teaches? Comparing spiritual things with spiritual. The natural man does not receive the things the spirit of god. For, they are foolishness to him nor can he know them. Because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges, all things.

Yet to himself is rightly judged by no one. For who has known the mind of the lord that he may instruct him. But we have the mind of christ. So far the reading of god's inspired. And an errant worked. Paul here, gives a Trinitarian. Explanation, for why his preaching was so unimpressive.

Why he didn't come with eloquence of speech? Why he didn't preach such sermons. That people would say. Oh, paul. But what a preacher. No, he preached such sermons that. That were full of the truth about the triune god. And the fact that jesus christ is god, that the holy spirit is god and That jesus, who pours out his spirit, Is the one who has died for our sins.

And that we are saved. Not by some great thing that we do. But by a great death, that jesus died as god had planned within himself to do. From before the world began. And so the, the apostle would plainly Uh, teach these things plainly preach, these things. Um, not with great eloquence or wisdom.

Uh, but the result is that those who came to be convinced that these things are true. You'd realize they were not convinced by how great the sermon was or how great the eloquence of the sermon was, They were convinced by the power of god. That it was the same god who had come in the second person of the godhead and died for their sins who had also now in the third person of the godhead made them spiritual people.

So that they could understand and believe these spirit-given words. And thus, their faith was not in the wisdom of men. But in the power of god, Their faith was not. And how? Excellently spoken. The sermon was but in the god, who had changed their heart to believe in jesus.

And specifically to believe that jesus is god. Who had died. For their sins. As he says, in the middle of the chapter that jesus is the lord of glory. As he says, at the end of the chapter, That jesus is yahweh. Whose mind the spirit gives us. Where does he say that?

Well, he says that in job, 15. Uh, verse 8, isaiah 40. Verse 13. That it is the mind of yahweh. That we have when we have the mind. Of christ. Verse 16, the implication of the question who has known the mind of yahweh that he may instruct him. Means that only Yahwe knows the mind of yahweh.

And yet, it is this very mind that we have when we have The mind of christ. And so it was great folly then. That the corinthians were having these Um, battles of Pride and supremacy, and in their church glorying in themselves rather than glory of the lord jesus. That's what the rulers of this aged you.

That's what the great ones, so-called and putting great and air quotes there aren't you? The great ones of this world do. But they don't know the truth about greatness. They are about to perish. They're about to come to nothing verse six. We speak wisdom among those whom who are mature, not the wisdom of this age, nor the rulers of this age or coming to nothing.

In fact, now i can see nor ear here, nor the heart of man devise What the lord had prepared for his people. That the lord of glory would be crucified for us. And so, the rulers of this age who are not humbled before god, receiving meekly, what the lord says, by his spirit, what do they do?

Or what's the result for them? Well the result is that they don't know the truth. They don't know what God had ordained before the ages for the glory of believers. And so you have the rulers of this age trying to puff themselves up to make themselves glorious. I don't realize it.

Only goddess glorious and That this glorious. God has a plan. For bringing. Believers into his glory believers who are not very impressive. As he's just got done pointing out to them in chapter 1 about how very few of them are impressive in any way shape or form. And yet, god himself had ordained within himself before the ages.

That he would bring unimpressive. Undeserving anti-deserving. Sinners. To faith in jesus christ. And that they would end up being glorified together. With him. And so he says the wisdom that we speak. Is a mystery, a hidden wisdom from god? With more. Uh, hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this aged knew.

For had they known they would not have crucified. The lord of glory. And so, how do you come to know it? You know come to know it by being great, you don't come to know it. By how eloquent the preacher is. Or impressive the sermon, as you come to know it because the holy spirit makes you a spiritual person that spiritual wisdom.

It's taught in spiritual words, these things we speak. Not in words, which means wisdom teaches, but which the holy spirit teaches. And so the spirit Um, Give spiritual words. Uh, his words to the people who he is giving. His, uh, his mind, his understanding. And so he says no one knows.

The things of god, except the spirit of god, we have received not the spirit of the world but the spirit who is from god, And so when he says, comparing spiritual things, With spiritual. It's probably better. Uh, translated spiritual things, four, spiritual people. Um, that is the holy spirit as the one, both who gives the words and who does the work in the heart.

And he compares the spiritual person versus the natural person. The natural person does not receive the things of god. He says, verse 14, there are foolishness to him. Nor can he even know them for their spiritually discerned? But he who is spiritual. That is someone in whom the holy spirit is working.

Gives. The mind of christ. That person can receive. And understand. What the what the word tells us about, jesus christ being the lord. For who has known the mind of the lord. That he may instruct him. But we have, The mind. Of christ. And so we can. On the one hand, if we Don't understand or maybe we understand but feel that we aren't convinced.

Like we should be in our hearts, the truth about jesus being god. It became a man to die for us. We have something that we can do. We can pray to god, the holy spirit. That he would give us hearts that are alive and minds to understand that we would be convinced because we know that it doesn't help us.

That comes from the holy spirit. And then if we do believe the truth of that jesus. Then we would be humble. We would embrace our lowliness. And, When we talk to other people about jesus, we would do. So not trying for ourselves to be impressive, which is the great temptation in all theological conversation is to try for herself to be impressive, but when we talked to other people about it, we talk as those who are impressed with him.

Who are impressed with the father, who are impressed with the spirit, who are impressed with the triune god. Desiring that they would see how glorious. The lord jesus is and how good he has been. To give himself. For sinners. And so we're invited by the great glory of god as Taught to us by the spirit to humble ourselves low.

To know that if we are going to be glorified and we are It's going to be it by god's way of glorifying us that he ordained before the ages. By uniting us to jesus by faith. And displaying us glorious in the last day. When christ, who is our life at returns, and we appear with him then, In glory.

That's a lot of humble ourselves. And let us ask the spirit to teach us. The glory of god. In our lord, jesus christ. Let's pray. Our father in heaven, forgive us for How proud we are how we try to be the impressive ones, how much we want others to think?

Well of us. And because we realize, after reading this passage that this comes from the flesh, this comes from the spirit of the age. This is just like those who are great in the world and who are coming to nothing. And even worse. That comes from those who are not appreciating and loving your glorio god and particularly your glory.

In our lord, jesus christ has taught by your spirit. So we pray that you'd forgive us for our pride and that you'd humble us. And the ear spirit would teach us the great glory of christ, who is crucified for us. That we might bless your name for what you have, determined in your self to do for us and then in us.

From before the world began. And we pray that you would keep doing this work that you have planned. By your spirit who would apply christ to us? In his name, we ask it. Amen.