

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD

GOD'S GRACE FOR AN IMPERFECT CHURCH: A STUDY OF 1 CORINTHIANS · 1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-16 · APRIL 21, 2024 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God." (1 Corinthians 2:11)

God's Powerful Wisdom and the Waning Wisdom of this Age (1 Corinthians 2:6-9)

- God's wisdom revealed as different from the wisdom of this age
- God's wisdom planned from before time
- God's wisdom revealed in the crucified Jesus who is the Lord of glory
- God's wisdom triumphs over the rulers of this age

The Holy Spirit and the Personal Revelation of God's Wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:10-12)

- God's wisdom revealed from beyond us not merely grasped by us
- God's wisdom revealed by the Holy Spirit who reveals the depths of God
- God's wisdom revealed shows God's grace and generosity to humanity

The Holy Spirit and the Mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:13-16)

- The Holy Spirit explains spiritual realities to spiritual people
- The person living at an entirely human level misses out on God's wisdom
- The spiritual person discerns God's wisdom because we have the mind of Christ

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever experienced a breakthrough of insight or a significant growth in wisdom that really stood out in your life? What happened?
2. This week we continue our preaching series, "God's Grace for an Imperfect Church: 1 Corinthians" by looking at 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. Whether you are on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through this study and then read that text aloud.
3. Verses 6-7 contrast wisdom of this age with God's wisdom. How does Paul characterize these two different sorts of wisdom?
4. The "rulers of this age" are mentioned both in verse 6 and 8. How does Paul describe them in both verses? What is happening to their power and what did they fail to understand?
5. Why do you think Paul might describe Jesus, the crucified Messiah, as "the Lord of glory" in verse 8?

6. Again and again, Paul emphasizes that there is a new understanding that has come to us through the Spirit of God (2:9-10). Why is this significant given all Paul has discussed in this section and the previous section (1:18-2:5) of the letter?
7. With verses 11-13 Paul describes how the Holy Spirit works to reveal God's thoughts to us. What does Paul say about the Holy Spirit here?
8. If the Corinthians believers were beginning to think highly of themselves and their capacities of wisdom and discernment, how might Paul's words in verses 14-15 be important for them?
9. Paul concludes by suggesting that disciples of Jesus have received "the mind of Christ" (2:16). How do you think the mind, or understanding, of Christ relate to Jesus and His crucifixion, which has been so central to Paul's writing up to this point?
10. What is God speaking to you through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then pray about what you shared. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and share this with someone during the next few days.

DIG DEEPER

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 2:11 or 2:12
- This week read some or all of these passages about the Holy Spirit:
 - John 14:15-17
 - Acts 1:7-8
 - Acts 2:1-12
 - Romans 12:4-8
 - Galatians 5:19-26
 - Ephesians 1:13-14
- Perhaps you could respond to those passages by taking time in prayer to thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Explore these resources:
 - Francis Chan, *Forgotten God*
 - Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*
 - Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective, 2nd edition*
 - Bible Project, "Holy Spirit": bibleproject.com/explore/video/holy-spirit/