

1 Corinthians

Wisdom & Unity

Meeting the demands of
Christian life and living



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Starting where
you are:

Any questions?

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An Interesting Parallel

Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20)

- Go ye therefore – v.19
- Make disciples – v. 19
- Baptizing them – v. 19
- Teaching them – v. 20
- Lo, I am with you – v. 20

Paul's Ministry (Acts 18:1-11)

- Paul came to Corinth – v.1
- Many heard and believed – v. 8
- And were baptized – v. 8
- For a year and six months he taught the Word – v. 11
- “For I am with you” – v. 10

1 Corinthians 2: Paul's ministry/God's wisdom

In this chapter:

- Paul reflects on his time in Corinth and dismisses worldly wisdom (2:1-5).
 - A determination to forego satisfying secular expectations.
 - A determination to preach Christ.
 - A determination to serve despite his shortcomings.
 - A determination to focus faith and testimony on the power of God (not on Paul, human wisdom, or performance).

Turning from the divisions that characterized the church (see ch. 1), the one, central issue that unites the church – “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (2:2).

1 Corinthians 2: Paul's ministry/God's wisdom

In this chapter:

- Paul also addresses the nature and need of God's wisdom for church unity (2:6-16).
 - Godly wisdom unites believers in understanding.
 - Godly wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - Godly wisdom satisfies the yearning for worldly affections.

Turning from worldly wisdom, characterized by human skill and power, God's wisdom (i.e., God's skill and power) is a "mystery" that unites believers through the agency of the Holy Spirit (2:11-12).

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 | Paul's approach to ministry

What it is not:

- Dependent upon human conventions of eloquence
- The standard of acceptance for an authoritative figure
- Intended to uphold secular notions of wisdom

What it is:

- Exclusively focused on Jesus and Him crucified
- Dependent upon the Spirit and the power of God
- Intended to advance faith in God

Consider Paul's ministry approach in the light of divisions mentioned in Chapter 1.

1 Corinthians 2:6-16 | The mystery of God's wisdom

A careful explanation of acceptable wisdom

- Intended for “those who are mature” as a unifying force
- Not the same as “the wisdom of this age”
- Not practiced by “the rulers of this age”
- By implication, the wisdom of this age and those who trust it will meet their end

Wisdom as “mystery”

- Known by the Originator
- Unknown by humanity until revealed by the Holy Spirit
- A way to identify a spiritual person from natural person
- Ironically, “foolishness” (m^{wir,a}: moria) to the nature of humanity

1 Corinthians 2:10-16 | Roles of the Holy Spirit

As it pertains to the Gospel and its impacts on the believer, the Holy Spirit:

- Reveals (v. 10)
- Searches (v. 10-11)
- Indwells believers (v. 12)
- Teaches (v. 13)
- Matures believers (v. 14-16)

A church develops the capacity to remain united through the ongoing work of Holy Spirit.



So What?

What does this
say to the church
of “this age”?

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